



Iowa SIDS Foundation

Support

Education

Hope

Volume 14, Issue 1

Spring 2005

From My Perspective

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Friends and board members of the Iowa SIDS Foundation are saddened by the loss of two past board members this winter. Melanie Quinn, 46 lost her battle with cancer on February 15, 2005. Larry Rossman, 52 lost his battle to a rare cancerous brain tumor on December 8, 2004. Both of these individuals were pioneers of the Iowa SIDS Foundation and were influential in advancing public awareness of SIDS and supporting families throughout the state of Iowa affected by a SIDS death.

Melanie Quinn

Melanie Quinn was a co-founder and past president and board member of the Iowa SIDS Foundation since its inception as Iowa SIDS Alliance in 1992. She worked tirelessly providing support to SIDS families and educating thousands of professionals and the community about SIDS. Melanie began this work after the death of her 7-month-old son Keaton Quinn Pangburn in 1986. She provided support to families many years before there was a SIDS organization in Iowa. Melanie also prided herself on keeping up with the latest SIDS research.

Jackie VanMeighem remembers Melanie as having an incredible memory, "She remembered SIDS parents' names, their babies' names, their family members and their specific stories even after some time had past." Melanie was Jackie's first contact with the SIDS organization after the death of her daughter, Jessica, in 1994. She wrote Jackie a personal note and invited her to the support group she facilitated in Davenport.

Jackie said, "Melanie was on a first-name basis with hospital members and medical examiners in the area. If there was a SIDS death, they knew exactly who to call."

Because of Melanie's geographical location, she often worked with members of SIDS of Illinois, collaborating efforts and providing support not only to Iowa families but to Illinois families as well. Pam Borchardt and Nancy Maruyama, RN Co-Executive Directors for SIDS of Illinois remember her fondly.

"Melanie was passionate about bereavement services for families. She would receive a call from the emergency department at hospitals in the Quad Cities and she would go - even in the middle of the night - to sit with a newly bereaved family," Pam recalls. "She had such dedication to the memory of her son, Keaton. She was an inspiration to all of us about how to take a horrible tragedy and turn it into something positive and meaningful. Melanie wasn't bound by borders. She frequently helped SIDS of Illinois with conferences, trainings and peer contacts. We were so lucky to have a trained professional who was willing to travel in order to educate others about SIDS. She was a friend and it was an honor to know her."

In recent years Melanie continued to work for her community. In 1998, Melanie was

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hired by the Catholic Charities Diocese of Peoria as a youth intervention advocate for the Youth Intervention Program (YIP). As an advocate, she worked with adolescents in crisis within the community and those placed in foster care. In 2003, Melanie was instrumental in developing a parent support group that helped parents learn better communication skills and understanding of their adolescent teenagers.

Kelly Sanchez, YIP case worker said, “Melanie was a devoted worker and spent a lot of her time helping families manage their family crises that may have developed in the home. She was also willing to spend time with our young adolescent mothers, educating them on SIDS and helping them get involved in community service agencies. Melanie will be missed by everyone she was involved with including workers, clients and all the families she touched through the years.”

Melanie is survived by Terry Pangburn and their children Brandon of Davenport, Donovan and daughter-in-law Sarah of Blue Grass, Cashlin and McKinnon “Macky” both still at home, her mother Jeanie Quinn, five sisters and one brother.

Larry Rossman

Larry Rossman, past president and one of the original board members of the Iowa SIDS Alliance, will be remembered for his dedication, compassion and gift of gab. Larry was a paramedic in Iowa for over 30 years. He became a SIDS educator after he had the unfortunate task of responding to an emergency call at his own home, for his own daughter. Two-month-old Cassidy Rebecca Rossman became a SIDS fatality on April 11, 1980. After Cassidy’s death, Larry preserved her memory quietly but adamantly.

Iowa SIDS Foundation advisory council member Mary O’Brien, RN collaborated professionally with Larry many times, “Some people are what I call the ‘kind souls’ of the world. They just go about life in an unpretentious way, not needing to get in the spotlight, but always doing a thorough job and always being there to help out when something is needed. Larry Rossman was one of those kind souls.”

Larry was a full-time paramedic with the Johnson County Ambulance Service in Iowa City since 1988. He was also a 24-year veteran of Mary Greeley Medical Center’s Mobile Intensive Care Services. Larry commuted to Ames on weekends from his home in Cedar Rapids to work part-time as a paramedic. In his 24 years in Ames, his contributions led to developing first responder units around Story County.

Larry recognized the emotional stress and difficulty that first responders also feel after a devastating emergency call involving an infant. Larry often could be counted on to debrief a staff of paramedics after responding to a SIDS call.

During his years of involvement with the Iowa SIDS Foundation, Larry participated in educational speaking engagements, worked on professional statewide conferences and provided public awareness of SIDS with the paramedic community throughout the state of Iowa. As a member of a multidisciplinary team, Larry was instrumental in developing the Iowa Infant Death Scene Protocol and Iowa Autopsy Form.

Melanie Quinn “was an inspiration to all of us about how to take a horrible tragedy and turn it into something positive and meaningful.”
- Pam Borchardt

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"Some people are what I call the 'kind souls' of the world... Larry Rossman was one of those kind souls."

-Mary O'Brien, RN

Mary said that Larry would easily be remembered for his many professional accomplishments, "But some of us will remember a more personal side of Larry - his laughing brown eyes, easy smile and 'kind soul' quality."

Larry remained optimistic and hopeful throughout his battle with cancer. He was so loved and supported by his Mary Greeley co-workers that 18 of them shaved their heads last May during his chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

Larry compared his life to that of a golf game, "You just wait for the next shot to land on the green, then you decide what to do next."

A December 16, 2004 memorial article in the *Ames Tribune* quoted Larry, "There are no perfect endings. There is a perfect beginning when you are born and a perfect beginning when you die."

In his spare time Larry was an avid mud racer. He began mud racing about 10 years ago. His property in Cedar Rapids, known as "Larryland," was where he established and was the president of the Iowa Mud Runners Association.

Fellow mud racer Vickie Kluge, president of *HotRodder.com* spoke of Larry with a heavy heart, "He was very humble and didn't elaborate a lot on his work. I only knew of his love for trucks and motorsports. He was one of the nicest people I've been fortunate to know."

Larry leaves behind a son Cody, daughter-in-law Melissa and grandson Evan, all of Cedar Rapids; his mother Esther Rossman of Boone, two brothers and one sister.

There is no easy way to sum up the lives of two of the most extraordinary people I have had the pleasure of knowing in my lifetime. Both Larry and Melanie will forever be known for their volunteer contributions to SIDS education and public awareness in the state of Iowa. The Iowa SIDS Foundation would like to extend its thoughts and prayers to all of Melanie's and Larry's families as a new journey begins for those affected by their deaths. We have all been affected and touched by their lives.

-Submitted by Angie Miller
Iowa SIDS Foundation Board Member

New Arrivals:



Congratulations to the following family on their new addition:

Brianna Marie Krusemark was born December 1, 2004 to Joel and Krissa Krusemark.



Is there a new little one at your house? If so, we would love to share your happiness. Please phone or mail all pertinent information or e-mail info@iowasids.org.

Important 2005 Dates

Saturday, August 27

Iowa SIDS Foundation 6th annual **Walk for the Future**

Albia, Boone, Cedar Rapids, Keswick, Quad Cities, Spirit Lake, West Des Moines
Registration at 8:30am except in Albia and Keswick (watch for future information)
Visit www.iowasids.org for more information.

Deadline to have a name added to the back of the walk t-shirt: June 17. Please call 515-279-6928 if you do not receive a form to add a name to the t-shirt by June 1.

Sunday, October 2

Iowa SIDS Foundation **Memorial Event**

Reiman Gardens, Iowa State University, Ames

1:00pm

Watch your mailbox and www.iowasids.org for more information.

Saturday, October 8

Strike Out SIDS softball tournament

Davenport, IA

All-day Co-ed softball tournament to raise funds to fight SIDS

For more information email atzen37@msn.com or call 515-279-6928.

Robby Boy

When you were born everyone was filled with joy. Every morning I'd go into your room and say, "Good morning, Robby Boy." I would even drag you around like you were some kind of toy. But one day when I was only two something horrible happened to you. Mommy, Daddy and the whole family were sad. I thought to myself, "This must be bad." I was confused. What was going on? And why was my Robby Boy gone? One day as Mommy cried, she explained to me that Robby Boy had died. It seemed like a tragedy—all the things that were happening around me.



Today it is sad to think that Robby is the brother I never had. I'll never know what a brother is like or if he likes to hike or ride his bike.

My little Robby Boy, I hope you have fun in heaven, playing with the other boys that are ten and eleven. Sometimes I still think, "Why did my little Robby Boy have to die?" I never even got to say goodbye.

By Alex Miller, Age 12

In memory of her brother,

Robby Miller 10/17/94—3/20/95

Peer Contact Training a Success

The Iowa SIDS Foundation hosted a day-long training in Urbandale for 30 current and new peer contacts on February 26 to prepare peer contacts to effectively assist new SIDS families in their bereavement. The training was made possible largely through a grant from the CJ Foundation for SIDS.

Peer contacts are the backbone of the grief support we provide to families. If you are interested in becoming a peer contact but were unable to attend the training, please contact Ingrid at 515-279-6928 or ingrid@iowasids.org.

2003 Iowa SIDS Data Released

The Iowa Child Death Review Team (ICDRT) has released its findings for 2003 child deaths in its 2004 annual report. This report contains statistics about all 2003 deaths in Iowa for children ages 17 and under.

The ICDRT is made up of 15 individuals representing a broad range of professions and also has 7 state government liaisons. This group reviews every death of a child in Iowa, producing a yearly report to the Governor and General Assembly including information and recommendations to prevent future deaths. See Resources on www.iowasids.org for the full report.

2003 Iowa SIDS Deaths

The ICDRT reported the following information about 2003 SIDS deaths in Iowa:

- 29 infants died of SIDS
- 5 infants died of sleep-related causes which could not be positively determined as SIDS versus another cause
- 2 infant deaths were ruled undetermined because of insufficient death scene information

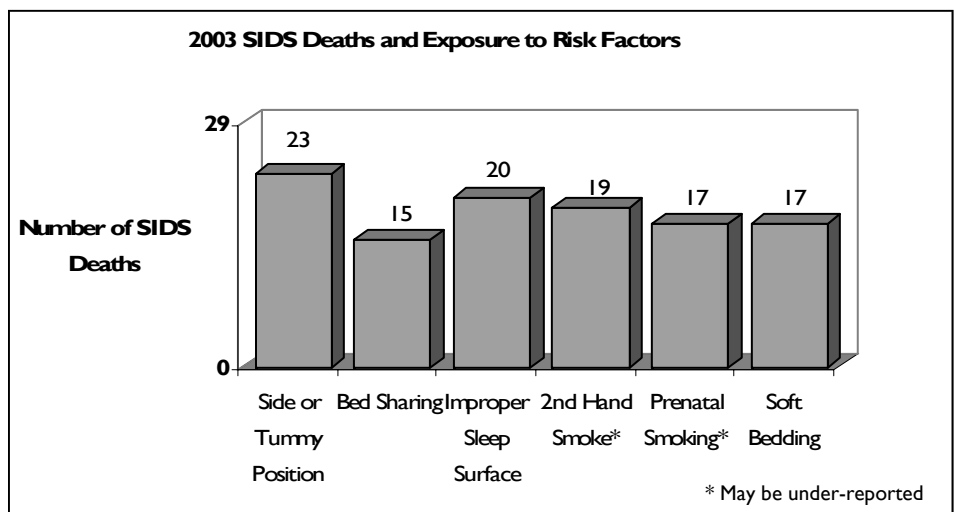
*Iowa SIDS Rates vs.
National SIDS Rates*

*Iowa SIDS: .76 deaths
per 1000 live births (2003)*

*National SIDS: .46
deaths per 1000 live births
(2001)*

Risk Factors for SIDS

The chart below shows the 2003 deaths and the infants' exposure to risk factors.



Quick Takes

Memorial Event Planned for Oct. 2

A special state-wide SIDS memorial event is planned for October 2 at Reiman Gardens in Ames at 1:00pm. This event will include keynote speaker Carole Harder and a special memorial reflection. Watch for future information.

National SIDS Conferences in 2005

September 15-18

Together Making a Difference presented by First Candle and International Stillbirth Alliance in Arlington, VA on

stillbirth and SIDS. For more information visit www.firstcandle.org.

October 20-23

CJ Foundation for SIDS presents its first national conference, *The Caring Circle* in Philadelphia, PA. The first days of the conference will concentrate on professionals in the SIDS community and the latter days of the conference will focus on SIDS and SUDC families. For more information watch www.cjsids.com.

SIDS Support Group Meetings

Des Moines group meets the second Tuesday of every month from 7-9 p.m. in the Kelley Room at Iowa Methodist Medical Center, 1200 Pleasant St. (basement level, past the cafeteria). For information call Carol at 515-223-1600.

Quad Cities group meets every month, second or third week Wednesday or Thursday at 7:00 p.m. For information call Betsy 563-332-6265.

Cedar Falls group meets as requested by appointment. Call Roxanne Novak at 319-277-3476 for information.

Sioux City group meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30-9 p.m. at the Siouxland Public Health Dept. 205 Fifth St. For information call Mona Scaletta at 712-279-6119.

Knoxville group meets as request by appointment.

Call Lori Howard 641-828-6515 for information.

Cedar Rapids/Iowa City

group meets as requested by appointment. Call Tricia Borelli at 319-398-6795 for information.

Washington group meets the first Tuesday of each month from 7-8:30 p.m. at St. James Catholic Church basement. When a holiday falls in that week, the meeting will be the second Tuesday of the month. For information call Karen Swanson at 641-472-0898.

Clarion group meets as requested by appointment. Call 1-800-944-1713 and ask for Cheryl.

PEER CONTACT SUPPORT

If you are a bereaved parent, grandparent or family member and would like additional peer contact individuals who are willing to listen, feel free to call:

Karen Swanson (641) 472-0898
Gary Marker (Grandparent) (515)285-2605

Other Resources

Serving all of Iowa

Amanda The Panda Support Groups (ages 6-17) – Children and families meet in a group with a therapist for 6-8 weeks periodically during winter, spring and summer months. Weekend camps. Family “Fun Days.” Pen Pal Program. No charge. Chat line and bulletin board on website. www.amandathepanda.org 1000 73rd Suite 12, Des Moines, IA 50311-1321. 515-223-4847.

Camp Amanda (for grieving children, teens, young adults and families) – Children’s grief camp held 3 times a year for 40 kids ages 6-17. Adult camps also held 3 times a year. College-age camp held once a year. No charge. 1000 73rd St. Suite 12, Des Moines, IA 50311-1321. 515-223-4847.

Teen Line – A statewide hotline that offers counseling and education 24 hours a day, seven days a week. 800-443-8336.

Des Moines Area

Compassionate Friends -Meets the first Tuesday of each month at New Hope United Methodist Church, 4525 Beaver 7:30-9:00 p.m. 515-965-1922.

Empty Arms - Meets along with Compassionate Friends, the first Tuesday of each month at New Hope United Methodist Church, 4525 Beaver, 7:30-9:00 p.m. 515-253-9739 or 515-270-8766.

Cedar Rapids Area

Compassionate Friends – Meets at Mercy Medical Center, McKinley Room the second Monday of the month from 7:30-9 p.m. 319-626-6246.

Empty Arms – Meets the third Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the formal lounge of St. Luke’s Hospital Resource Center. 319-369-7347.

Grieving and Growing Support Group – Mercy Medical Center Hospice. Open to youths up to age 14. Six sessions offered in the spring and fall. 319-398-6496.

Iowa City Area

Compassionate Friends – Meets on the first Monday of each month (in the case of a holiday – the second Monday) at 7:00 p.m. in the First Floor conference room at Mercy Hospital,

500 E. Market St. 319-351-2255.

Lake City Area

H.U.G.S. Support group for Children – For children 5-15 years old. One-on-one support for children who have experienced a death loss. For registration, contact Community Hospice, Stewart Memorial Community Hospital, 1301 West Main, Lake City, IA 51449. 800-262-2614.

Manchester Area

Regional Medical Center Grief Support Group – Support group for adults grieving the loss of a loved one. Meets the first Wednesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. at the Regional Medical Center of Northwest Iowa and Delaware County, conference Room B, 709 W. Main St. Please check in advance as time is subject to change. 319-927-7330.

Mason City Area

Understanding Grief & Loss Support Group – A six-session grief support group held periodically throughout the year to provide education and support for anyone affected by a death. Free of charge. Offered by Hospice of North Iowa. 232 2nd St. SE. 641-422-6208.

Nevada Area

Bereavement Support Group – For adults experiencing loss through death. Call St. Patrick’s Catholic Church for more information. Daytime-515-382-2974, Evenings-515-382-2539.

Pella Area

Empty Cradle Program – Sponsored by Hospice of Pella to provide emotional support and educational materials to families who have experienced the death of a baby due to miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, stillbirth, SIDS and early infant loss. Services include support groups, individual counseling, keepsake box and newsletters. Empty Cradle educates the general public and medical professionals in the area of pregnancy loss and newborn death. Hospice of Pella, 414 Jefferson. 641-628-6644.

Memorials and Donations

The Iowa SIDS Foundation thanks the following individuals for their generous donations.

These donations were received as of April 30, 2005.

In Memory Of

Joey Cusick
Joseph and Gloria Burkle

Nathan Faga
Pat Zimmerman

Edmund Jakubczak
Bill and Stephanie Pettit

Jacob Anthony Lipski
Jerry and Carol Lipski
David Sledesky
Staff of Immaculate Heart of
Mary Catholic Church
Tricia Behnke

Alex Marker
Charles and Jill Matthias

Ryan Mougín
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Bill and Lori Miner
Glen and Grace Rossman
Bill and Stephanie Pettit

Beth Stukerjurgén
Jay and Ingrid Stukerjurgén

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Pat Zimmerman

General Donations
Gary and Pam Sejkora
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Iowa SIDS Foundation

Our Mission

The Iowa Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Foundation is a statewide, non-profit, voluntary health organization dedicated to providing emotional support to SIDS families, educating professionals and the general public about SIDS, and funding medical research into the causes of SIDS.