

TWINLESS TIMES

FALL 2019

HELPING TWINS WHO
HAVE LOST THEIR TWIN



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Twins,

I am excited to be the new TTSGI President. Before I introduce myself, I wanted to thank Ray Boyle for serving as President for the past eight years. Under Ray's leadership, TTSGI, as an organization, is more transparent, is financially and legally stable, and is using modern financial and database systems. Ray's dedication to TTSGI includes saving the organization thousands of dollars each year by using his CPA talents to keep track of the bookkeeping and other paperwork. Thank you Ray (and yes you should keep your 50/50 winnings to replace that computer you use to do the books). Another thank you goes to the Conference Planning Committee for another great conference. The committee did a fantastic job which was not dampened by the rain. Dr. Eileen Pearlman was a wonderful keynote speaker. We had engaging breakout sessions and, despite the weather, we had a short but effective memorial walk and balloon ceremony; and enjoyable closing dinner with awards and a lively auction.

Many of you know me from my attendance at every conference since San Francisco in 2005 or during my four years as co-editor of this newsletter, but I would like to introduce myself and also share my initial priorities as your new President. To begin, my identical twin, Eve, died in 2003 at the age of 27 after a seven-week illness with a rare bone cancer. After she died, it occurred to me that I couldn't be the only twin in the whole wide world who had lost a twin. So, I did an internet search and found TTSGI ("You Are Not Alone"). That first year I was so grief stricken and numb that I even questioned my twin status. At my first conference, I learned that I was still a twin ("Once a Twin, Always a Twin"). That was when I made a commitment to myself and my twinship to always make it a priority to go to the TTSGI conference each year no matter what was happening in my life. In those early years, I found myself going from surviving day-to-day, to living, to actually thriving in life again ("Journey to Healing"). I then got to a place in my journey where I could begin to give back ("Healing by Helping"). Eve asked me to live life for both of us and I think she would be proud.

Professionally, I am the Director of Technology & Innovation for the City of Long Beach, California and have over 20 years of professional local government experience in budgeting, finance, technology and project management, as well as 12 years of experience serving on nonprofit boards and committees. In 2013, I joined the TTSGI board and served as chair of the Finance/Audit Committee, the *Twinless Times* Co-Editor, and later as Vice President. As Vice President, I led the board's Strategic Planning Process and adopted a formal conflict of interest policy. My first priority as President is to recruit and retain talented board members. Newly implemented term limits provide an opportunity for succession planning and new perspectives, while always staying true to the guiding principles of TTSGI. We have three new board members and I am excited to work with each one of them. They will each be introduced in this newsletter. My second priority as President is to update and continue to implement the TTSGI Strategic Plan with its three strategic goals: 1) increase TTSGI impact through core programs, 2) develop efficient and effective TTSGI organizational structure and processes, and 3) strengthen the financial health of TTSGI. I am using an inclusive process to update the Strategic Plan which included conducting a 10-year visioning session with all members attending the Huntsville annual conference. The results of the visioning exercise will be presented in a future edition of the *Twinless Times* and will guide the work of the board for years to come. If you were not able to attend the conference and would like to participate, please find the visioning questionnaire in this newsletter and return through email at lea.eriksenIII@gmail.com.

Together, we can make sure TTSGI continues to provide a safe and compassionate community for twinless twins to experience healing and understanding.

Lea Erikson, President



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THE EMPTY CHAIR

by Sandy Goad, twin to Jim

LISTENING

"Information Please" is a true story about someone named Paul Villard. I shared this story at our national conference this summer:

"When quite young, Paul's father had one of the first telephones in their Seattle neighborhood. Paul was too little to reach the telephone, but used to listen with fascination when his mother talked to it. Then Paul discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person – her name was "Information Please" and there was nothing she didn't know.

Paul's first personal experience with this "genie-in-the-bottle" came one day while his mother was visiting a neighbor. Amusing himself at the tool bench in the basement, Paul hit his finger with a hammer. As he walked around the house sucking his throbbing finger, he arrived at the stairway. That's when he saw the telephone! Quickly, Paul ran for the foot stool in the parlor and dragged it to the landing. Climbing up, he unhooked the receiver in the parlor and held it to his ear. "Information Please," he said into the mouthpiece just above his head.

A click or two and a small clear voice spoke into Paul's ear. "Information" "I hurt my finger," Paul said. "Isn't your mother home?" came the question. "Nobody's home but me" Paul answered. "Are you bleeding?" the voice asked. "No," he replied. "I hit my finger with the hammer and it hurts." "Can you open your icebox?" she asked. He said he could. "Then chip off a little piece of ice and hold it to your finger," said the voice. You'll be alright." After that, Paul called "Information Please" for everything. He asked her for help with his geography and she helped him with his math and spelling.

When Paul was nine years old, his family moved across the country from Seattle to Boston. Paul missed "Information Please". It belonged in that old wooden box back home and he somehow never thought of trying the tall, shiny new phone that sat on the table in the hall. As he grew into his teens, he appreciated now how patient, understanding, and kind she was to have spent her time on a little boy. She listened!

A few years later, on his way west to college, Paul's plane landed in Seattle. He had about half an hour between planes. Without thinking what he was doing, Paul dialed the hometown operator and said, "Information Please." Miraculously, he heard the small, clear voice he knew so well from his childhood. He hadn't planned this but he heard himself saying, "Could you please tell me how to spell "FIX"? There was a long pause. Then came the soft-spoken answer, "I guess your finger must have healed by now." Paul laughed. "So, it's really still you," he said. "I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during my childhood." "I wondered" she replied "if you knew how much you meant to me?"

What does this story mean for us? It tells us the importance of taking the time to listen to each other. In order to have your story heard, you need to have a listener. By listening carefully when someone speaks, we're telling them that we care about what they are saying.

I have heard it said that listening is contagious. When we listen to others, then chances are they will be more inclined to listen to us. At our national conferences and regional meetings, twinless twins can find other twinless twins who will actively listen to their story in a safe environment without making judgments. Through listening, they are "healing by helping" each other.

TTSGI GUIDING PRINCIPLES: ONCE A TWIN, ALWAYS A TWIN

TTSGI has four guiding principles:

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

The Fall Edition will focus on the first one:

ONCE A TWIN, ALWAYS A TWIN –The twin or multiple birth experience, whether it is experienced exclusively in utero or continued for any period of time following birth, is a profoundly important human experience, differing in major respects from all other forms of human interaction. Twin loss can be experienced in deep and unique ways. This special “twinship” experience of loss is recognized, valued, and honored by TTSGI.

The next article is an example of the guiding principle, Once a Twin, Always a Twin.

ONCE A TWIN, ALWAYS A TWIN

By Margaret Gron, twin to Edith

Two years ago, I joined the TTSGI Facebook group. At first it was difficult to read countless thoughts and messages from twins. It was so difficult that I considered removing myself from the group. I ultimately stuck with it and I'm glad I did. After a year there was a name I came to recognize as a twin so committed, reliable and always present... Dawn Barnett. What stood out about Dawn was her sensitive and supportive feedback to twins; always offering her hand to people if they needed one to hold.

Eventually, I became Regional Coordinator of TTSGI South Central region and when organizing my first twin gathering, guess who answered “Yes” to my invitation... Dawn Barnett. I was shocked to realize this famous twin was not only in my region, but she was also going to attend my first regional gathering. I went on to meet and know Dawn, twin to Daryl, and appreciate the amazing twin journey she created for herself.

Dawn has done so much for TTSGI and is known by so many in the organization. Truly... everyone knows Dawn! She was once Regional Coordinator of TTSGI South Central region, held a board position for TTSGI, served on the Conference Committee, and for years supported the raffle and auction sales at the conferences. She was also the book reviewer for the *Twinless Times* newsletter and has personally



donated annual memberships to many twins in need. Most notably, for the past 12 years, Dawn has been the TTSGI Facebook Page Administrator. In Dawn's own words:

“It has been a long ride of 18 years with TTSGI; 12 on TTSGI Facebook. I began running the TTSGI Facebook when the membership was around 200. The job has been hard requiring 3 hours a day and 7 days a week. Reading all the posts takes time management and the ability to empathize with newly grieving no matter age, how and when they lost their twin. Keeping the page active has always been my ultimate goal and keeping it a safe place for all 4,000 members. I found

over the years 500+ inspirational stories, pictures and articles to post twice a day and prayed I would post something a twin needed at that time. I also gave wisdom from my 70+ years of twin loss and from talking to hundreds of twinless.”

So, Dawn, as you head into retirement, know that I am grateful for your tireless commitment and for sharing your famous twin journey with me. Your life is filled with love for Daryl and for the countless beautiful twins whose hands you held over the years. On behalf of the Twinless Twins Support Group International, we love and thank you for all your contributions and for graciously being a positive example of the guiding principle *Once a Twin, Always a Twin*.



KEVIN'S CORNER

By Kevin Mullen, twin to Brian - Twinless Times Correspondent

MY TWINS DAYS FESTIVAL EXPERIENCE

On July 31 my mom and I started the long trek to Twinsburg, Ohio to attend the 44th annual Twins Days Festival. The theme this year was "Home for the Holidays" and there were many great outfits for the theme, such as Uncle Sam (worn by Steve and Jeff Nagel), Statue of Liberty (worn by Amber and Ashley Ganoë) and Elf on the Shelf (worn by Caleb and Matt Paddock). This year, twins Dave and Don Wolf were honored as Kings of the festival, and twins, Katherine and Carolyn Fertig were honored as Queens of the festival. This year, Twins Days Festival was a success with over 2,400 sets of twins (and multiples) registered.

New this year to Twins Days Festival was a Twinless Twin Remembrance Lantern Launch. It was a beautiful evening ceremony with 22 twinless twins in attendance. Those representing their twins and TTSGI were Russell Scott (with brother Stanley), Tasha Cram (with husband Joe), Margaret Gron (with children), Ed Wasko, Richie Boudreau, Beatriz Herrera, Amy Neff, Heather Love, Jason Blyler, and Ben Woodward.

Last year, twins Brittany and Briana Deane married twins Josh and Jeremy Salyers at Twins Days Festival and it was exciting for the two couples to celebrate their wedding anniversary with all their twin friends. At the end of the festival, twinless twin Ed Wasko, twin to JJ, hosted his annual bowling event for all the twins at Roseland Bowling Lanes. The bowling event is always a good time when the Twin A competes against Twin B groups, I was fortunate to be Ed's bowling partner again this year and we had fun celebrating when we placed 3rd in the men's division.

Twins Days Festival is held annually on the first full weekend of August in Twinsburg, Ohio. It's a great way to honor your twinship.



MISSION:

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

IN RECOGNITION OF OUR CONTRIBUTORS SINCE SPRING 2019

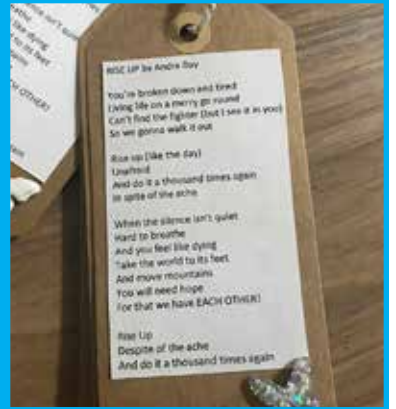
- Phyllis Ashliman** – monthly pledge in memory of her twin, Phil
- Dawn Barnett** – donations for TTSGI store, conference attendance for twins and recognition of FB twins who raised money for the Memorial Walk
- Melissa Bergman Geonie**
Nancy Bergman
- Susan Bertoline** – in memory of Steven Bergman
- Meggy & Brandon Biss** – donation for twin's conference registration fee
- Jennifer Clark** – in the name of Sherry Lane Thomas
- Margaret Daffin** – quarterly pledge and donations in memory of her twin, Josie
- Paul & Margaret Daffin** – in memory of our dear friend and supporter of TTSGI, Lester Smith
- Elliot Davidoff**
- Laurie B. Everitt Trust** – donation for a twin to attend the conference
- ExxonMobil Foundation** – for volunteer hours and matching grants by
Margaret Daffin in memory of her twin, Josie Wilson
- First Giving** – GoFund Me
- Craig Friedman** – donation for a twin to attend the conference
- Goodsearch** – website search engine
- Lainie Gorelik**
Rachel Hazan
- IGive.com** – money earned from online searches
- Pieter Kreuk**
Laura Meier
Stacy Melendez
- Network for Good** – anonymous donors through Facebook
- Nordstrom** – matching grant by Venice Lacy, in memory of her twin, Toni
- Balvinder Singh Powar**
- Alexandra & Ananda Robie** – monthly pledge for Scholarship fund
- Ruth Osterweis Selig** – gift of stock in memory of Rollyn Osterweis Krichbaum
- Carolyn Shane** – in memory of Steve Bergman – a good man, honest, caring, soft-spoken, supportive – a real down to earth gentle soul!
- Brandy Shearer** – happy birthday to you both
- Beverley Smyk** – donation for a twin to attend the conference
- Barbara Terry** – scholarship donation, in memory of Brian Swank
- TIS Best Philanthropy** – donor is anonymous – this is a charity that accepts gift cards and donor directed the funds to TTSGI
- Clare Van Dam** – I am donating on behalf of Julie Belgue and her lost twin, Martha
- Herbert Wang**
Peter Wang
- Rochelle Webb** – happy birthday Sherry Thomas! This donation is donated to you (and Kyle), your amazing spirit and the beautiful woman you have always been to me!
- Jeffrey Willig**

We apologize if we have missed your name in this listing. Please let us know and we will recognize you in our Spring 2020 newsletter. Contact Margaret Daffin at medaffin@aol.com



Huntsville Alabama 2019 TTSGI CONFERENCE





MY TTSGI CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE

By Janet, twin to Margaret

I flew into Huntsville from Dallas this year as I stayed in Arizona for a week first. The first bit of magic was I met a twin in the Dallas airport! We flew into Huntsville airport on a tiny American Eagle airplane and Wilmette kindly picked us up and drove us to the hotel. Several of us went out to eat at one of the restaurants in the village surrounding the hotel. The hotel is part of a campus just off a main highway in Huntsville with shops, restaurants and also an old fashion fairground carousel!

First day of the conference was taken up with a day meeting for regional coordinators and the Board. We went for drinks afterwards and met lots of old friends. The new twins had their own reception first while we registered for the conference and got our Twinless Twins T-shirts. Ray Boyle welcomed everyone and told us about this year's conference.

Friday was the start of the real conference program. Sandy Goad ran her Inspirations session at 8am with music and readings. The sessions started in the main room with the opening addressed by Michelle Getchell. We then heard the keynote speaker's presentation. Dr Eileen Pearlman is a twin herself and is married to a twin. She talked about early attachment and the different bonds twins have. After a break, I went to Dr. Pearlman's follow up session where she showed a video of how twins interact in utero. Following lunch, I went to a panel session where four twins answered our questions.

It was such a good idea to use the maturity and wisdom of twins with longer losses. Then I joined the self-introduction session. This is where twins tell their own story and it's very valuable and moving. I was not going to tell my story but changed my mind at the last moment! Later, a group of us went to the Chinese restaurant in the hotel village and then walked back



to the hotel and met other groups of twins shopping and having ice cream. The candle lighting ceremony was at 10pm, but sadly it had to be indoors because of the rain and lightning. It was still very moving as we held up our candles while inspirational music was playing.

After an early breakfast on Saturday, I went to Inspirations which, as always, is an uplifting start to the day. The business meeting followed which was all about the statistics and finance for Twinless Twins. Lea Eriksen is our new president and we said goodbye to the outgoing President Ray Boyle and thanked him for his wonderful service. We also found out that the 2020 conference will be in Denver. My next session was called Time Has Passed. It was a really valuable session as those of us who have longer loss can pass on our survival strategies to the newer twins. Straight after lunch we had the last session by Dr Pearlman as she summarized her points and asked for questions. Her information on very early twin attachment in the womb caused lots of discussion and interest during the conference. The memorial walk in the park was cancelled as storms were forecast so, instead, we did a quick circuit round the complex with the twin banner. We had the balloon ceremony inside as we couldn't release them outside.

The Banquet started at 6:30pm and it was a really excellent buffet with a choice of hot main meals and a selection of desserts. The awards were given out and Eileen Jensen won the Dr. Brandt Award, and Dena Stitt was also given a gift as she is standing down from the Board after her long service to Twinless Twins. The live auction ended and we said our goodbyes as some twins were leaving early the next morning. For me, Huntsville was definitely the best twin conference ever, since I started attending in 2010.

DR. BRANDT MEMORIAL AWARD 2019

By Sandy Goad, twin to Jim

Established in 2001, the Dr. Brandt Memorial Award is presented by the TTSGI Board of Directors to an individual whose contribution and dedication to helping twinless twins parallels that of the late Dr. Raymond Brandt, the founder of TTSGI. This award was established to honor the memory of Dr. Brandt but also point to the future. We all strive to carry on this great man's work and life-long passion, so it is fitting that recognition for exemplary efforts carry his name.

I first met Dr. Brandt in 1999. In 2004, I was asked to speak at a memorial service for him at Arlington Cemetery where he is buried.

These are some of the words I said that day: "Our world values possessions and money and prestige. But when it comes right down to it, those things really matter very little. Knowing Dr. Brandt has taught me this: that the sweetest most precious thing in all the world is the love we show to one another. Dr. Brandt was never so absorbed in his own life that he couldn't hear the cry of others around him. He proved his love for us by investing his time in us." Dr. Brandt knew how to show his love to others and so does our recipient tonight.

I have had the privilege and honor of knowing and working with this year's recipient for over 15 years and she has become a life-long twin friend. She is selfless, compassionate, kind and generous. She makes herself available not only to all of us, but to her family and friends.



Emery Nester, in his writing called "Together" said, "A man was walking in a wilderness. He became lost and was unable to find his way. Another man met him. "Sir, I am lost, can you show me the way out of the wilderness?" "No," said the stranger, "I cannot show you the way out of the wilderness, but maybe if I walk with you, we can find it together."

Our Dr. Brandt award recipient tonight goes to someone who has helped many twinless twins "find their way out of the wilderness". For many years, she served as a Regional Coordinator in the Southwest region and after

stepping down from that position, she has continued to hold meetings in the Denver area in the spring and the fall, driving 4 hours to get to them (not always so easy in the mountains!). And when I couldn't get to a national conference, she has always stepped in for me to lead the Morning Inspirations.

She may have been the first twinless twin you met when you arrived at the conference. You will often see her at the door of the hotel ready to welcome each of you with a calming and reassuring presence.

It is an honor for me to be asked to present the Dr. Brandt award this year to Eileen Jensen, twin to Elaine.

SAVE THE DATE: 2020 CONFERENCE!

The Twinless Twins 2020 Conference will be held July 9-12, 2020 in Denver, Colorado.

Please note that a special early bird rate will expire by February 29, 2020 so watch for registration details and more information to follow on January 2nd.

From a Twinless Twin who attended the Conference: "It was a wonderful feeling to be surrounded with so many twins who truly understand my loss, my emptiness, my pain, and every single feeling that I have. I truly felt like a twin again. Though my twin is gone, I felt connected as a twin to all of them."



2019 MEMORY WALK, HUNTSVILLE, AL

By Margaret Daffin, twin to Josie
Host of the 2019 Memory Walk



The 11th TTSGI Memory Walk (somewhat shortened by the rain) was held close to the hotel on Saturday afternoon, July 13th. Some of the twins carried the Memory Walk banner, which had been signed by all twinless twins, in memory of their twins.

Each year, the Memory Walk is held as a fundraiser for TTSGI and this year we successfully raised approximately \$7,000. A number of twins raised donations from family and friends:

Kevin Mullen – 2 donors helped him raise \$150

Venice Lacy – 3 donors helped her raise \$400

Kelly Bailey – 9 donors helped her raise \$300

Margaret Daffin – 27 donors helped her raise \$2,500

Julie Belgue – Facebook fundraisers

Becca Scher – Facebook fundraisers

Leslie Cutler – Facebook fundraisers

Additional donors who made contributions during the conference – \$3,670

A special thank you to Linda Burke who, every year, sends out the TTSGI tax receipt letters to our donors. Thank you to all twins and support guests who walked and/or supported this wonderful event. See you next year in Denver, Colorado.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL GATHERING – SEPTEMBER 28, 2019 IN DENVER, COLORADO
NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL GATHERING – OCTOBER 5, 2019 IN NATICK, MASSACHUSETTS
SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL GATHERING – OCTOBER 26, 2019 IN HOUSTON, TEXAS
MID ATLANTIC REGIONAL GATHERING – OCTOBER 26, 2019 IN FREDERICK, MARYLAND
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL GATHERING – NOVEMBER 2, 2019 IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA
CANADA REGIONAL GATHERING – NOVEMBER 2, 2019 IN TORONTO
NORTHEAST REGIONAL GATHERING – CHECK WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION
NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL GATHERING – CHECK WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION
MIDWEST REGIONAL GATHERING – CHECK WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION

UPCOMING REGIONAL GATHERINGS ARE LISTED ON OUR WEBSITE AT [HTTP://WWW.TWINLESSTWINS.ORG/EVENTS/](http://www.twinlesstwins.org/events/)

PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE REGULARLY AS EVENTS ARE HELD THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

2019 MEMORY WALK DONATIONS

Phyllis Ashliman, in memory of her twin, Phil
Julie Belue, in memory of her twin, Martha (Facebook fundraiser)
Leslie Cutler, in memory of her twin, Matthew H. Pennypacker (Facebook fundraiser)
Miriam Doetsch, in memory of Dr. Raymond Brandt
Robin Epstein, in honor of Tony Lacy
Lea Eriksen, in memory of her twin, Eve Eriksen Richards
ExxonMobil Foundation – matching grant from Margaret & Paul Daffin
Sandy & Paul Goad, in memory of her twin, Jim
Jacquie Goldman, in memory of her twin, Fredda Gottwals
Ami Hoyt & Family, in memory of her twin, Angela
Venice Lacy, in memory of her twin, Toni Lacy
Jane Malcolm, in memory of her twin sister, Joan
Laurie Meier, in memory of her twin, Linda
Kevin & Susan Mullen, in memory of his twin, Brian Mullen
Leane Platt, in honor of Becca Scher
Sandra Price, in memory of her twin, Tanya Ingraham
John Roberts Motor Works Company – in honor of Eileen Jensen
Becca Scher, in memory of her twin, Ian Alexander Scher (Facebook fundraiser)
Barbara Terry, in memory of her twin, Brian Swank
Alice Ward, in memory of her twin, Anita

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

Paul & Margaret Daffin
Jane Borst
Jane & Tim Anderson
Adriana Boretti & Pedro Jaldin
Eleanor Jicha
Elizabeth Woelfel
Maria & Kenny Jamail
Diana Crossley
Phuong Vuong
Terhi & Dale Chambliss
Meggy & Brandon Biss
Sue Smith
Betty Yianitsas
Elizabeth & Joe Ivers
Susan & Martin Nusynowitz
Robert Ducharme
Dr. Robert Porter & Joy Shiller
Joanne & Steve Downes
Marion & Gary Geer
Elida & Fouad El-Gawly
Marion & Dick Dare
Jane Kendrigan
Carol Coats
Michelle Berg
Josie Ochoa
Howard Molofsky
Swim Babies Swim (Tracey Smith)

The following donors gave in honor of Kelly Bailey, in memory of her twin Kim Bailey

Beverly Dixon
Kim Russo
Jackie Welch
Jane Larson
Stacy Arnone
Melissa Hoffelmeyer
Cherie Westover
Ray Madsen
Dan Dixon

The following donors from the Northeast (NY/NJ) Region gave in memory of their twins

Ann Albano
Fred Donegan
Laurie Everitt
Hannah Kalyoussef
Eleanor Maddy
Sheri Parham
Carolyn Shane

I apologize if your name is not shown and you gave a donation for the Memory Walk – contact Margaret Daffin, medaffin@aol.com

PARTICIPANTS FOR THE AUCTION/RAFFLE

By Terry Lewis-Foor, twin to SherrY

The Board of Directors would like to thank all of our members for donating auction and raffle items at the conference and for those of you who were present to bid on the live auction and purchase tickets for the raffle items. I think you all will agree that the Saturday evening live auction is not to be missed and is always such a wonderful way to end the conference. As this is our largest fundraiser of the year, we need your support and we certainly had an abundance of it this year. THANK YOU!

We would also like to thank the following people who took time away from the conference to help us out in the raffle, silent auction and live auction. Because of their tireless efforts it made 2019 another successful year for fundraising and we couldn't have done it without them - a BIG SHOUT OUT to: Sandra Brown, Barbara Terry, Terry Foor, Venice Lacy, Margaret Daffin, Dena Stitt, Phyllis Ashliman, Causha Withey, Becky Waite, Dave Jones and Lea Eriksen.

2019 TTSGI CONFERENCE, HUNTSVILLE, AL RAFFLE & AUCTION DONORS

Larry Adams

Joan Angelis

Phyllis Ashliman

Dawn Barnett

Julie Belgue

Joyce Blade

Ray Boyle

Rose Cahill

Adam Coddington

Kimberly Crews

Leslie Cutler

Margaret Daffin

Becky Durham

Lea Eriksen

Kurt Floor

Joan Garcia

Jacquie Goldman

Alejandrina Guajardo

Tamson Hall-Benson

Both Harrison

Trudy Hylant

Eileen Jensen

Fred Jensen

David Jones

Jan Konya-Grabill

Terry Lewis-Floor

Katy Kay Liest

Mike Lueth

Jane Malcolm

Laurie Meier

Diana Morgan

Bob Osterholt

Alyssa Pratt

Marc T. Reichel

Russell Scott

Carolyn Shane

Kim Sprott

Tina Takach

Anita Tablott

Barbara Terry

Sunday Thomas

Abby Vierling

Matthew Vierling

Alice Ward

Dr. Camille Wissmann

Jacob Yurich

Thank you to all who participated in the raffle and silent/live auctions at the 2019 Huntsville Twinless Twins Conference. Your generosity and willingness to give is so appreciated. To everyone who bought 50/50 raffle tickets, thank you. If your name is not listed above, we apologize and thank you.

GATHERINGS & UPDATES

NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL GATHERING

By Joan Angelis, twin to Jean

"I'm too nervous to meet other Twinless Twins." "I would be too sad." "It's too scary to talk about my twin." "I'm afraid I'll cry or lose control of my feelings." "Nobody will understand."

These are some of the feelings that twins have when considering attending a regional Twinless Twin meeting. Too often, this ends in a decision not to attend. That's how it started with Jennifer Okell, twin to Rebecca, before a regional meeting in Omaha on June 8, 2019. Twins from Iowa and Nebraska gathered at a meeting in Omaha hosted by Valarie Warner. Jennifer's thoughts:

I had only met one of them before in another meeting. I went into this meeting the same way as I did the last one, with lots of anxiety and really not knowing what to expect. But what I found was some surprising and lasting support and I listened as well as talked at the meeting, and the others did the same for me. I find comfort in knowing that there are others out there just like me with the same issue (or something completely different). I am obviously referring to how each of us has lost our other half, and somehow, someway, we have all found each other. Once again reaffirming the cornerstone phrase of our organization "ONCE A TWIN, ALWAYS A TWIN."

Jennifer's words, to me, say more than anything, "YOU ARE NOT ALONE."



Iowa, Nebraska
L to R: Jennifer Okell, Linda Harding, Cheryl Thorberg, Jennie Henry, and Geri Terway
Photographer: Valarie Warner (host)



Minneapolis, Minnesota
Standing L to R: Kevin Cramblit, Maryellen Richter, Ariella Scullion, Peter Anderson, Sandy Meyer
Sitting L to R: Joan Angelis, Katherine Krantz, Eric Jacobson

LONE TWIN NETWORK SOCIAL AT HETTIE'S CAFÉ

United Kingdom affiliate Janet Baird, twin to Margaret

Eight of us arrived in Skipton by rail or road on the hottest day of the year so far. Our annual tea party at Hettie's cafe was scheduled from 1pm to 3pm on Saturday June 29th. I arrived early, but our long table was all ready for us upstairs by the window. There was a lovely green checked cloth and a vase with two real pink peonies in it and a small blackboard saying 'Reserved for Janet.' It was a great start! The owner David Roberts came up to see me and it wasn't long before the others trickled in. Everyone was hot from their journeys so we welcomed the bottles of iced water provided for us.

By 1pm we were all there - but there were two notable absences. Jill Deeley always came to Hettie's and loved it. She'd have a first course then progress to cake - accompanied by a glass of Prosecco! Ann Worthington was sadly not with us either. A year ago, we heard the sad news that she had passed away. But Sandra ordered a large bottle of Prosecco for those who wanted it and it arrived in a bucket of ice. We all drank a toast to Jill and Ann and it really felt they were there with us. Menus were consulted and orders placed. Our excellent waitress handled our complicated orders and soon platefuls of Welsh rarebit, bacon baps, omelets and jacket potatoes were being handed round the table. The conversation buzzed as we ate and there was such a good atmosphere.

I love Hettie's as it proves lone twins can have fun and we don't have to be miserable! Some of us moved on to desserts, with ice cream, raspberry pavlova and the best of all, a Knickerbocker Glory! The tea and Prosecco flowed until it was almost 3pm. The staff coped with our individual bills and we said our goodbyes as family arrived in the cafe below.

As I headed for the station I felt as if it had been the best Hettie's ever, apart from Jill and Ann not being there. But actually, I think they were right there with us.



TEN YEAR VISIONING EXPERIENCE

MISSION:

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

VISION:

TTSGI is the leading resource for compassion, information, communication, support, and personal connection for twinless twins and other multiples worldwide.

TEN YEAR VISIONING EXERCISE:

It is 10 years in the future, you are sitting in the annual Conference Business Meeting receiving a report from the Executive Director about TTSGI. What might TTSGI look like in 10 years?

1. How would we be providing compassion, support and personal connection?
2. What would our information and communication look like?
3. What would our events look like?
4. What would our membership structure look like?
5. How would we be supporting our organization financially?

GRIEF AND ITS FINISH LINE

By Jacob, twin to Zach

There is a quote I absolutely love and think it captures the grief journey quite well. *“Real tears are not those that fall from the eyes and cover the face, but those that fall from the heart and cover the soul.”* The feelings I experience with these tears come quite often in my journey as a Twinless Twin. I can sense when this feeling is brewing within me. I think we all can. Your heart starts to close off and become heavy. You put on a brave face rationally knowing that this will pass but, in that moment, you feel that you will feel this way forever. You try everything you can to combat it. Distracting yourself as best as you can through a multitude of options, anything to get your mind off what you are currently feeling for a few fleeting seconds.

However, I believe at certain moments, the only release for this is to fully feel all the emotions that have been our constant companions since our twin died. I once saw a YouTube video titled ‘The Adventure of Grief’ and in it, a very poignant speaker said “you need to let the abyss swallow you.” This is easier said than done but I truly believe that it is 100% accurate. The difficulty with this is that we are so afraid of that moment of letting everything go – of jumping into the darkness of grief without a parachute. When this happens, we lose everything we have learned, practiced, and been taught. We lose our sense of direction and become wanderers to this experience. We become distraught and confused. We try to grab ahold of anything we can reach to lead us to normalcy.

But then something inspiring happens. We gain a sense of courage in ourselves. Courage to handle this sorrow filled moment. Courage in ourselves that when the time has come to let the abyss swallow us, we can let it happen. We let ourselves fully feel the heartbreak knowing we heal a fraction more every time we jump and have a little faith.

There is no finish line in grief, at least not the one we picture in our head. The finish line is realizing that within each one of us, we have the courage it takes to face these moments and come out on the other side. Realizing that grief is by far one of the loneliest walks a human being can make but if we choose to accept all the feelings that come with it, if we choose to “let the abyss swallow us” in those times of pain, then we have arrived at the finish line of that grief moment. There will be another moment, and another, and another. But each one has a finish line – to choose to jump into the abyss, to cleanse your soul of the sorrow you feel, to heal slightly more. That, my friends, is the finish line of grief – for that particular moment.

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

By Susan Schneider, twin to Robin

I almost didn't go to the TTSGI Huntsville conference this year. Mom died after a year and a half in home hospice and I was her primary caregiver. Dad had died one year after Robin, my identical twin, and once mom was gone, the full impact of the loss of all three from this Earth impaled me with renewed grief over Robin's passing. Dad and mom were extraordinary, nurturing parents who were engaged in our lives and those of our two younger brothers. My parents were also both elderly and very ill when they died. I believe they departed to a better existence. While I know that Robin also shines in radiance, I still miss her enormously. Besides, I was working to honor my parents in Columbus, serving on the Patient Advisory Boards of both major hospital systems and pursuing other volunteer work. With so many surviving twins contributing so much to the Twinless organization, what could I offer to help other lone twins? Some of my friends suggested spending the weekend with twins whose twins are gone might just renew my pain, so why attend? Then Ray Boyle asked me to try and get some media attention for the conference. Here was something I could do to make a positive contribution in Robin's honor. To shine light on great healing that grows from the gathering of twinless twins.

One of the greatest gifts TTSGI has given me is the honorific signature, "Susan, twin to Robin". I over use it, signing every Twin Horizons Travel document Susan, twin to Robin. For me, it is an acknowledgement that Robin lived and still makes a difference. Now my interactions with others always include a faint echo of Robin. Who could imagine the new gifts so many other twins showered me with in Huntsville?

Eileen, twin to Elaine, has a warm greeting that embraces all of us as we arrive. I sat in the lobby waiting for my room to be ready and witnessed Eileen welcoming newcomers and returnees for hours: Carolyn, wife of Garry, twin to Terry, who has linked my relatives to each other on the Find A Grave website. Future generations will be able to trace our family's heritage thanks to

Carolyn. Joan, twin to Jean, who shared how she celebrates their birthday by posting a photo and wishing Jean a happy joint birthday. Perhaps most of all Janet, twin to Margaret, and Michael, twin to Joseph. When musing to Michael that to call us "soulmates" didn't ring true to me, Michael suggested "how about spirit mates?" Of course! Janet, with her infinite British grace, always offers spot on guidance as I navigate my new realities.

This past winter, via email, Janet lifted me up with her sage observations. When I called my sister-in-law (Elaine) to share what I learned in the break out session led by Carolyn, twin to Cary at the TTSGI conference, we had an unexpected breakthrough. As I tried to describe to her why I continue to mourn Robin, I said "I didn't just lose Robin, I lost the Schneider Twins". Elaine exclaimed "I never thought of it like that". Boy am I glad I went to the conference! I got to honor Robin even more by acquiring the Public Relations media thus alerting local lone twins to the conference. I discovered that the caring community of twinless twins generously share their coping tactics at every conference. See you in Denver!

*Note from Margaret Daffin – thank you Susan for your P.R. media contribution this year in Huntsville – it was terrific and I was so pleased to be a part of it.



RETIRING AND NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Thank you to **Dave Jones, Becky Sehunek Waite** and **Renie Hallford** for their dedication, work efforts and love for TTSGI as board members and Board Emeritus. Our organization would not be where it is today without your guidance. Thank you!



WELCOME JACOB YURICH, TWIN TO ZACH

New! Southwest Regional Coordinator

I lost my twin brother (fraternal) Zachary on February 24, 2001 due to brain cancer. He was first diagnosed in 1997 and went into remission several times before the final stretch. For nearly fifteen years, I was closed off to my twinship due in part to not having the necessary tools to grieve and also being frightened of what this process had in store for myself. During the first part of 2016, I made the decision to open my heart to this process had in store for me and gave myself permission to fully feel what my twin relationship has meant to me. I attended my first Twinless Twins Conference during the summer of 2016 in Detroit, MI. It was here that my eyes were opened to all the love, compassion, courage, and perseverance that this organization provides to people who have lost their twins. Over the last three years, I believe I have made tremendous strides in my ability to process my grief, and I feel that I am in a position now to help others do the same.



WELCOME ALYSSA PRATT, TWIN TO KARYN

New! Board Member

Alyssa lost her twin Karyn in-utero. She currently lives in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and works as a social worker and bereavement coordinator. She attended her first TTSGI conference in 2010 and has attended ever since; missing only once. In 2015, she served as Regional Coordinator briefly and continued to serve as an early loss twin correspondent and facilitator of early loss breakout sessions at our annual TTSGI conferences. Alyssa's mission, as a board member, is to bring insight to the TTSGI board on the growing early loss membership and give back to the TTSGI since she has received so much from the organization.



WELCOME WILMETTE COMBS, TWIN TO WILMA

New! Board Member

Wilmette lost her twin Wilma in 2013 due to breast cancer. She only survived 11 days from diagnosis. She currently lives in Pelham, Alabama and works as a supervisor in remodeling/resetting department of a chain of grocery stores. She attended her first TTSGI conference in 2015 and has attended ever since; missing only once. She served as TTSGI Facebook Moderator for about three years and her mission, as a board member, is to pay forward the love and support this organization gave to her.



WELCOME MATT VIERLING, TWIN TO MARK

New! Board Member - Secretary

Matt lost his twin Mark in 1996 due to a brain tumor at the age of 9. He currently lives in Houston, Texas and works as a marketing coordinator for a nonprofit organization; he is a former hospital chaplain. Attending his first TTSGI conference in 2011, he has served on the board from 2013-2016 as Secretary and received the Angel Award in 2012 for redesigning the TTSGI website. Matt's mission, as a returning board member, is to serve TTSGI with his time and talents.

2019 DONATION FORM



TWINLESS TWINS
Support Group INTL

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/Master Card/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.)

Designate Funds – please check one:

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Canadian twins should send money orders in U.S. funds only

- In full at this time. Check enclosed Credit Card
 During the month of _____
 By making pledge payments of \$ _____ for _____ consecutive months/years.
 My company has a Matching Gifts Program. I am mailing a completed form.

Name of matching company _____

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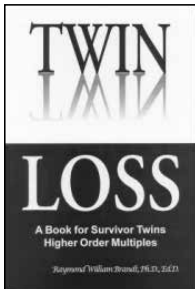
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Credit Card Expiration Date: _____ (mm/dd/year)

Twinless Twins, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit tax-exempt organization and your donation is tax deductible within the limits of the law.

RECOMMENDED TWIN BOOKS



“TWIN LOSS”

By Raymond W. Brandt, PhD

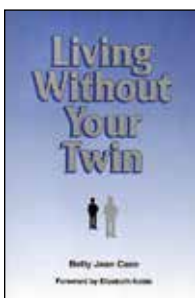
Dr. Brandt was the founder of Twinless Twins Support Group International and was considered by many an authority on twin loss. The 400-page book discusses all aspects of the loss and also speaks to the family members on how to help the survivor twin.



“WHEN GRIEF CALLS FORTH THE HEALING”

By Mary Rockefeller Morgan

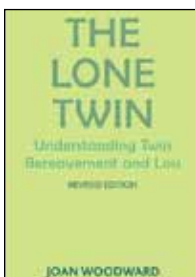
In this startlingly frank and moving memoir, Mary R. Morgan struggles to claim an individual identity, enabling her to face her twin brother Michael's death and the huge loss it engendered. With remarkable candor, she shares her spiritually evocative healing journey, which moves her forward into a life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



“LIVING WITHOUT YOUR TWIN”

By Betty Jean Case

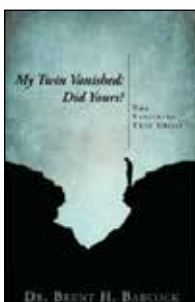
TTSGI receives a donation each time one of author Betty Jean Case's books is purchased through us. Betty was a twin, who grew up with twin siblings and had a set of twin grandsons. This 150-page book discusses how to keep living without your twin and best friend by your side. It also explores the uniqueness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



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

By Joan Woodward

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



“MY TWIN VANISHED DID YOURS?”

by Dr. Brent Babcock

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



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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.

TWINLESS TIMES BY MAIL

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

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Spring Issue: February 10th

Summer Issue: May 12th

Fall Issue: August 11th

Winter Issue: October 20th

Submissions should be emailed to:
twinlesstimes@yahoo.com

Twinless Times Co-Editors:
Margaret Gron & Emily Heekin

LIST OF REGIONAL COORDINATORS – 2019

PLEASE USE CONTACT@TWINLESSTWINS.ORG TO CONNECT WITH YOUR REGIONAL COORDINATOR.

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