

# TWINLESS TIMES

WINTER 2021

HELPING TWINS WHO  
HAVE LOST THEIR TWIN



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As we approach the holiday season, I recognize this is a difficult time for many twins dealing with bereavement and loss. This year, like last year, is more difficult because so many of us continue to be impacted by the pandemic. COVID-19 has impacted us all, but some more than others. For example, we have twins who have had COVID-19 directly and recovered or who are currently battling it. And we have a growing number of twinless twins who have lost their twins due to COVID-19. In addition, COVID-19 is still hindering our ability to meet in person which is so hard since the holidays can be an extremely lonely time for twins. Please know that you are not alone and please continue to take advantage of the regional and specialized zoom meetings that are being offered by our amazing group of Regional Coordinators.

Despite the pandemic, our work continues, at the Summer Virtual Conference we had new board members approved by the membership and we thanked our outgoing board members. We also have a new Regional Coordinator for Canada! All are featured in this newsletter. The new board has been meeting virtually and is getting ready to meet again virtually for our winter board meeting where we will discuss the 2022 Conference and registration process among other topics. The Board is also working on developing a 2022-2026 Strategic Plan which is based on the results of the 10-year visioning exercise conducted at our last in-person conference. There is also a write-up in this newsletter on that. Our Regional Coordinators are hard at work hosting numerous virtual gatherings. Our Facebook moderators are welcoming and tending to the ever-growing Facebook membership which stands at over 4,900 twins. We have generous twins who have agreed to match year-end donations dollar for dollar in our annual "Double the Donation" campaign. We also have our dedicated Twinless Times co-editors who spend weeks preparing these quarterly newsletters. What we have been able to accomplish is due to the wonderful twin volunteers and our dedicated twin Executive Director, Michelle Getchell, who give their time and talents to make sure TTSGI continues to exist to provide a safe and compassionate community for twinless twins to experience healing and understanding. I am also so thankful for all the twins who have reached out and supported another twin in their healing journey. That is who we are and what we do.

As we embark on the holiday season, this is the time to be kind to yourself, to check in on each other, and to know that you are not alone.



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# THE EMPTY CHAIR

by Sandy Goad, twin to Jim

## THE MIGHTY OAK

I attended a Twinless Twins annual conference in Chicago many years ago where the keynote speaker, Mary R. Morgan, spoke on "Beginning with the End". As I listened, I

realized that is what all of us must do after the death of our twin. We must begin.

I am reminded of the mighty oak tree. It's a symbol of patience, strength and endurance. It inspires us never to give up, and to remember that great things come from small beginnings. Of course, we know that an oak tree is not mighty overnight. It has to go through many stages of growth. First the acorn, then a small shoot, followed by a sapling, a small tree, and a large tree.

This poem called The Oak Tree by Johnny Ray Ryder Jr. was shared in one of my grief groups:

*A mighty wind blew night and day. It stole  
the Oak Tree's leaves away.  
Then snapped its boughs and pulled its bark  
until the Oak was tired and stark.  
But still the Oak Tree held its ground while  
other trees fell all around.  
The weary wind gave up and spoke, "How  
can you still be standing Oak?"  
The Oak Tree said, I know that you can break  
each branch of mine in two,  
carry every leaf away, shake my limbs and  
make me sway.  
But I have roots stretched in the earth,*

*growing stronger since my birth.  
You'll never touch them, for you see they are  
the deepest part of me.  
Until today, I wasn't sure of just how much I  
could endure.  
But now I've found with thanks to you, I'm  
stronger than I ever knew.*

Rob Anderson, who conducts grief workshops and facilitates grief groups, writes in an article, "Our most powerful survival tools can be found in sharing our grief as well as sharing our healing". He chose the oak tree as a metaphor for our lives because of its slow, patient growth, but also because of its strength, endurance and long life. Rob says, "You can be like that oak tree, moving slowly, but persistently through your healing life. In time you too will produce acorns and be able to give away your seeds of hope."

How do we begin? Emery Nester said in his poem Together: "A man was walking in a wilderness. He became lost and was unable to find his way out. Another man met him. "Sir, I am lost, can you show me the way out of this 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."

TTSGI is here to help you on your journey toward healing. It is a place, where together, we share our grief and we share our healing. We are not alone.

## 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.**

# TTSGI GUIDING PRINCIPLES: JOURNEY TO HEALING

TTSGI has five guiding principles:

1. Once A Twin, Always A Twin
2. You Are Not Alone
3. Healing by Helping
4. Journey to Healing,
5. Uniting Our Diverse Community

The Winter Edition will focus on the second one:

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

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

## THEY REMEMBERED!

By Eduardo Echeverria, twin to Alfredo

I attended my 50-year high school reunion recently (a year late). I had only been to my 10-year reunion, so it has been a while. My identical twin brother, Alfredo, had never gone. I was excited to go this year. Fifty years is quite the milestone. Then I realized I was going to see my twin brother's friends and would need to respond to all of the “I'm sorry for your loss” comments and the strong possibility of leaking eyes. That bothered me.

The reunion was held in a big fancy tent outdoors. When entering, the first thing you saw was the empty chair memorial for those classmates who had passed. It was sad to see how many of my classmates had passed away. It was even sadder to see my twin's name tag on that memorial. It would have been so cool if both of us could have been there. But that wasn't going to happen.

The typical twin experience did happen

though. A classmate came up and said there was someone wanting to meet me. Someone “I used to date.” I didn't remember her or her name so she must have dated my twin brother.

All evening many friends stopped by to express their sympathy for the loss of my twin. That was a bit tougher than I expected. Yes, there were leaking eyes! I decided I would focus on the fact that by saying something to me they were honoring Alfredo and their memory of him. I was grateful they took the time to remember him. After 51 years, it was good to know my twin had a good impact on his friends.

We are encouraged to say our twin's name and to tell their story, to remember them. This was a good opportunity for me to do just that. Keeping his memory alive was comforting. It was a fun reunion.

# HOLIDAY GIVING – GIVING SO THAT OTHERS MAY RECEIVE

DOUBLE  
the DONATION

*Giving with the power of two!*



Right now, through the generous gift of anonymous donors, any donation received will be matched dollar for dollar! If you give \$100, it turns into \$200!

**Every gift, no matter the amount, will be used to help support hurting twinless twins around the world.**

Make a donation today by visiting [www.twinlesstwins.org](http://www.twinlesstwins.org) or by sending a check made out to *Twinless Twins Support Group, Intl.* in the enclosed envelope.

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

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

*But the non-profit organization that supports us in our time of need also needs us to be there too! Again in 2021, with the cancellation of our annual conference due to COVID 19, TTSGI has experienced another difficult financial year.*

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.*

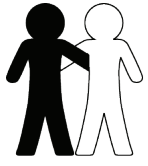
**As in the past, we are fortunate that anonymous donors of TTSGI will generously match all year-end donations received, so please give, knowing that your donation will be doubled for TTSGI.**

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

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

In Gratitude – Margaret Daffin, Fundraising Committee Chair

# 2021 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](http://www.twinlesstwins.org) and use the DONATE button.)

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT OPTIONS:**

Amount of Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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 \_\_\_\_\_

Recognition for the Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_

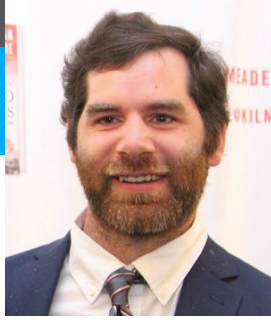
Type of Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_ (Visa/MasterCard/Discover)

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ (no dashes or spaces)

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.





# KEVIN'S CORNER

By Kevin Mullen, twin to Brian and Twinless Times' Correspondent

## TWIN TIME

In early October, I flew out to Michigan for the wedding of my cousin Kyle Zink and his bride, Sara Schmitt. I had the pleasure of meeting Sara's twin sister, Kari, and their older sister, Olympic swimmer, Allison. On my final day in Michigan, I met up with Ed Wakso, twin to JJ. It was nice to see him after Twinsburg's 2021 Twins Days Festival. Kari and Sara said they might come to Twinsburg so meanwhile Ed, twin to JJ and I are planning on getting together next time I am visiting Michigan. It is never too early for twin time.



## 2022 TTGSI CONFERENCE



JULY 14-16, 2022  
*Save the Date*  
DENVER, COLORADO

# WHAT MIGHT TTSGI LOOK LIKE IN 10 YEARS IN TERMS OF GOVERNANCE; ASSETS; AND ORGANIZATION?

By Lea Eriksen, twin to Eve and TTSGI President

The TTSGI's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan asked this question and called for a ten-year visioning exercise to be conducted with the membership. At our 2019 Huntsville Conference, twins in attendance at the business meeting and the dinner/auction were given the opportunity to participate in the following 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?

A follow-up opportunity to participate was then made available in the 2019 Fall Newsletter for twins who didn't attend the 2019 conference. A total of 37 submissions were received and we want to thank these twins for taking the time to complete the exercise. Your input is valued and all submissions were reviewed and analyzed by the Board of Directors and discussed at the Winter 2019 Board meeting. The initial plan was to present the results at the 2020 Denver Conference, but as you know that was canceled. Therefore, the Board wanted to use this newsletter to touch base with the membership to let you know how we have incorporated the results of the visioning exercise into our operations and planning activities.

First, many ideas have already been implemented. For example, twins called for virtual meetings to be held and through necessity, virtual meetings are now being held throughout the regions and they have been supplemented with affinity groups, focused on the type of loss, or length of time since loss, and other factors that bring twin's together with similar circumstances. A suggestion of a monthly newsletter is covered by the Twin2Twin monthly email. If you are interested in receiving that, please contact Margaret Gron, Twinless Times Co-editor, at [twinlesstimes@gmail.com](mailto:twinlesstimes@gmail.com).

Also, several twins called for the establishment of an Endowment Fund and as was announced in the last newsletter, this has been established and twins still have the opportunity to be included as "Founding Donors". If you are interested in learning more, please contact Margaret Daffin, Chair of the Fundraising Committee at [medaffin@aol.com](mailto:medaffin@aol.com). Also, the Facebook page is better being used to educate Facebook members about TTSGI paid membership and to promote members' only virtual meetings and virtual programming.

Other ideas are in process and are assigned to relevant committees to implement. There were a lot of ideas related to the annual conference that are being assigned to the Conference and Planning Committee to put into place for our next in-person conference to improve the social connection and range of programming at the conference (for example making sure there is teen-focused content).

A Marketing and Communications Committee has been formed and is working on many of the ideas that fall into this area, including better use of social media like posting twin testimonials on YouTube, outreach to other twin-based organizations (like ICOMBO), and improvements to our website.

The Fundraising Committee is exploring ideas related to grant writing and estate planning and other fundraising ideas. Also, the Board has created a Diversity and Inclusion Committee to ensure that our leadership, programming, meetings, content, and operations are equitable and inclusive. Lastly, the Board is also working on our 2022-2026 Strategic Plan where the visioning exercise results will be formally incorporated into the one and three-year action items.

Thank you again to all twins who participated in this visioning exercise. Your contributions will help us to achieve our vision for TTSGI to be the leading resource for compassion, information, communication, support, and personal connection for twinless twins and other multiples worldwide. If you are interested in providing feedback or learning more about the 10-year Visioning Exercise and Results please contact me at [lea.eriksen111@gmail.com](mailto:lea.eriksen111@gmail.com).



# TWIN GATHERINGS & SPECIALITY GROUPS

Regional Coordinators continue their efforts despite the pandemic. Zoom twin gatherings have provided a safe environment to connect and share our twin stories and journey.



**Northeast Regional Gathering**  
by Carolyn Shane, twin to Cary



**Southeast Regional Gathering**  
by Jessica Wickey, twin to Jennifer



**Traumatic Loss Affinity Group**  
by Carolyn Shane, twin to Cary



**Recent Loss Affinity Group**  
by Eduardo Echeverria, twin to Alfredo

## REGIONAL ZOOM GATHERINGS:

For upcoming Regional Zoom Gatherings please check our website <http://www.twinlesstwins.org/events/> and your Regional Coordinator.



**First Contact Affinity Group**  
by Joan Angelis, twin to Jean



# A NEW INITIATIVE: INTEREST (AFFINITY) GROUPS WITHIN TTSGI

By Carolyn Shane, twin to Cary

To support our TTSGI members on their individual paths of healing, our organization has been connecting its twins around the country and even around the world, going beyond the traditional regional meetings through specialized interest groups that can also be considered “Affinity Groups.” With support from the TTSGI national organization, we have set up a program of specialized meetings characterized by common experiences of twinless twins, such as how their twin loss occurred or when that loss took place. These meetings have been announced in our Twinless Times.

Currently, we have topical groups and have several members, who have attended at least one of these meetings. Each of these groups is listed below.

By October 15, each group has had at least one meeting, and several have had more than one meeting. The Recent Loss Group has been meeting every few months, and we are receiving positive feedback from many members who have taken advantage of these Zoom gatherings. We feel that this initiative has been successful beyond all our hopes because our members are responding by attending meetings in large numbers. In many cases, twins have followed up with leaders and others in their groups, asking for further information on next meetings and communicating their appreciation for this initiative.

There is one caveat, however. In some cases, people sign up to attend, but in the end, they do not sign onto the Zoom meeting, disappointing the leaders and others who looked forward to their presence. The facilitators spend time preparing and planning for the meetings and look forward to seeing those who sign up for the meetings. The hosts spend their time sending out the initial emails, responding to members’ concerns and questions as well as tracking attendance and sending out the Zoom link to those who respond positively. They also look forward to seeing members on the Zoom screen. We ask that you

try your best to follow up with your attendance if you do sign up. If you can’t make it, try to let your facilitator and/or host know you won’t be there for that session.

I would like to thank each host and facilitator for all the hours they have donated to TTSGI to make these gatherings possible. Below is a listing of each group’s name, its host and facilitator, as well as future dates of upcoming Zoom meetings. Another round of meetings will begin soon, and I encourage all members to try to attend at least one of these new offerings.

## **Affinity Group Host Facilitator Future meeting date(s):**

**Recent Loss:** (Three years or less): by Ed Echeverria on November 14th, January 22nd 2022 and March 27th 2022

**Alcohol and Drug Overdose:** by Carolyn Shane and Jessica Wickey on December 5th at 2:00 pm ET

**Unexpected/Sudden Loss:** Beverley Smyk and Diane Morgan on December 5th at 2 pm ET

**Suicide Loss:** Joan Angelis and Jan Konya-Grabill TBD

**Traumatic and Violent Loss:** Carolyn Shane and Beverley Smyk on January 23rd 2022

**Early Loss:** (Womb to age Three): Carolyn Shane and Alyssa Pratt on February 13th 2022 at 4:00 pm ET

**Mature Loss:** (15 years and Beyond) Carolyn Shane and Ruth Selig on February 27th 2022

**First Contact with New Members:** Joan Angelis and Alyssa Pratt on March 12th, 2022

**Long-Term Illness:** Garry Rayno on March 23rd, 2022

**Men Only:** Margaret Gron TBD

# OUTGOING & INCOMING BOARD MEMBERS AND REGIONAL COORDINATORS



## **Thank you to Bill Osterholt, twin to Bill!**

TTSGI would like to thank Bob Osterholt, who is retiring from the board after serving for three years. Bob joined TTSGI in December 2010 after losing his twin Bill to cancer that year. Bob has served on our Finance & Audit Committee and most recently on the Marketing Committee and could always be counted on to donate his lovely condo for a week's vacation in Alabama gulf shore at our annual auction. Bob was born and raised in Ft. Wayne, Indiana (home of Dr. Brandt, the founder of TTSGI). Bob is now retired from his Printing business and resides in Angola, Indiana with his wife Jane.



## **Thank you to Venice Lacy, twin to Toni**

TTSGI would like to thank Venice Lacy, who is stepping down as a board member due to term limits after serving her full two terms. Venice joined TTSGI in June 2011 only four weeks after her identical twin sister Toni suddenly passed away from complications of Acute Myelogenous Leukemia (AML) in May 2011. This was only one month after her diagnosis when Toni was only 40 years old. Venice served as past Secretary and has served on the Conference Committee and the Ethics and Scholarship Committee. Venice has also been the MC for the last few in-person conference banquets. Venice was born and raised in New York City and currently lives in California. Venice will stay involved in TTSGI on the Conference Committee and as Co-chair of the new Diversity and Inclusion Committee.



## **Thank you to Margaret Daffin, twin to Josie**

TTSGI would like to thank Margaret Daffin, who is stepping down as a board member due to term limits. Margaret joined TTSGI in 1996 after losing her twin Josie to murder in May 1996. Margaret has served on the Board of Directors longer than any other board member and served as President of the Board in 2007. Margaret has served as the Fundraising Chair, the Memory Walk Chair, past Twinless Times Newsletter Editor, and was the Dr. Brandt Memorial Award recipient in 2008. Margaret will stay involved in TTSGI as Chair of the Fundraising Committee.



## **Welcome to new Board Member Larry Adams, twin to Gary**

Larry, twin to Gary, joined TTSGI in 2017. Gary passed away in February 2016 shortly before their mother's death in June 2016. Searching for support and understanding that his friends and family could not provide, he found TTSGI and with that found "his" people. Larry lives in Charlotte, North Carolina, and is a certified professional accountant. Larry has helped with TTSGI's tax filings for the past two years. He wants to give back to TTSGI to "pay it forward" for other twins on their journey of loss. He is thankful for the opportunity to serve on the Board of Directors.



## **Welcome to new Board Member Eduardo Echeverria, twin to Alfredo**

Eduardo's twin, Alfredo, died in March 2016 from massive strokes brought on by complications of spinal fusion surgery. After feeling desperately alone, Eduardo searched for support, found TTSGI, and became a member in February 2017. Al and Ed were born and reared in Chicago. After college, Ed moved to southern California (after realizing January didn't have to be freezing) and is currently living further

# OUTGOING & INCOMING BOARD MEMBERS AND REGIONAL COORDINATORS

north in Sacramento. Ed retired from the California Department of Insurance where he worked in Consumer Services and Information Technology areas.

Healing by helping continues to motivate his involvement. Ed became the West Coast Regional Coordinator in 2019. Ed is very appreciative of the support TTSGI has provided him on his healing journey and wants to give back by serving as a Regional Coordinator and member of the Board of Directors.



## **Welcome to new Board Member Judith Olson, twin to Julie**

Judith joined TTSGI in early 2019, soon after losing her identical twin sister, Julie, to complications of Breast cancer. They were business partners, travel companions, and occasional roommates. They were always together as Judith was Julie's caregiver and held her hand during her entire 25-year cancer journey. It was remarkable to witness Julie living fearlessly and with extraordinary passion while at the same time being heartbreaking, knowing she endured unimaginable discomfort and pain.

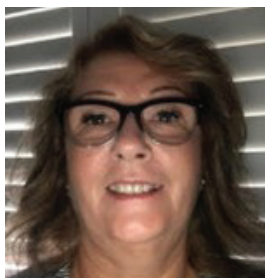
Judith was raised in Tampa, Florida, and currently resides in Dallas, Texas. In addition, the experience of caring for Julie, experience in the health and wellness industry, and as a certified grief educator have led Judith to a greater understanding of how the body, mind, and spirit work together. Judith has served on the 2020 and 2021 Conference Committees and co-chaired the 2020 Memory Walk fundraiser. She views her board service as an opportunity to help twins who lost their twin to death, just as others helped her when she joined.



## **Welcome to new Board Member Beverley Smyk, twin to Donna**

Beverley found TTSGI and became a member in 2002 after searching the Internet for information and support for twin loss. She has been volunteering with the organization for many years, including being an active TTSGI Facebook administrator since 2007. Beverley lives in Toronto, is employed at a Canadian bank as a Senior Manager.

Beverley lost her twin sister Donna at age eight in an auto accident due to a drunk driver and credits the support of other twinless twins in helping to understand her grief, find healing and joy in life again. She wants to serve on the Board to contribute to the mandate of TTSGI and move forward in a way that recognizes the individual nature of loss and grief.



## **Welcome to Patricia Wilbee-Matesic, twin to Pauline, the new Canadian Affiliate Regional Coordinator**

Patricia joined TTSGI and attended her first conference in 2016, which was the real start of her healing journey. Patricia lost her twin Pauline in 2007, who died by suicide. Patricia has attended many regional and Zoom meetings since. Patricia's husband is also a twin and they have four adult children, six grandkids and a teen foster child. Patricia is recently retired after a career in social work. Patricia is excited to begin her new chapter of her life in listening to new twins and assisting twins as we all grow together as a twinless twin family and support each other.



# LOSS: 15 YEARS AND BEYOND

By Ruth O. Selig, twin to Rollie

With Carolyn Shane, serving as host and organizer, and Ruth Selig as the facilitator, the new “affinity group” of twins who had lost their twin at least fifteen years ago met on the afternoon of September 19th for 90 minutes.

The 14 twins, by a show of hands, first shared how many decades they had lived without their twins. Surprisingly, there was almost the same number of twins in our group who had lost their twins 15–20 years ago, 20–30, 30–40, and more than 40 years ago. Several twins, upon hearing of these losses, remarked that for twins, this can be a very long journey that actually lasts the rest of their lives, but that memories can become treasures. After this initial sharing, individual twins responded to the question, “how has your grief journey changed over time,” with many heartfelt stories shared. By the end of the session, each twin had shared their story and all agreed they wanted to gather again.

Carolyn explained to the group that their next meeting was already scheduled, for Sunday, February 27th 2022 from 4:00 to 5:30 pm. More information will be sent out to the membership by email so others may join this group at the next meeting.

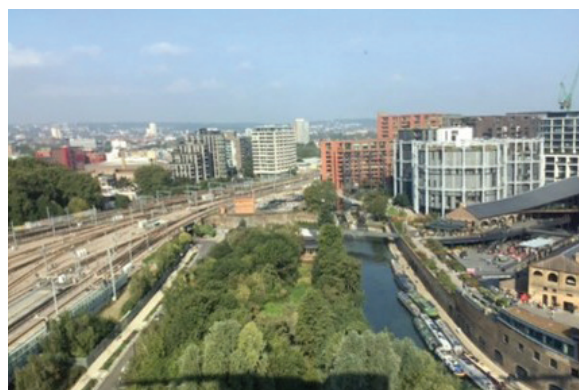
## LONE TWIN NETWORK

By Janet Baird, twin to Margaret, LTN correspondent

The Lone Twin Network (LTN) held its London 2021 meeting on Saturday, October 9th and it was different because it was the first face-to-face meeting since the start of the COVID pandemic. Two years have passed since our last London meeting.

The main meeting started at 1 pm with the committee meeting beforehand where we decided to keep to an informal format, as some twins might not want to be part of large groups. We were lucky to be allowed to use the roof garden on the 11th floor of our chosen venue, so this meeting felt relaxed and safe. We formed groups of mixed loss outside and then came back inside for tea. David Elvy thanked us for coming and we had the chance to light electric candles for our twins before we said our goodbyes.

At the committee meeting, we decided to hold fewer big formal regional meetings and to encourage twins to hold small informal twin huddles in their own local area. This could be in a cafe, or outside in a park, or anywhere safe and suitable. So, if you want to meet other twins let us know and we'll help you set up a huddle! It's the way forward!



## Be inspired by: [Hess twins Marion and Steven](#)

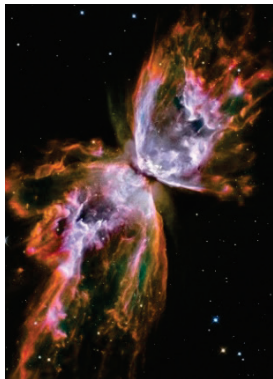


Twins Marion and Steven, at age 5, were arrested along with their parents and eventually deported to Bergen- Belsen concentration camp in 1944. They survived and now in their 80's, the last surviving twins of the holocaust have started to share [their story](#).

Photo Credit: Michael Lutch

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## Find wonder in the [Butterfly Nebula](#)

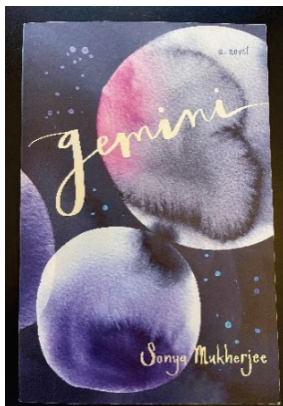


Looks like a butterfly but stings like a bee as the star in the middle ejects layers of gases in the process of dying. I imagine all our twins as Butterfly Nebulas creating mosaic artwork in space. When you are missing your twin, rest your heart and mind [with them](#).

Photo Credit: @NASAHubble

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## A twin story [Gemini](#)



Conjoined twins, Clara and Hailey, take turns writing about their lives as teenagers wanting to fulfill their dreams; their individual dream. Oddly, there is something so familiar that any twin can relate to this dilemma even if not conjoined physically to their twin. Untangling your dream from your same-aged sibling is an inevitable milestone.

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# WHAT SCIENCE TELLS US

## DELIBERATELY DIVIDED: INSIDE THE CONTROVERSIAL STUDY OF TWINS AND TRIPLETS ADOPTED APART BY NANCY L. SEGAL, PH.D.

A Book Review by Ruth O. Selig, twin to Rollie

Twinless Twins know all too well the heartbreak and trauma of losing one's twin. Imagine being born a twin, but not knowing it because you had been deliberately separated from your twin before you were adopted and your adoptive parents were never told they were getting a twin. Perhaps even more troubling would be the revelation that your new parents had to participate in a child development study as a condition of your adoption, allowing researchers to observe you regularly for 12 years, administer IQ and other psychological tests, and take films and photographs.

This is the real-life context for the riveting new book, *Deliberately Divided*, detailing the controversial twin study brought to public attention by *ABC News's 20/20*, the 2017 documentary film, *The Twinning Reaction*, and the 2018 documentary film, *Three Identical Strangers*, which continue to shock audiences worldwide. The book's author, psychologist and twin researcher Dr. Nancy Segal (Keynote Speaker, 2009 TTSGI Annual Conference) takes the reader behind the scenes to witness the story unfolding over six decades.

Several of the separated twins and triplets in the films ask, "How could such an outrage occur?" In the early 1960s, two psychiatrists, the head of the New York City Child Development Center affiliated with the Jewish Board of Guardians (now the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services) Dr. Peter Neubauer, and Columbia University's Dr. Viola Bernard together designed a study to track the development of identical twins and triplets adopted into different families. Dr. Bernard was the psychiatric consultant to the highly respected adoption agency, Louise Wise Services (LWS), which was implementing a policy of separating twins at adoption. The researchers wanted the twin separations to

be kept secret from the parents to ensure that the study could evaluate the influence of "nature" (genetics) and "nurture" (the environment) as well as the impact of different parenting styles. They believed that learning about a related twin adopted into a different family would influence both families. In fact, when one female twin pair discovered one another at approximately age seven, both twins were dropped from the study.

Psychology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis gained tremendous prestige in the 1950s and 1960s, during the same era when adoptions were shrouded in secrecy. As with all records of physical and mental health, confidentiality and privacy were considered paramount, courts sealed adoption records, and, unlike today, it was believed to be in the best interests of birth and adoptive parents and children to keep information surrounding adoptions hidden forever.

Ironically, today, when adoptions are conducted with more transparency, the records from this early study remain tightly sealed in the Yale University archives, restricted until 2065, when all participants will no longer be alive. Not surprisingly, some twins and triplets involved are determined to gain access to their records. Although some documents have been released, legal efforts are ongoing.

Segal, a prodigious investigator, conducted extensive research for this book, interviewing colleagues, friends and family members of the late Viola Bernard and the study's lead researcher, the late Peter Neubauer, as well as administrators, research assistants who conducted the observations, journalists, ethicists, and attorneys. Most importantly, she interviewed almost all the twins involved



## WHAT SCIENCE TELLS US, CONTINUED...

and their still living relatives, the unwitting participants in this controversial study. Segal further examined the researchers' efforts to avoid media exposure, their worries over informed consent issues, and the steps taken to avoid lawsuits.

Impressively, Segal never shies away from controversy and proves herself a gutsy and determined investigator. She is upfront and unblinking in her condemnation of the twin adoption study, explaining although not agreeing with those who defend that study and the theories on which its researchers believed it was based. Segal also says her own views were influenced, in part, by her personal story as a fraternal twin and twin researcher specializing in studying twins reared apart.

As in her earlier book *Accidental Brothers*, also reviewed in the *Twinless Times* ([https://www.twinlesstwins.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/tt\\_2018\\_03\\_fall\\_proof2.pdf](https://www.twinlesstwins.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/tt_2018_03_fall_proof2.pdf)), Segal's ability to dramatically describe stories of twin separation, loss and reunion offers the reader an unforgettable experience of coming to know the twins and triplets involved in the study, as well as some fraternal twins adopted apart who did not become part of the study. Because there were, in the end, only 11 individual twin subjects who completed part or all of the 12-year study (eight identical twins, including three identical female pairs, one identical male pair, plus three identical male triplets), Segal is able to devote a chapter to each pair, bringing the reader inside the drama of separation and reunion.

While reading this absorbing book, I discovered it intersected with my own life story in ways neither Nancy Segal nor I expected, when I told her a year ago, I wanted to review *Deliberately Divided*. I had seen *Three Identical Strangers* and was troubled but also intrigued by the story.

For me, Segal's book brought back a flood of memories. I was born in 1942 in New

Haven, Connecticut, where my parents were delighted to bring their identical toddlers to the Yale Child Study Center for observation. Internationally known for the study of children, the Center's widely read books, including *The First Five Years of Life* and *The Child from Five to Ten*, described normal milestones and stages of child development. Along with his colleagues, Louise Bates Ames and our neighbor, Francis Ilg, Arnold Gesell, the Center's first Director, was the person probably most responsible for informing parents that children go through a series of stages, such as the "terrible two's." All this was long before pediatricians Benjamin Spock and Berry Brazelton became famous. During the 1950s, my parents often spoke positively about the growing inter-related fields of child development, psychiatry and psychoanalysis.

After observing and testing us, the Yale Child Study Center psychologists told my parents that it was important for them to help us develop strong separate identities, particularly because we had been inseparable as small children who shared a room, always dressed alike, had our own language as babies, and later began to stutter. Specifically, the specialists advised my parents to send us to a school with two separate classrooms at each grade level. For five years, we drove 20 minutes away to Hamden Hall rather than walk



Ruth and Rollie Osterweis at approximately age three

## WHAT SCIENCE TELLS US, CONTINUED...

two blocks to the smaller school my two older sisters had attended, because their school only had one classroom per grade. At the age of eight, we were tested again and the Yale doctors declared us sufficiently separated and “individuated” to transfer into the single fourth grade classroom at our neighborhood school.

During these years, my mother also enrolled us in separate sessions of speech therapy to help our stuttering, but she was careful to spend the hour alone with each of us while the other went into speech therapy. This too was declared a success by the Yale psychologists, as much for the undivided parental focus on each twin as for the speech therapy. Fortunately, we stopped stuttering.

My parents, my identical twin sister Rollie, and I never questioned the Yale Child Study Center’s advice, and we consciously continued to pursue some separate paths, including different summer experiences. After college together we thought it was a positive step for Rollie to move to Chicago, while I remained in Massachusetts. Although I later came to understand that the individuation and separation theories for twins were no longer held in high regard, I never thought they particularly hurt us. Looking back, however, I wish we had spent more time together as adults, since I was to lose Rollie to cancer just before our 40th birthday. For a decade before that, we saw each other infrequently, each involved in a demanding museum job and raising young children.

As I read Segal’s book, I became aware that my experiences growing up affected my reactions to parts of her narrative, particularly when she questions the motives of those who used the theories of separation and individuation to justify the separation of twins for adoption. I wonder now how the esteemed Drs. Gesell, Ilg, and Ames viewed the twin adoption study in New York City, which they probably knew about since they undoubtedly knew Drs. Bernard and Neubauer.

Also influencing my reading was the recent experience of my partner of 20 years who was adopted through the Spence-Chapin Adoption agency in New York City, which took over the Louise Wise Adoption records when LWS closed. At my urging, Mark joined 23andMe and Ancestry.com, and through genetic testing and his own sleuthing (including a request to the New York City Department of Health’s Bureau of Records and Statistics for his original birth certificate), he happily learned the names and some history about both his birth parents.

Segal is uniquely qualified to write this book as a twin growing up in New York, but even more importantly, as a researcher who has conducted many scientific twin studies. She casts a very critical eye not only on the Bernard/Neubauer collaborative study, but also on the theoretical underpinnings they believed undergirded and justified twin separation at adoption, which Segal tells us had no basis in science. Segal considers all sides of the ethical debate, but she makes her position clear. In addition, she questions the “historical context” defense of the study (that the scientists were reflecting the science of the day), and she suggests the researchers kept so much secret because they knew their study was unacceptable to many and, as time went on and practices changed, probably also was unethical and even immoral.

### FINAL THOUGHTS

The doctors involved in the Louise Wise Services-Child Development Center study may have sincerely believed in the importance of encouraging separate identity and individuation in twins and that these theories could help justify separate adoptions for twins and triplets. I do not question their motivations. I am less critical of the separation theory than Segal, but, at the same time, she is right to question their ethics and research practices since the twin study took the theory of separation and individuation to such a tragic extreme.

## WHAT SCIENCE TELLS US, CONTINUED...

The Bernard/Neubauer study lies at the intersection of fundamental human rights and evolving scientific theory. Adopted twins, I believe, do have a fundamental human right to grow up together. We can blame the study, we can view the theory of individuation as wrong, and we can deeply sympathize with the anger, hurt, and bewilderment the twins involved experienced and expressed so eloquently in recent films and TV programs. But we also should recognize, as Segal does, that the two distinguished doctors involved made some important contributions during their very long careers.

Regardless of the outcome of the debate over ethics and responsibility analyzed in the final two chapters, the book is impressively researched and meticulously told. Dr. Segal enjoys twins, she enjoys being a twin, and she relishes her professional life studying, talking about, and working with twins. She clearly states that she will always take twins' best interests into account in her research endeavors. Everything about this story is complex and multi-layered, and I congratulate her on pursuing an incredibly difficult journey with such relentless determination and unflinching courage.

### AUTHOR BIO:

Professor of Psychology at California State University, Fullerton and Director of the Twin Studies Center, Dr. Nancy L. Segal has authored over 250 scientific articles and now seven books on twins and twin development. Several of Segal's books focus on twins separated at birth, including: *Born Together-Reared Apart: The Landmark Minnesota Twin Study* (Harvard University Press, 2012); *Someone Else's Twin: The True Story of Babies Switched at Birth* (Prometheus Books, 2011), and *Accidental Brothers* (St. Martin's Press, 2018), which follows the life histories of identical Colombian twins who were inadvertently exchanged at birth. Her book, *Twin Mythconceptions: False Beliefs, Fables, and Facts About Twins* (Academic Press,

2017) describes and corrects various kinds of misinformation about twins. Read the 2021 interview with Dr. Segal in the Twinless Times spring edition [https://twinlesstwins.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/tt\\_2021\\_01\\_spring\\_web.pdf](https://twinlesstwins.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/tt_2021_01_spring_web.pdf).

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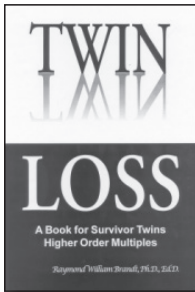
### POSTSCRIPT:

Twinless Twins often ask how they can participate in twin studies and particularly in studies of Twinless Twins. Segal's twin loss study is ongoing and can be accessed online at her website. To participate, find the Twin Loss Survey at <http://drnancysegaltwins.org> and scroll down to the red box on the lower left side. There you will see a list of current studies; click on the link to the study of twinless twins.





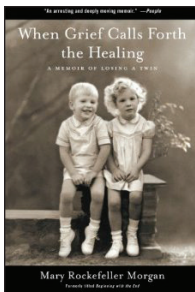
# RECOMMENDED TWIN BOOKS



## “TWIN LOSS”

By Raymond W. Brandt, PhD

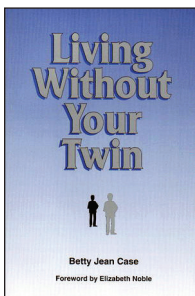
Dr. Brandt was the founder of Twinless Twins Support Group International and was considered by many an authority on twin loss. The 400-page book discusses all aspects of the loss and also speaks to the family members on how to help the survivor twin.



## “WHEN GRIEF CALLS FORTH THE HEALING”

By Mary Rockefeller Morgan

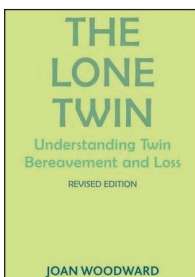
In this startlingly frank and moving memoir, Mary R. Morgan struggles to claim an individual identity, enabling her to face her twin brother Michael's death and the huge loss it engendered. With remarkable candor, she shares her spiritually evocative healing journey, which moves her forward into a life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



## “LIVING WITHOUT YOUR TWIN”

By Betty Jean Case

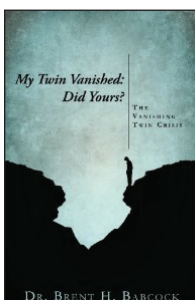
TTSGI receives a donation each time one of author Betty Jean Case's books is purchased through us. Betty was a twin, who grew up with twin siblings and had a set of twin grandsons. This 150-page book discusses how to keep living without your twin and best friend by your side. It also explores the uniqueness 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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All members are invited to submit articles for publication in the Twinless Times. The email subject should be “Twinless Times Submission.”

Submit to: [twinlesstimes@gmail.com](mailto:twinlesstimes@gmail.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](mailto: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:  
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