

# Forever Angels



Hello Everyone,

I hope this finds y'all enjoying the day, perhaps in your garden. The delphiniums at my house are glorious. They range from 6-10 feet tall, shading from the deepest blue to lavender and also some are white. As I walk the paths and come across them, I am brought to a halt each time to stop and marvel in their colour, grace, fragility and beauty. It is amazing to think that nature can work these wonders.

May your garden bloom for you, offer you sanctuary, comfort and peace.

*Thinking of you,  
Lynda*

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## Letters to the Editor.....

Wow, Lynda, that "Top Ten List" article at the end [*Beth Pector's article in Issue #07-05 of Forever Angels*] is beautiful, and inspiring. I have passed it along to several parents in Saskatoon who have suffered the loss of a twin or triplet. It's very helpful for me to read too, to understand a little more of how the loss of a baby may affect families in years to come. Your *Forever Angels* newsletter is always good, but this edition seems especially helpful to me. Thank you for your hard work on behalf of so many multiple birth families. Sheila, Saskatoon (a very involved Mother of triplets, President of the Saskatoon Parents of Twins & Triplets Club and caring volunteer for all things multiple birth)

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Thank you for thinking of me Lynda.....you always unerringly find the right time to contact me your true admirer in this tough, tough field, Ed Smith (Loving Grandfather of a twin grandson hit by a car while riding his bike, aged 15 years)

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## Loss of One Twin.....

I have just come upon this wonderful website, I am interested in becoming a member and having a Forever Angel write-up on our son. Matthew was twin A and born at 23 weeks and 2 days, weighing a meager 1lbs 4 1/2oz and 12 1/2 inches long (born April 22/06). He spent an hour and ten minutes with us before going to be with Jesus. After Matthew's delivery labor stopped; stopped for 18 days. May 9 Twin B was born to us at 25 weeks and 6 days "a little" girl, 1lbs 11oz and 12 1/2 inches long, we came to know her as Hadley Dalice. After a smooth ride in the NICU at BC Children's Hospital, a stay of roughly 100 days, we brought her home. She is perfect and close to 10 months corrected. Matthew will never be forgotten. Hadley will surely know about her brave and sweet twin brother. This would be a nice way to remember him.

Thank You, Niomi

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## On the Web.....

.....To read the blog of one family's journey with the loss of their twin sons, you can log on at <http://pluckthepetal.com/blackdaisies/category/henry-and-eliot/> It's beautifully written and a thoughtful memorial to two little boys and one family's integration of the pain of their losses.

.....To review a non-profit site for Christian women which deals with chronic illness, coping with difficult situations, and Living with Loss check out [www.ourhopeonline.com](http://www.ourhopeonline.com)

.....Beaded Royalty, [www.beadedroyalty.com](http://www.beadedroyalty.com) specializing in custom sterling silver Mother, Grandmother and Baby bracelets. The bracelets are created using solid sterling silver beads and genuine Swarovski crystal birthstones. Thoughtful and gentle memorial bracelet creations personalized for you.

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## Grieving Grandparents.....

**Ques:** I appreciated your information. What about how to handle the issue when one twin dies but the other survives? It is very difficult to celebrate the life of one and mourn the death of the other simultaneously. Rise

**Ans:** Hello Rise, You've asked a very difficult question and my suggestions for handling such a situation are just that, suggestions. It needs to work for you. You don't say how old your surviving twin grandchild is currently, so I am assuming quite young. Maybe for the first year or two this wee youngster would not be terribly affected by his/her co-multiple loss but as time goes by, s/he could become affected by the grieving adults around him and notice that not everyone is happy on his birthday. Here's the hard part, I think life is for the living. This doesn't mean we ignore or deny our grief and loss of what should have been (i.e. two celebrating this birthday), but it is important that your surviving grandchild be afforded the joy and attention that a birthday brings to a child. To have to "not be too happy" himself, or curb his enthusiasm, can be a burden/confusing for a child. It isn't unusual, when the adults around him are upset, for a child to internalize what is happening and feel they are to blame for the parents or grandparents being upset, when in fact, nothing is further from the truth. It's not his fault that his co- twin could not be there. May I suggest that a special time, it could be the day before or the day after the birthday, be set aside for reflection and focus on your loss. Having said that some families do well with lighting a special candle on the birth/ death day itself and either singing Happy Birthday or saying a prayer for the deceased twin. Whatever you decide to do can be as a family, adults only or yourself, quietly and lovingly. The way you choose to remember, needs to work for each of you and also offer space for the surviving co-multiple to enjoy his birthday as young children can and do.

There is no easy answer, but as I mentioned, I believe life is for the living and a birthday in a young person's life is usually special and a joyful celebration with family members and friends coming together.

I sincerely hope these thoughts help you. I am so sorry for your loss but it is very evident that your twin grandchild has a loving and caring grandparent in his corner. How wonderful.

**Rise Answers:** Lynda, Thank you for your very kind and warm response. As you guessed our granddaughter's life was brief. The entire experience from the announcement that my son and daughter-in-law were having twins until Eva's death at 29 days old was a roller coaster ride of high hopes and crisis. The girls were identical twins in one amniotic sac, which meant this was a high risk pregnancy. We knew from early on that one twin had a heart problem which would require multiple surgeries but was treatable. Our daughter-in-law went into the hospital at 24 weeks and made it to one day shy of 35 weeks. Our son ran the household, took great care of their 3-year old son, worked, and brought Noah to have dinner with Mom every night. We are very proud of the three of them. The girls birth weights and apgar score were good. It appeared that the heart problem was not as severe as originally feared and the surgical plan was modified. Let me add that they live in Virginia and we live in Florida. We went up multiple times. Let me also add that I am an RN and nursing school instructor. I probably knew too much. We thankfully saw Eva during the first few days prior to any surgery when we had great hopes and took pictures. She ultimately had two surgeries: the first was a total disaster. The second one, 5 days later, was truly to save her before she deteriorated any further. We flew up to be with them and we were glad that we did. By this time, Naomi (our healthy twin) was home and doing well. The surgery took all day and Eva was in very critical condition but alive at the end. Every day she improved slightly. We went home but got nightly reports from our son. By 6 days following the surgery, it looked like she had turned the corner, everything was functioning better and the ventilator and medications were being lowered. They even started feeding her breastmilk again through a tube! She had turned her head to look at her father that night when he spoke to

her. We were so hopeful. A few hours later, disaster struck. She developed respiratory distress and the doctors were unable to save her. At least her parents were there at the end. She was cremated so that they could bring her home. And we had a very nice service; they brought both children. Friends, neighbors, work colleagues, etc were all wonderful.

As you have said, grief is different for everyone. It is now two and a half months since Eva's death. Fortunately, Naomi is thriving but she never wants to put into her bed. She sleeps well when she is being held. She wakes up within a half an hour when put down. Her mother and I surmise she was used to another person close to her all the time and that uterine experience is already framing her personality and behaviors. They have simply told Noah, who knew both were born and that Eva was very sick, that Eva is too sick to come home. Later, when he is old enough to understand, they will tell him the whole story.

I have my good days and my bad days. It is gratifying that the kids seem to be doing well. We saw them again last month while we celebrated the graduation of our daughter from law school. It was important to be completely able to celebrate a happy event together. I know it takes time, but it is so hard.

Thank you for your information. It confirmed much of what I know and was very comforting.  
Sincerely, Rise

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## **Memorial Page on MBC's Loss Web Site Page**

*LSN has a Memorial Page and your memorial inclusion is free to all of our members. If you would like your child's or childrens' memorial included, let me know and I will arrange it. Here's the Memorial Page address <http://multiplebirthscanada.org/english/memorial-page.php>*

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*UPDATE QUESTIONNAIRE - If you would like to complete the Questionnaire and send it in, it will be included in an upcoming issue of *Forever Angels*. Not only is it nice to learn how and what you are doing, but also to learn of new additions (or is it editions?) to the family. Looking forward to hearing from you. Just push "Forward" on your computer, erase everything to the Questionnaire and you will be able to complete it and send it along to [loss@multiplebirthscanada.org](mailto:loss@multiplebirthscanada.org)*

*How are things for you and your family?*

*Please provide a little background about your loss:*

*How long is it since your loss?*

*We lost, e.g. one of twins, two triplets, both twins....*

*What helped or supported you the most at the time of your loss?*

*What helped you the least?*

*Do you celebrate any anniversaries?*

*If so, how/what do you celebrate (e.g. Birth Day, Death Day, other)?*

*How do you celebrate them?*

*Is there something that you would have appreciated, perhaps annually, on your anniversary of loss by your family or friends that would have helped, even a little bit?*

*How is Mom at this point in time?*

*How is Dad at this point in time?*

*If you have a survivor(s), how have you chosen to let them know about their co-sibling(s)?*

*What would you offer by way of support to another family who recently lost one, more or all of their children?*

*Anything else you might like to add.*