

#### ©Twinless Twins Support Group, International



President's Corner

Dear Twins,

ince late spring, I have had the pleasure of meeting many twins. Through regional meetings and our annual conference, TTSGI tries to reach out to those who no longer share life with their twin. We are a very small number of volunteers who try to make a difference.

It is then appropriate as we draw closer to the holiday season, to recognize our volunteers who so freely give of themselves, their time and talent.

Our Regional Coordinators are often the first contact a twin makes with our organization. Their offering of understanding often can be the catalyst for the first baby steps in their healing journey. They also recognize there is no timetable to this journey. We are all different and our journey is therefore unique.

We are also fortunate to have someone who guides and supports our Coordinators as a labour of love.

Our twins wouldn't be able to read this note without the countless hours put in by our editor Margaret Daffin, who also does much more for TTSGI.

We have a Conference Committee, who immediately after our Ohio conference began making plans for our 2013 conference in Los Angeles. The success in Ohio is a direct reflection upon their collective planning.

We have a Treasurer who has carefully, quietly and competently looked after our finances from the time of Dr. Brandt, our founder.

We have other committees, such as membership, public awareness and a corporate secretary who provides our meeting minutes with a very short turnaround.

Lastly, we have an amazing Executive Director. Anyone who has attended a national conference has felt her warmth, sincerity and devotion to TTSGI.

As we approach the holiday season, I am thankful for everyone who is a part of this organization. For those of us whose twin loss predated TTSGI, we recognize how essential it is for those who have found us.

Ray Boyle, President 🎔



# **VOLUNTEER!**

**WINTER 2012** 

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: <u>www.twinlesstwins.org</u>

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# THE EMPTY CHAIR

# "A NEW YEAR"

By Sandy Goad, twin to Jim



new year to tell our story, acknowledging the reality of our loss, embracing our pain and remembering.

A new year to help others understand that grief does not have a timeline.

A new year to find ways to honor the wonderful gifts our loved one gave to us.

A new year that brings hope that others will not forget.

A new year to let the joy our loved one's life brought to us begin to take the place of the hurt.

A new year to ask for support from our friends, our family and the community. Grief is a journey that doesn't have to be traveled alone.

A new year to say yes to life and get busy with not just surviving but living.

A new year to laugh again and not feel guilty.

A new year to reach out to others who are grieving and help them.

In this new year, I hope that you will learn to live again, to hope again to love again.

Where there is pain, let there be softening.

Where there is bitterness, let there be acceptance.

Where there is silence, let there be communication.

Where there is loneliness, let there be friendships.

Where there is despair, let there be hope. 🎔

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By MaryAnn, Twin to Liz

For our 40th birthday in 2006, my twin Liz and I wanted to get tattoos at that same time. So she came to see me that Thanksgiving to get them done. She did a heart with a banner that had her kids' initials. I did a star outline on my left wrist, a cross on my right wrist and an outline of a dolphin on my left shoulder blade (see before photo of dolphin). I knew I wanted to finish the dolphin tattoo but was not sure how. So I figured I'd wait until I was sure of what I wanted to do. When my twin Liz died in May 2012, I knew what I wanted to do, I wanted to honor her. By finishing the tattoo I felt it was a way to express myself about



who she is in my life and how I feel about her. I went to the tattoo parlor and I showed the owner my design. It was to be a mirror image of the dolphin tattoo I already had with a cross, heart and our nicknames under it. I also wanted the dolphins colored in our favorite colors, yellow for Liz and pink for me. I also added another star, each with our favorite colors (see photos) For me this dolphin tattoo represents what Liz was for me. She was my mirror image but just like the different colors





we are individuals but united by our faith (cross), by our love (heart), who we are to each other (nicknames) and how she is always with me permanently. •

# THANK YOU TO OUR REGIONAL COORDINATORS

e at TTSGI would like to thank and acknowledge two wonderfully dedicated Regional Coordinators who are stepping down. Linda Pountney and Meredith Yelton. Linda, in the New England Region, who has now served as RC and Acting RC over a period of ten years and has helped in numerous ways in her region, and Meredith in the Southeast Region.

Most members are unaware of the hard work that encompasses being a Regional Coordinator - being available for newly grieving twins who have lost their twins and to counsel them; send materials out to new members; schedule regional meetings two or three times a year for groups; meet individual twinless twins at home or at a convenient location; attend the annual conference, and many other requirements. These RCs have volunteered their time and efforts to forward the cause of TTSGI and mentor those new twinless twins and encourage them to become members.

We thank you for a job well done and we wish you well for the future.

Margaret Daffin, Co-Editor 🎔

# PAMELA ROBERTS

## NEW SOUTHEAST REGIONAL COORDINATOR

amela wrote the following note to the Board of Directors and we are pleased to welcome her as our new Southeast Regional Coordinator:

"I am interested in the position of Regional Coordinator for the Southeast. I am a compassionate, caring person and while these were characteristics I possessed before my twin, Penny, died, they have been amplified over the past five years.

Penny and I were "those" twins; we finished each other's

sentences, often read the same book at the same time, talked on the phone daily, and it didn't matter what we were doing as long as we were together. Friends said we could find fun in having a flat tire (and did). We were blessed to be able to spend the week together before she died. Her youngest son, Jake, was turning 16 so we took him to Orlando to celebrate. Each day we dropped Jake and one of his friends off at a theme park and then Penny and I spent the day together. Five days after I returned from south Florida, Jacob killed Penny and her husband. Since that horrible night, August 2, 2007, I have stood



behind Jake and supported him 100% by hiring an attorney to defend him, visiting him, even sitting behind him during his trial. I have continued to be his advocate even after his conviction.

Penny's oldest son had an understandably difficult time processing the deaths of his parents at the hands of his brother. He also didn't understand how I could support Jake and love him unconditionally. The decisions he made because of that trauma put a great

> deal of stress on our relationship but I was there for him, too.

I believe I have the qualities the board is looking for in an R.C. I have strong communication skills, have written about our family's story and entered the manuscript in a writing contest; have shared our family's story in churches; and became a counselor to many in our family as they continue to heal.

Over the past five years I've grown stronger in my faith, firmer in my resolve to find a way to help others who may not be as far along in their healing process, and have learned the true meaning of the words grace, forgiveness, and unconditional love.

Pam Roberts, twin to Penny"

*Editor's Note:* Pamela will be contacting all TTSGI members in her region . •

# **ARIZONA MEETING**

Submitted by Regional Coordinator Eileen Jensen, twin to Elaine

The Southwest Region also held a meeting in Phoenix, AZ on Sept. 22, 2012, hosted and led by Barbara Wright. The twins attending were Traci Eversole, Jim Zaccaria, Justin Clarke, Mary Essick and the host Barbara Wright. It was good to meet two new twins.

Everyone enjoyed the lunch which was followed by sharing their own twin story. The annual conference was discussed and we are so glad that it is going to be on the West Coast. The meeting was closed with the candle lighting ceremony.

Thank you Barbara for hosting this meeting. •



From left to right: Jim Zaccaria, Amy (friend), Traci Eversole, Barbara Wright, Mary Essick and Justin Clarke.

# July 2013 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
SAVE THE DATE						
TWINLESS TWINS CONFERENCE						
JULY 18-21, 2013						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 PLEASE SAVE THE DATE for the 2013 Twinless Twins Conference to be held July 18-21 in Los Angeles at the Renaissance Los Angeles Airport Hotel - see the article					27	
28 entitled: EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW BUT DIDN'T KNOW WHO TO ASK in this issue for more information about the conference. •						

# NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS: FEBRUARY-OCTOBER, 2012

Joan Angelis Betsy Aron Phyllis Ashliman Janet Baird Abigail Bardasian Dawn Barnett Lauren Barrows Jean Benner Alcided Benoit Mary George Beyer Debe Bloom Jonathan Bock Barbara Bosch Ray Boyle Dana Bridges **Elizabeth Brinker** Dottie Bruch Anne Bunting Linda Burke Donald Caserta Ellen Cedfeldt Erin Centauro Stephen Chapman Marge Clapp Justin Clarke Cynthia Clement Noah Cohen Debbie Coleman Roderick Cowan David Cox Sara Cucinotta Lisa Curtis Margaret Daffin Pearl Davison Miriam Doetsch Lea Eriksen Gale Erlewine Pamela Fender Darlene Ferraro Susan Ficke **Carol Finley** Jennifer Finney Joan Garcia Michelle Getchell **Doris Giroux** 

Rita Glynn Sandy Goad Jacquie Goldman MaryAnn Gomez Olivia Greco Renie Hallford Alix Harris Cynthia Hasting Marion Hearn Paul Heiden Cheryl Henson Randall Henson Virginia Holleman Maey Anne Hoover Heidi Howard Amy Hoyt Watanabee Vikki Huntwork Elaine Igelman Joyce Ilgenfritz Margo Irons Jamie Jenkins Kevin Johnson Lauren Johnson Shelley Johnson Barbara Ann Jones Dave Jones Mike Karbeling Cheryl Karp Madleen Katkauskas Art Keelev Jane Kennel Nellene Kenyon Dee Knoblauch Jay Knyal Stephen Koeppen Kristina Kofoot Mary Lou Krebsbach Venice Lacy Beatrice Lee Marilynn Lester Terry Lewis Foor Donna Linscomb June Loertscher Deborah Mackler Jane Malcom

Amber Mariani Melina Maritato Nicole McCrief Norma McDonough Pat McGovern Caryl McIntire Edwards Ronald McKenzie Barbara Milleville Darlene Moore Mary R Morgan Andrea Moss Gayla Moss Julia Nellett Kitty Nikolay Jason Noble Alfredo Ojeda Kittie Olberding **Rachelle** Oliver **Bob** Osterholt Sheri Parham Brent Parker Mugsy Pearson Leslie Pennypacker Alia Pfeiffer Jane Phillips Linda Pountney Alyssa Pratt Harriet Pratt Carol Prunty Shyam Rai Julia Ramey Garry Rayno Marc Reichel Dala Ridnour Barbara Ritter Jennifer Roberts Pamela Roberts Judith Ann Rockey John Rohrer Tracev Ronan Kim Rothigordt Jennifer Rudd Margery Runyan Lisa-Michele Russo Joan Salley

Joan Sandherr Shirley Sauer Susan Schneider Becky Sehenuk Ruth Osterweis Selig Carolyn Shane Donald Shinsako Marcella Slawson **Emily Slosberg** Shawn Smith Loyce Snider **Derry Sollors** Jill Solomon Marland Michael Spitaletto Margaret Stegall Mary Stephens Janet Stevens Zoev Stites Dena Stitt Crystal Strickler Jessie Sugden Katie Summerell Debra Swanson Cassandra Szymanski-Spala Barbara Terry Michelle Thomas Lindsay Turner Judy Valdez Rick Van Valkenburg Matt Vierling Lucy Wagner Courtney Waller Suzanne Wedow Trudy Weinstein Jessica Wickey **Beverly Wiliams** Judy Wilson Camille Wissmann Tracy Ann Wolfe Lia Woodall Daniel Yoffee Susan Zanca-Burwin

# TWINLESS TWINS HAS REGISTERED WITH MISSIONFISH AND GIVING WORKS

hat is MissionFish? Since 2003, MissionFish has been eBay's exclusive charitable partner, helping to raise over a quarter billion dollars by powering the eBay Giving Works program. In 2011, eBay established the PayPal Charitable Giving Fund, an IRS-registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to operate MissionFish and further its charitable purpose of helping nonprofits raise funds through online commerce.

The primary channel for raising awareness and support for nonprofits is through eBay Giving Works, an awardwinning program that enables members of the eBay community to donate to their favorite cause. Sellers can give a portion of the proceeds from their sales.

### How does an eBay seller donate part or their entire sale to Twinless Twins Support Group, International?

eBay seller lists an item for sale, chooses a percentage to donate, and selects Twinless Twins as the beneficiary.

Listings appear on eBay with a special Giving Works features.

When the listing sells, MissionFish collects the donation from the seller and distributes the proceeds to Twinless Twins Support Group, International. ♥



# WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR TTSGI!

By Carolyn Shane

Twinless Twins is a volunteer led, not-for-profit organization. We need the active support of volunteers like you to help us become a better and stronger organization to more effectively meet the needs of our members.

We also depend on our members to help raise the much needed funds to support TTSGI financially. Our dues do not pay for all of our expenses. We depend on donations sent to us throughout the year as well as various fundraising activities held during the conference.

We need you to donate for the annual conference: items large and small • vacation homes • jewelry • and items with our logo to raffle off. We also need you to bring whatever extra cash you may have – and your credit card. This way you can bid on the many items that are a part of the live auction held at the banquet, and during the conference you can choose from a wide assortment of both silent auction and tricky tray items.

Please do your part – whatever that may be – to help TTSGI continue its good work in benefitting those who need us.  $\mathbf{P}$ 

# **MIDWEST REGIONAL MEETING**

by Sarah Beebe, Regional Coordinator, twin to Heidi

Thanks to all of our fabulous Midwest Twins who travelled from Ohio, Indiana and Illinois to attend our Summer meeting in August and our Fall meeting in October. There's no better therapy than hugging a fellow twin.

#### **August Meeting Attendees:**

Olivia, Twin to Penny Sarah, Twin to Heidi Cathy, Twin to Char Paul, Twin to Pete Susan, Twin to Robin Cathy, twin to Christine Terry, Twin to Christine Terry, Twin to Sherry Marci, Twin to Sherry Marci, Twin to Jarrett Cathy, Twin to Julie Elain, Twin to Irene Cassandra, twin to Brian

### **October Meeting Attendees:**

Paul, Twin to Pete Cathy, Twin to Char Cathy, Twin to Julie Terry, Twin to Sherry Elaine, Twin to Irene Larry, twin to Garry Marci, Twin to Michaelene Jody, Twin to Jeremy Linda, Twin to Jeremy Linda, Twin to Diana Barbara, Twin to Bea David, Twin to Dennis Sarah, Twin to Heidi Derry, Twin to Bruce

P.S. I ordered the names of how we're grouped in the pictures! :)



August Meeting



October Meeting

# **"I SIT ALONE IN THE DARK OF NIGHT**"

### by Debbie Coleman, twin to Dianne

Sit Alone in the dark of night, my husband gone to bed long ago and my dogs sleeping soundly but still waiting for me to go to bed, ready to jump and come with me when I go. I hear the TV blaring behind me with movie stars and TV stars giving themselves awards for doing their job? I remember my sissy and I abhorred how these people always seemed the need to honor themselves for what we thought to be frivolous and nonsensical tributes with all the problems

that are going on in the world.

As I sit here, alone with this nonsense in the background, it brings back such strong memories of my twin. We both always seemed to have the same outlook on many areas in life, actually in all but one area. My sister was very spiritual, where I have always been very cynical. But we never criticized or chastised each other, actually gently teased each other on our beliefs, never trying to change one another - just absolute acceptance of what we were and where we were in this journey of life.

We started life in tough circumstances - our childhood was not so perfect, and we grew up in a home of dysfunctional alcoholic circumstances. We moved on through our childhood years with different men and women coming and going like ships in the night assuming to be our parents. As much as we little girls were alone in a house of horrors at times, we maintained and survived through this intact, unbreakable loving bond we both hung on to for dear life. We kept each other afloat, we kept each other tight to our chests, we kept each other safe and never let go.

So here I sit many years later, all grown up, and I sit alone. So deadly alone. No more phone calls, no more chats, no more skyping, no more hugs, no more laughter, Dianne Power, December 31-1959 – March 7–2012. ♥ no more of everything. My sister Dianne Power passed away March 7, 2012. I sit alone.

During my sister's fight with lung cancer, we talked about everything. It is these talks that give me peace of mind in the dark of night, knowing that when she left this world nothing was left unsaid between us. Don't get me wrong, I have cried everyday for 14 months from when she got her diagnosis and passed away and ever since. Life is terribly difficult. I would give anything to have her back, and go to bed every night wishing I could do this. But I have come to a place, that I need peace in my heart for her and for me. I know that she would never want me to go on, being miserable or unhappy with what time I have left. But I also know she would know why I am, as she would be the same.

> When she was fighting for her life, she always said to me so many times, "I have the easy job Deb, you have the hard job. You have to go on." No words could have been truer, I have to go on. The pain and the hurt paralyze me at times. I keep to myself for the most part. I don't want to deal with people. I don't need anyone, lets face it, I didn't before, I had my sister, my best friend. People and friends were ok to be on the outskirts of our life, but never ever could come in any further than we needed them. We had each other. Now I sit alone.

> I hope that peace will come to me one day with the beauty of time and healing. I don't want to feel guilty for

going forward when I'm ready, as I do now. I know that even though this guilt can rise like bile in my throat, I know that sissy wants me to move on. I know that she is waiting for me to do this, and will only rest when I have come to a place of peace. I will get there sissy I promise, for now I sit alone...

I cannot tell or express my loneliness everyday of not having vou beside me sharing, crving, laughing or hugging. I keep you close to my heart in the locket I have of you around my neck. Our Bond is Our Story.

I will see you again, and will love you forever.

Debbie, proud to be the sister of my angel twin,

Dianne Power and Debbie Coleman



# **TWIN'S DAY** by Kevin Mullen, twin to Brian

n August 1st my mom and I set off for Twinsburg, Ohio. This year marked the 37th year for Twin's Day and my 7th year of attending. Many twins come a couple of days early to rest up and catch up with everyone poolside. This year marked 25 consecutive years of attendance for four sets of twins - Steve and Jeff Nagel, Jean and Jill Burk, Diane and Denise Anderson and Kerry and Terry Davenport. There was an invite only party for them on Thursday evening to which I was invited to attend.

After the party many of us got together for karaoke, where Matt and Mike Gragnani sang to Jean and Jill, Diane and Denise, Kerry and Terry. There were also plenty more talented twins that followed. Each year the Festival committee chooses a theme and this year it was "Twin Power" and with everyone sporting their super twin power shirts, the festival began with the Friday night BBQ.

This year was a truly special year, as two sets of fraternal twins - Rachel and Matt Zronek, and Michael and Megan Hill were named the Festival's Kings and Queens. The parade on Saturday was great with so many super heros. Some of my faves were Steve and Jeff Nagel and Ben and Fred Kinsey as the Hulk, Dera and Gianna Fasline as Catwoman, Scott and Nathan Hasbrook as Thor.

One highlight is to check out the big world map where each set of twins puts a pin in the area of the state or country that they come from. In my seven years this was the first time I saw all 50 states with at least one pin. Vermont had four or five pins. When my mom and I left the grounds it was at 2,078 twin attendees but the final count was 2,090.

It's fun to see how the people and business of Twinsburg love and greet the twins. In the Giant Eagle store they have a twin guest sign-in book, so every year they record how many different places the twins come from that are shopping in their store.

This past March there was a twin's edition on the "Price is Right" where my twin friends Linda and Laura Seber appeared on the show. Ed and Jim Wasko who appeared on "Our America with Lisa" on OWN (Oprah Winfrey Network) last year — Jim Wasko passed away the day after Christmas from cancer, but Ed was there and with the help of friends put on the Twin Bowling tournament.

Gary and Larry Lane (Jack and Jill) returned to the festival after a five-year break and talked about their film "Hollywood to Dollywood" which they filmed two years ago and was just released. Gary and Larry had screenings of "Hollywood to Dollywood" recently in New York City and Los Angeles. They won 25 Awards Worldwide for it and they gave me a copy.

On Monday, while heading home, I called Jon Hilber, twin to Justin to wish him a Happy Birthday and to Sean Joyce, twin to Tom and Ken Spoor, twin to Kevin to tell them about the trip.

Going to Twinsburg is like going to a family reunion for me - just like our yearly TTSGI conference. •



(Photo by and courtesy of Charles Robinson.)

# **SPECIAL TT HOLIDAY OFFER:**



"Beginning With the End: A Memoir of Twin Loss and Healing" by Mary R. Morgan

Discounted rate for the holidays: **\$14.00**. If you buy 4, you get 1 free - for a total of 5 books (great for book clubs!).

To take advantage of this offer please send your request to:

Twinless Twins Support Group, International PO Box 980481 Ypsilanti, MI 48198

or visit our web store at: www.twinlesstwins.org/store/books

**Mary R. Morgan, L.M.S.W.,** is a licensed psychotherapist specializing in working with twinless twins. She lectures on the subject of twin loss and has led a bereavement group for twins whose twin died in the 9/11 World Trade Center disaster. She is a beloved member of TTSGI and has helped hundreds of TTs move forward on their grief journey.

For more information on the book, visit <u>http://www.beginningwiththeend.com</u>

# AVAILABLE FOR THE FIRST TIME!

## **Twinless Twins Logo Pendant**

This <u>Sterling Silver</u>, 1" pendant, sells for \$59.00 and comes with a loop attachment, as shown, and is a reproduction of our Twinless Twins logo. It is a loving keepsake to honor your twin and is available just in time for the holidays! To purchase, you may use the order form below or go online to: www.twinlesstwins.org/store/.



"The moment I put on the necklace with the pendant, I felt Robin's Ipresence. It was like she was with me all day long. What a comforting tribute from Susan and Robin." Suzanne Schneider, mother to Susan and Robin

Twinless Twins Support Group, International Po Box 980481, Ypsilanti, MI 48198 www.twinlesstwins.org			
Name: Address: City/State/Zip:			
Item	Price	Quantity	TOTAL
Twinless Twins Logo Pendant	\$59		
<u>Special gift to the buyer</u> : Susan, who commissioned the pendant in honor of her twin, Robin, will cover mailing costs.			

### Mail checks or money orders to:

Twinless Twins Support Group, International PO BOX 980481, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

- \* "I just got my pendant and I am so thrilled! I bought a lovely chain for it and will wear it often in memory of Char. It is so beautiful".
- \* "Susan, I received your nice card and the beautiful pendant. I will wear it and think of my twin without a doubt. Thanks for coming up with this grand idea." Barb, twin to Brien

# HOLIDAY GIVING -GIVING SO THAT OTHERS MAY RECEIVE



S 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 telephone, 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.* 

Is there a creative way you too can give on a regular basis and share your resources with 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. 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 🎔

# **TWINLESS TWINS SUPPORT GROUP INTERNATIONAL**

## **2012 DONATION FORM**

Please enter the required information below if you would like to sign up as a Donor for Twinless Twins Support Group International.

Please print **this form** and mail it, along with your check, money order, or Visa/MasterCard/Discover information to:

### Twinless Twins Support Group International P.O. Box 980481 Ypsilanti, MI 48198-0481 Or fax to: 1-888-205-8962

(Alternatively, you may make your donation online at **www.twinlesstwins.org** and use the DONATE button on the home page.)

#### **Designate Funds – please check one:**

General Fund	Conference Assistance Fund
□ Scholarship Fund	□ Matching Gift

### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Name			
Address			
City	State	Zip Code	Country
Phone No.	Email		
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	Twinless Twins, Inc. is a 501(c)3 no	nprofit tax-exempt org	anization and

your donation is tax deductible within the limits of the law.

# **MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL NEWS**

by Mike Karbeling, Regional Coordinator



The Mid-Atlantic Region of Twinless Twins met in Frederick, MD on Saturday, October 13. This marked the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mid-Atlantic Region meetings and fittingly it was a beautiful sunny day in Frederick. I only wish that all of you could have been there to experience, first-hand, the beautiful day in Frederick and the healing that took place as twinless twins came together and experienced love, support, encouragement and hope. We gave this week-end to ourselves, as twins, to help us on our path toward healing.

Nineteen twins attended, including eight new twinless twins! We also recognized Sandy Goad, Linda Burke, Ruth Selig and Joan Sandherr for their support over the years as twins who attended the first Mid Atlantic Regional meeting in October 2002. We held our morning meeting in the conference room of the Hampton Inn and began by introducing ourselves, and Ruth Selig discussed the National Conference in Los Angeles California 2013. After a short break, with our chairs in a circle, we shared about our twin loss. Mike Karbeling, twin to Howard and Mid Atlantic Regional Coordinator, opened up the group sharing and facilitated the group discussion. In that circle, we opened our hearts and let ourselves explore what was inside, while being surrounded by the comfort and support of other twinless twins. Our motto, "healing by helping others" was witnessed by those in the circle.

As mentioned above, we welcomed eight twinless twins who attended our regional meeting for the first time. It took a lot of courage for Ami, Joan, Jonathan, Leslie, Linda, Mary Ann, Sara and Tracy to walk through the conference room doors. We hope that they will continue to return to our meetings as one of our "returning twins" to find the support we are able to offer each other and to find hope for their own future. Each new twinless twin received a special "Angel of Healing" as a reminder of the week-end and as a reminder that they do not walk alone.

# **NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL MEETING**

by Linda Pountney, Acting Regional Coordinator

On October 13, 2012 in Providence, RI we gathered at our twin friend Larry Wilson's lovely home, built in the 1920s, full of charm, and history. Nineteen people were in attendance, several new twins to the organization. After discussing TTSGI's mission and membership requirements we finished a tasty lunch assembled from around the states by our twins.

As I facilitated the meeting, I took a few quick notes as people spoke about where they were on their journey through twin loss. These themes are shared with each other to further discussion after the meeting, on our New England Facebook page.

I learned from doing this – we have quite a few twins who have lost their twin 16-45 years ago. Several twins mentioned traumatic events, as limiting their forward movement on their path. Jealousy when confronted with intact twins was brought up to be an emotional trigger. Three twins cited anger as part of their grief process. In addition, abandonment contributed to feelings of anger, strongest when there is no family remaining to share memories of one's twin. One conversation centered on forgiveness – the act of forgiving our twin for a variety of reasons, others in our life, and forgiving yourself to help release the guilt.

Survivor guilt was discussed. Awareness of how guilt can sneak in and affect our life is important to recognize. Crying, lack of sleep, numbness, and shutting down were mentioned. Denial of feelings, used to survive and lessen grief, was touched upon. Anxiety was brought up, as it comes up for twins who had vivid experiences of their twin's death, equating to reliving a trauma associated with our twin's death. Twin dreams were shared. Some twins yearn to experience them, and others have had them.

Our vulnerable state when a loss has been experienced was dwelled upon, expanded to include fear of future losses, now that we know firsthand that "anything can happen". This type of fear can be very uncomfortable to live with. Replacement relationships to fill the hole our twin left were spoken about, including our children filling this role. "Missing yourself not being the same person", compared to who you were before the loss, was contemplated. It was suggested that this is a secondary loss to grief – the loss of our old self. One twin described it as the loss of the quiet understanding of the world you once enjoyed. Recent loss twins spoke about feeling "half alive". Symptoms were talked about, along with milestones that we are not ready to celebrate during bereavement. It was a comfortable environment to cry, to laugh, and to remember our twins and our journey. The immediate comfort of being twins on our own paths, but together, facilitated a bond among us.

The need for new identity formation was stressed and one member shared that she went to a music conference alone for the first time since losing her twin. She used to always go with her twin. Bravo! Perfectionist tendencies were cited as pertaining to being twinless, described as "living for two". New ideas to foster our independence to promote new identity formation were touched upon, along with the benefit of helpful encouragement from each other. We talked about how we keep our twin's memory alive, and how feelings of peace surface back into our lives, promoting healing. The twin journey for one twin involved exploring their relationship and toys growing up – a shared history explored. Several twins agreed.

We talked about the importance of not being too hard and judgmental on ourselves about our grief progressing in a timely manner. Delays in grieving were common among twins whose twin died before they were old enough to separate or individuate their identity, or feel comfortable to know how to grieve. Multiple losses can increase complications in our grieving process; several twins in attendance cope with this issue. "Good can come from such a bad thing" – two twins shared. Good can also come from the peace that sails into our lives after negotiating the trials of grieving. We all agreed we wouldn't want our twin to have to endure losing us. One twin described herself as lucky... of course, to be a twin! **\*** 

# **EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW BUT DIDN'T KNOW WHO TO ASK CONCERNING THE 2013 CONFERENCE**

#### When is the conference?

The conference begins the evening of Thursday, July 18, and ends at the closing banquet on Saturday, July 20. Plan to depart on Sunday, July 21.

#### Where is the conference?

Renaissance Los Angeles Airport Hotel 9620 Airport Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90045-5402 310-337-2800

**Do I fly into LAX Airport?** Yes.

How do I get back and forth from the airport to the hotel? There is a complimentary shuttle service you can take.

#### What will the weather be like?

In July the average Los Angeles daily low and high temperatures are 64° to 83°. For more information visit <u>www.weather.com</u>

#### What should I wear during the conference?

Almost anything goes -

For the opening evening session the attendees wear business casual; others their traveling outfit or t-shirt and jeans. During the day, wear what you feel comfortable wearing: pants, t-shirt, blouse, jeans and shorts.

Remember, there will be air conditioning, so be prepared if the A/C is cooler than you prefer. In the evening, for dinner, you can choose to change or stay in what you wear during the day. It doesn't matter, attendees do both! For the closing banquet, attendees tend to dress up a bit – nice slacks outfit or nice dress. Men usually wear suits. This is a nice affair but NOT formal.

# I am a first-timer. What should I expect and what is expected of me?

To welcome you to the Conference, we invite you to join us for our First-Timer's Reception where you will have the opportunity to meet other first-timers as well as Board members and the Regional Coordinators. First-Timer's Registration will be held on July 18 at 7:00 pm with the First-Timer's Reception beginning at 7:30 pm. The Board Members and Regional Coordinators will be available to meet with you to answer any questions you may have concerning the conference. After the First-Timer's Reception you will be asked to join all Conference attendees at the Welcome Dessert Reception at 8:00 pm. Be sure to have dinner prior to the First-Timer's Registration at 7:00 pm. During the Conference, there will be time for sharing what you feel comfortable concerning your twin and twinship. There will be speakers, and various different breakout sessions, free time to relax, reflect and casually meet others and a closing banquet on Saturday evening. Plan to depart on Sunday.

#### Is there a special place where we can congregate?

Most of us look for one another in the hotel's foyer/ entrance, in the bar area, or near the registration tables outside the room where the Welcoming Reception will be held.

### What do we do for meals?

Read this section carefully.

Thursday - Dinner at your own expense First-Timer's Reception – 7:30 pm light snacks and beverages (registration at 7:00 pm) Welcome Dessert Reception – 8:00 pm desserts and beverages (open registration at 7:30 pm) Friday Breakfast – choose from Hotel Restaurant – may be a bit pricey, but is available Burger King across the street Wake up early and "Dine with Davey\* at Denny's" Friday Lunch – Box lunches with an assortment of sandwiches to choose from Friday Dinner – at your own expense Saturday Breakfast - refer to Friday Breakfast Saturday Lunch – at your own expense Saturday Dinner – Banquet Sunday – Depart \*Davey is David Jones, our Treasurer, who will be driving a large passenger van. More details to follow.

### What restaurants are in the area?

There will be a list of local restaurants available at the conference.

You can also go to the hotel's website page <u>http://</u> <u>www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/laxrr-renaissance</u> <u>-los-angeles-airport-hotel/</u> and search for the Dining Nearby section under Visit Local Areas, one of the Tabs on the Home page.

#### Does the hotel have a fitness center?

There is an outdoor pool and a whirlpool as well as a full-service fitness center featuring cardiovascular equipment and free weights. The hotel has a jogging/ fitness trail and sauna facilities.

(Continued on page 17)

# AUCTION AND RAFFLE - LOS ANGELES, CA - JULY, 2013

#### By Dawn Barnett, twin to Daryl

Please consider donating items for the conference auction. High dollar items such as jewelry, travel vouchers, condos, vacations, TT logo items and such are featured in the live auction. Other nice items will go into the silent auction to streamline the banquet. Smaller items will be available in the raffle. All these wonderful items serve to raise funds for our organization to help more twins such as yourself. The auction is our major money maker for funding the conference the following year.

We need **YOUR** involvement for the auction/raffle to be successful - both in donated items and in purchasing them at the auction or buying raffle tickets sold at the conference. You are invited to donate items even if you cannot attend the conference. Simply ship or bring your items to the conference. You may mail the items directly to the hotel (sometime close to the conference date) c/o TTSGI or Dawn Barnett. As all who have attended in the past know, it's a fun event and the future of our conferences depends on it.

Again this year, Carolyn, Sandra and I look forward to seeing you in Los Angeles, CA and hopefully having the best auction/raffle ever. Thank you!! Dawn Barnett, twin to Daryl 🎔



(EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE 2013 CONFERENCE—Continued from page 16)

#### How close are we to "tourist" attractions?

The hotel is just minutes from the beaches, Hollywood Park, and Manhattan Beach, as well as downtown L.A. There are many different local activities that are nearby - from a biking trail to bowling and all kinds of water activities to volleyball.

#### What is the cost to attend the conference?

Registration fee is \$199 per person and you must be a paid-up member of TTSGI to attend.

On June 7 the late registration fee takes effect at a cost of \$245 per person.

The Hotel rate is \$104 per night plus tax.

The cut off date for the hotel's special rate is July 2 so it is imperative that you make your reservation by that date. There will be no exceptions.

Parking your car will be at a cost of \$13 per day.

#### What should I do if I have to cancel at the last minute?

Unfortunately, we are unable to refund any registration fees one month prior to the Conference. Once the "firm" attendee count is given to the hotel we are not able to decrease that number. However, we are able to add attendees up to 24 hours prior to the conference.

Please contact the Hotel directly for their cancellation policy.

#### What if I want to attend but am unable to afford the conference?

Please contact our Executive Director, Michelle Getchell at 1-888-205-8962 or contact@twinlesstwins.org for assistance.

The Conference Committee, the Board of Directors and the Regional Coordinators are all looking forward to a Super Conference full of companionship, making connections, sharing our stories, an informative interesting keynote address, worthwhile break-out groups and **MOST IMPORTANTLY SEEING EACH OF YOU THERE!** 

#### WITHOUT YOU WE ARE ONE MEMBER SHORT!

# SOUTHWEST REGIONAL MEETING

By Regional Coordinator Eileen Jensen, twin to Elaine

The Southwest Regional meeting was held in Lone Tree, CO on Sept. 15, 2012. We met at the Country Buffet. It was great to have a large group of returnees and new twins. After name tags and meeting everyone, Steve gave a table prayer. Everyone enjoyed the buffet with so many choices and wonderful food. Following our meal, the twins shared with introductions, telling their own twin story. Time is always a limited factor but every twin did have the opportunity to tell their story. It truly is a time of sharing and so beneficial to our healing, also adds that thread of hope we all need. WE ARE NOT ALONE IN OUR GRIEF.

Steve surprised everyone with a gift of a bookmark that he made. It has both twin names with the cultural origin, inherent meaning and spiritual connotation of those names. A very unique gift and greatly appreciated by all. Steve also went above and beyond as he presented me with a "Certificate of Appreciation". What an absolutely wonderful surprise. Thank you, Steve.

The CO twins welcomed Matt Vierling who came to our meeting. He is attending the Seminary in Denver and we were glad to have him with us.

We closed with the reading of a poem and then took the picture below. Those attending and pictured from left to right are: Tim Lavis, Scott Passo, Steve Koeppen, David Cox, Lynn Rolaf, and Joe Basehart. Second row: Phyllis Ashliman, Gale Erlewine, Mugsy Pearson, Eileen Jensen (with Certificate), Elizabeth Hoyt, and Pat Pointon. Third row: Darla Ridnour, Lia Woodall and Matt Vierling. The spouses and support people who attended but are not pictured were Nile, Tim, Linda, Mark and Scott's daughter and granddaughter.



# **COLUMBUS CONFERENCE**

by Kevin Mullen, twin to Brian

n July 11, 2012, I flew to Columbus, Ohio to attend my 13th TTSGI Conference. Kevin Johnson, twin to Kelvin picked me up at the airport. We went to grab a quick lunch and then back to the airport to pick up Sandra Brown, twin to Sammy. Then we all went to Kevin's mom's house for a while before we went to the hotel.

The first person who greeted me with a big hug was Janet Baird, twin to Margaret from England. We all gathered in the atrium of the hotel, catching up on the past year before several of us went to Tucci's wood fired bistro for dinner.

There were 26 new twins attending this year's conference. I met a few of them, like Marc Reichel, twin to Tim and Scott Andrews, twin to Allan. It was great seeing old friends - Mary R. Morgan, Dena Stitt, Michelle Getchell, Matt Vierling, Becky Sehenuk, Margaret Daffin, Kevin Johnson and so many others. I missed seeing Sean Joyce, twin to Tom, Jon Hilber,

twin to Justin, Ken Spoor, twin to Kevin and Jason Brewster, twin to Adam.

Thursday was spent greeting more arrivals. Friday started with the breakout groups and later that night I was lucky to go out to dinner with my aunt, uncle and cousins who live in the area.

Saturday morning I spent practicing my presentation speech. In the afternoon we did the memory walk and the balloon release. Mary R. Morgan also signed my copy of "Beginning with the End". The dinner was great and Mrs. Brandt was in attendance. I sat with Kevin Johnson, his mom, Jessica, twin to Jennifer and her friend. Soon it was time for the Angel Award presentations and with that the honor of handing out the first of two that night to my best friend Matt Vierling, twin to Mark.

Sunday morning, I was saying goodbyes to everyone. Kevin brought Sandra, Matt and me back to the airport, and there we saw Margaret and Paul Daffin and we had lunch with them before going our own ways. I can't wait to see everyone in Los Angeles next year.

# "MY TWIN SISTER"

### By Geri Brooks, twin to Sheri Johnson

y twin sister's ashes are sitting there waiting for me to join her. You see she asked that when I die our ashes be joined and tossed off the Navajo bridge in Arizona. Her choice of where she wanted us to go together is because of a trip we once took. It was her favorite trip we took together. I took her on an 8-day raft trip down the Colorado for our 50th birthday. When I told her I had signed us up and there was no return on the deposits, she was going. She thought I had lost my mind. As it turned out for both of us, we never felt so close to God and to each other.

Sometimes I feel her holding me and sometimes it's me holding her. I wish they had sonograms in 1942 when Mom was pregnant with us. A picture of us in the womb would be so wonderful. Mom didn't even know she was having twins until after Sheri was out and the doctor said," Oh, there is another one".

There's this connection we had that I cannot explain. You hear about people feeling their missing limb, the so called phantom limb. Missing her is similar. She's not really there but it feels like she is right there with me at times. I can feel her, I just can't touch her. I found myself in a summer rainstorm last week. Wearing leather flip flops I took them off to get to the car. Walking through a warm pool of water triggered a memory that as children we would play in the puddles and so at 70 years old I am jumping and splashing and Sheri was right there jumping with me.

I still cry a lot and I don't mind that I cry, I just mind the reason why. 🎔

# NOTES AND NOTABLES ...

# **TWIN GRANDBABIES**

These are my new granddaughters, born August 10th, in Kalispell, Montana. Our daughter and son-in-law, Holly and Todd Hannan, are the proud parents of Ingrid and Noni, identical twin girls.

Having lost Brien, my twin, 6 years ago, I truly feel he gave me these beautiful girls as a gift. "I cannot be there with you again, Barb, but I can give you a set of twins to remind you of our lives spent together." I hear his voice. Thank you for including this in your newsletter.

Barb Terry, twin to Brien

(In both pictures, Ingrid is on the left, Noni is on the right, in the lower picture, Ingrid and Noni with big sister Cora.)



# **AN OLYMPIC EXPERIENCE**

by Janet Baird, twin to Margaret

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his summer I had the amazing experience of being a Gamesmaker at the Paralympics in London. For those not familiar with the word, the Gamesmaker were the volunteers dressed in red and purple uniforms, who helped at the Olympics and Paralympics. 250,000 people applied and 70, 000 were offered jobs. My job was in transport, in the Athletes' Village, which was a huge complex with its own dining hall, medical centre, shops and plaza. I was working with the athletes in the transport mall - we helped load them - and their bikes, wheelchairs, etc- on to a fleet of buses which took them to all the venues. I met most of the big names, although in our role we didn't ask for autographs or pictures. I had to work long 8 hour shifts, some starting at 6am - which meant a 4.15am start from the house where I was staying with friends. We had some wonderful moments, like loading team GB for the opening ceremony and going by bus for an hour across London to watch the Marathon- right at the finish on the Mall near Buckingham Palace.

As I walked round the Athletes' Village, on the superb Olympic site, I often felt a stab of regret that my twin Margaret wasn't walking next to me, wearing her red and purple uniform, complete with cap. She would have loved every minute, including eating in the vast workforce dining room alongside all the other volunteers and jumping on the buses.... but actually I felt she WAS there, enjoying it with me, being part of the incredible experience that made 2012 so special.

Yesterday I went to Trafalgar Square to cheer on 21 floats of athletes from the Olympics.. all the big names were there and the crowds were unbelievable. It was a fantastic end to a wonderful summer and I felt so proud to be part of it.

I will never forget being a Gamesmaker .. but who knows, they might want us in Rio in 2016? 🎔



### Hi Everyone,

Just to keep you updated on the TTSGI Facebook site, we now have over 400 plus members. When I took over as moderator in April of this year we had around 230 members, so as you can see we have grown by leaps and bounds since then. It amazes me daily seeing how many with different type losses in various areas of the country are "finding us" and getting help from this site. Some even came to the conference this year as a result of the site. I can't tell you how many come on who are fresh in their loss (anywhere from 1 day to 1 month), and elaborate how thankful that they have found TTSGI and the help we on the site have given them.

If you have not already joined, please go to our website: <u>www.twinlesstwins.org</u> and at the bottom of the home page, under Contact Us, click on "Our Facebook Page."

Twin hugs,

Dawn, twin to Daryl 🎔

Our Facebook Page:



https://www.facebook.com/groups/8156469513/ (You must have a Facebook account and login to it in order to view our page.)

**NEW TWINLINKS COORDINATOR** 



Lea Eriksen

winLinks, our internet announcement bulletin, has a new coordinator/ editor. Her name is Lea Eriksen, twin to Eve, and she graciously and competently has stepped in to look after this important communication tool.

Lea has been a member of TTSGI and has attended all of our national conferences since losing her twin in 2003. She has already sent a couple of "blasts" and is very conscientious. Thank you Lea.

Some may have noticed in the most recent "blast", that the appearance has been changed. Thanks to Becky Sehenuk for working to make this happen and harmonize the TwinLinks appearance to our website.

Ray Boyle, President 🎔



# **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"



Iwin

### 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. **SPECIAL OFFER! (SEE PAGE 11)** 

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 LODE Understanding Twin Bereavement and Loss Bewee Batters

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 (<u>http://www.isbs.com/partnumber.asp?</u> 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 P.O. Box 980481 Ypsilanti, MI 48198 1-888-205-8962 contact@twinlesstwins.org

#### **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: <u>boyler@firstline.com</u>. 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



**Polar Bear Twins** 

Twinless Twins Support Group, International

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Raymond Boyle - President (2013)

Dena Stitt – Vice President (2015)

Ruth Selig – Secretary (2014)

David Jones - Treasurer (2013)

Sandra Brown – Director (2015)

Margaret Daffin – Director (2014)

Kevin Johnson – Director (2014)

Carolyn Shane - Director (2015)

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Michelle Getchell



# 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.  $\heartsuit$ 

# **REGIONAL COORDINATORS CONTACT INFORMATION — 2012**

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