



Helping After Neonatal Death  
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## 2014 Annual Letter

*"To lose a child is to lose a piece of yourself"*

- DR. Burton Grebin

### Dear HAND Families-

**Helping After Neonatal Death** is closing its 30<sup>th</sup> year providing grief support services to families who have lost a child before, during, or shortly after birth. HAND is run exclusively by volunteers – all bereaved parents – in Northern California and the Central Valley. HAND relies entirely on your support, so grieving parents can receive our services for free.

**Grieving Parents Need Our Help** Unfortunately, infant loss continues to happen every day and more and more families are in need of a helping hand to support them at this time. HAND runs grief group support meetings in 3 different areas; and fields support calls on a daily basis from grieving parents, families, friends and health providers. We provide local hospitals with materials to assist grieving parents and run two annual events celebrating the lives of the babies we have lost. All of these services are provided by our selfless volunteers who need your help. We are always looking for ways to reach more families and provide more support for those who are grieving. We would love the New Year to bring more volunteers to our HAND family.

### Service of Remembrance, October 12, 2014

HAND families once again gathered on a gorgeous Sunday afternoon to celebrate the memories of all the precious babies gone to soon. The day was spent reading poems, listening to music and reciting the names of all HAND babies. Families spent time connecting with peers and making mementos in honor of their children. It was a time to reflect upon losses and to gather strength among those who understand what we have all been through.

**Shirley Choy-Marshall-** Volunteers are the backbone of the HAND community and no other was more dedicated to our group than Shirley. Shirley lost her battle with breast cancer on May 9<sup>th</sup>. We at HAND mourn the loss of Shirley and are doing what we can to honor her legacy. She always put others first and helped countless families begin to heal after their losses. After attending many grief meetings herself, she joined HAND's board and also ran our subsequent pregnancy meetings. She made our group stronger and we will miss her presence.

*Continued on next page...*

### **Serving parents and healthcare providers since 1983**

- I would like learn more about volunteer opportunities at HAND, please contact me
- I would like to continue to receive information from HAND
- Please remove me from your mailing list

Provide us with any updates to your information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_



**Mission:** To help parents, their families, and their healthcare providers cope with the loss of a baby before, during, or after birth  
**Services:** Peer support groups, Telephone support, Hospital visitation, Lending library, Website, Social Media, Community education, Publications, Service of Remembrance

**President:** Kelly Symons  
**Secretary:** Eddie Vergara  
**Treasurer:** Patti Nakamura  
**Alameda/Contra Costa Area:** Kelly Symons  
**Central Valley Area:** Ami Mishler  
**Directors:** David Haan, Janice Kelley, Nancy Pierce, Nadine Silverstein, Stephanie Vergara

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### “What HAND Means to Me”

We asked parents what HAND means to them, and here are some highlights:

- *HAND has given us a place to grieve. Because the world outside doesn't understand, HAND gives us the opportunity to meet others who do. This is a place where we know we are not alone and that there are others who are just like us. We are very grateful for the services HAND offers.*
- *HAND has been a wonderful support in helping me not only get through the grief of losing my daughter, but also giving me meaningful ways to celebrate her life.*
- *HAND: A place to process the hardest thing; to cry, to share, to grieve, to meet wonderful people who share a terrible bond.*
- *HAND means kindness to me. Ever since participating in HAND Services Of Remembrance, we are greeted with warmth and gentleness. THANK YOU for being there for us.*

### You and HAND

What can you do to make a difference in the life of someone dealing with the loss of their little one(s)? I came to HAND to honor the memory of my daughter in 2010. I never knew how much I myself would be helped by helping others. Though my grief is no longer new it will never go away. Being a part of HAND and helping those on their journey heals me a little more each year.

These are some of the way you can help support HAND's mission:

- Volunteer time to support families in need. There are small and big ways to help others, please contact us at info@handonline.org or 888-908-4263 if interested.
- Provide a financial contribution to make it possible to offer HAND's services and materials at no charge to newly-bereaved families.
- Talk about HAND to others it can be especially helpful, reminding people that pregnancy and infant loss is common, and that HAND is available to help.

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

| Kelly Symons | President, 2014  
 | Forever remembering Hadley Avery Symons

***Serving parents and healthcare providers since 1983***

**YES, I want to continue to support HAND's important work!**

**Donate online at [www.handonline.org](http://www.handonline.org), or...**

Mail a check or money order payable to: HAND, P.O. Box 341, Los Gatos, CA 95031-0341

\$500       \$250       \$100       \$50       Other: \_\_\_\_\_

My company has an applicable gift matching program (please include appropriate paperwork)

Donation is in honor/memory of: \_\_\_\_\_ Born/Died: \_\_\_\_\_

I am donating on behalf of another family; please send a gift acknowledgement to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

HAND is a California 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.