



WINTER 2014

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*Ian Frew and friends in Honduras*

## A Heart for Honduras: Ian's Gift of Life

How far can your heart take you? Just ask Floridians Susie and John Frew. Their story will convince you: one act of compassion can go farther than you could ever imagine!

Back in 1990, organ donation and transplants were still new. So when their son Ian was born with a rare and potentially fatal congenital heart defect, the Frews prepared for the worst. Their prayers were answered when the doctors revealed a new treatment option. Vanderbilt hospital in Nashville had started doing a few pediatric heart transplants.

At seven days old, Ian was placed on the organ transplant list. The family waited while Susie stayed in Nashville with Ian and John returned to work. Three weeks passed before they got the call: a heart was available for their ailing infant.

The surgery was a success. A tiny, walnut-sized heart given in compassion by another family now beat inside little Ian. Although the Frews never met that donor family, they prayed for them and were eternally grateful. As the years passed, Ian grew up like any other active, healthy all-American boy, playing basketball and paintball and scuba diving.

Church and faith were central to family life. Ian's passion for mission work grew over his five mission trips to Honduras. "Ian considered mission work in Honduras one of his long-term goals in life," says Susie. "He was so passionate about the Helping Honduras Kids Foundation. Ian loved the people of Honduras, especially the children."

In June 2013, at age 23, Ian suddenly fell ill, complaining of chest pain. He collapsed in church and died a short time later at a nearby hospital. He was a registered donor and was able to donate his tissue and corneas according to his wishes.

"When I got the call from LifeNet, I said 'of course'," says John. "I mean, look at what we got because of someone else's generosity." For Ian Frew, his family, and his young friends in Honduras, the gift of donation brought the opportunity for life, love and acts of kindness. The decision to give the gift of life came straight from the heart for this family.

## Healing Tears by Dr. Lani Leary

*Dear Dr. Leary,*

My daughter died four months ago and my world is still reeling. I feel out of control and out of touch. Friends keep asking me what they can do for me, and I don't know what to tell them. Can you help me put what I need into words for them? - *A Mother*

*without Words*



*Dear Mother,*

There is comfort in the compassion and good intentions of others but when we are exhausted by grief, we have little capacity to think for others or advocate for ourselves. We can find what we need when we identify our feelings.

You may have never had such a loss before. You may be feeling numb, exhausted, and unable to think. You may be at a loss for words and unsure if anything would help. These are normal and acceptable responses to the unexpected and sudden death of your daughter.

Friends want to help but may not know what is helpful. Many are uncomfortable and unprepared for grief, and either stay away, say and do things that don't help, or act in ways that are not helpful to the people they care about. The following support in the form of requests has helped others:

- "Please be with me, even when there is nothing to do, or when I have nothing to say. Sometimes I just need to be with someone in silence."
- "Please listen to me. Let me tell my story as many times as I need without interrupting or reminding me that I've told it before."
- "Please remember my loved one by name and with specific stories."
- "Please allow me all my feelings, whether they are comfortable or understandable to you."
- "Please ask me what I need instead of assuming."
- "Please do what you say you will do for me."
- "Please give me time to grieve in my own way, and at my own pace."
- "Please stay with me and my grief on holidays, anniversaries, and when my grief surprises me years later."

Any one of these acts of kindness can make a difference. Please use these as conversation starters, or as a response, when friends ask you what they can do for you. Very few of us know what the death of a loved one means to us, and what we need, until it happens to us. You can help them to understand and to give you what you need.

Blessings,

*Lani*

*Dr. Leary is a psychologist and certified grief therapist who consults with LifeNet Health. Her responses reflect her professional opinion to general questions. Individuals struggling with complicated grief are encouraged to seek the care of a professional. Please submit your questions to Robin Cowherd, LifeNet Health, 1864 Concert Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23453, or visit Healing Tears at our [website](#).*

## Comforting the Soul - Beating the Winter Blues by Sarah L. Decker, MA, CIC-CSp



With the winds of winter come darker days and longer nights for a large portion of the LifeNet Health service area. These changes in the season can bring some changes in mood.

Even the healthiest of moods can become dismal in winter's shadow. Grief can complicate these winter blues.

What can you do to beat these feelings?

- **Supplement them!** Talk to your doctor first, but taking vitamins, especially Vitamin D, can boost your mood. Your body usually can get Vitamin D from sunlight. This vitamin helps you fight off illnesses and can improve your mood. When we lack the amount of UV light we absorb in the spring and summer, a supplement can be a wonderful option.
- **Volunteer.** It can be easy to get so tired from the shortening days that you may fall into the habit of coming home from work and falling asleep. Giving back is one way to feel good and do good at the same time.
- **Exercise.** It might be the perfect time for a gym membership or home gym equipment. Exercise is a great way to warm up and get healthy. You will also be more likely to fight any winter illnesses better than you would without exercise. Exercise also boosts endorphins to make you feel happier and more energized.
- **Brighten up!** Digging into the back of your closet for some of those spring and summer colors could be exactly the boost you need. Pair them with your winter wardrobe and see how a little color can brighten your mood.
- **Be friendly.** Friendships are the spice of life. Hanging out with your buds may not be what you feel like doing, but it can really boost your mood and allow you to release some of the negative feelings you are having. You can also look for new friends at support groups, winter events, and at the gym.

If you find yourself particularly prone to sadness or depressive symptoms in the winter more than any other time, see your doctor and let them know how you are feeling. There is a very real diagnosis called Seasonal Affective Disorder, which is a depression that occurs most often in fall and winter months.

Winter is only a few short months. Go ahead and make it brighter. You can do it!

## Healing the Spirit Highlight - Making a Memorial Quilt by Michael Reilly, MA, Donor Family Advocate



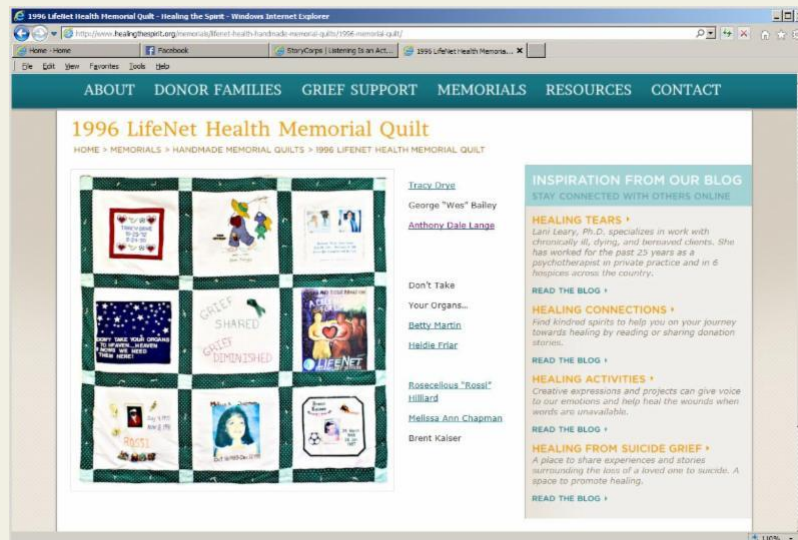
Back in 1996, some donor families got together to create a handmade memorial quilt honoring their loved ones. Since then, donor families have created a total of 17 quilts memorializing those who gave the gift of life.

These memorial quilts are on permanent display at LifeNet Health locations across Virginia. They inspire our staff daily to help achieve the mission we all work for - Saving Lives and Restoring Health. They remind us, through their loving images and tributes, that our donors and their families remain the heart and soul of LifeNet Health.

Memorial quilts are also on display at our annual In Celebration & Remembrance events. We will occasionally display them at various community events. Donor families may view the quilts and their loving messages knowing that LifeNet Health will always remember our donors and their families. We hope they might be inspired to carry on the tradition by creating their own quilt squares to be joined with others in the next quilt.

If you would like to view the memorial quilts and read the tributes some donor families have attached to them, click [here](#) and go to the Memorials section of the website.

If you would like to create your own quilt square in honor of your loved one, you don't need to know how to sew. You can go to the website and request a blank square with instructions on how to make your own.



## Holiday Tree of Remembrance ceremonies

Hundreds of donor families across Virginia gathered over the holidays for LifeNet Health's annual Tree of Remembrance ceremonies to honor and remember their loved ones.



*Donor family members enjoyed listening to the young violinists at the Virginia Beach Tree of Remembrance ceremony on December 3rd. Memorial tree ceremonies were also held in Richmond on December 8th at the United Network for Organ Sharing and in Roanoke on December 15th at the Hotel Roanoke.*

## Save the Date for *In Celebration & Remembrance* events in Virginia

*In Celebration & Remembrance* ceremonies are annual LifeNet Health events held to honor organ and tissue donor families, and to remember their loved ones. Live music, speakers, donor recognition and refreshments have made these special occasions for over twenty years.

Look for your invitation in the mail during the month of March. *In Celebration & Remembrance* events in Florida and the Northwest will be held in the later part of 2014. Invitations will be sent approximately one month prior to the events.



- **Western Virginia** - Sunday, April 6th, 2:00 p.m. Hotel Roanoke, Roanoke
- **Central Virginia** - Sunday, April 27th, 2:00 p.m. Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond
- **Southeastern Virginia** - Wednesday, May 7th, 6:00 p.m. The Founder's Inn, Virginia Beach

Visit LifeNet Health's website for more grief and loss support  
[www.healingthespirit.org](http://www.healingthespirit.org)