

Mother's Day *without Keith*

By Caryn M. Suarez



Keith Sullivan

On May 12, 2000, the Sullivan family was en route to visit their grandmother who was sick in the hospital. Pam and Keith Sullivan were in the front seat of the car and their sons, Keith 16 and John 14, were in the backseat. Less than five minutes from their destination, they were hit head on by a drunk driver, who was only about a mile from having left his house. Already intoxicated, he needed to make a run for more alcohol and he felt the quickest way to get it was to get behind the wheel of his car. The family suffered horrific injuries. John suffered multiple injuries, including three pelvic fractures. Keith, who also had multiple injuries died, at the scene.

In a moment, the Sullivan's lives were changed forever. Two years later (on May 12th of this year) Pam Sullivan must get through Mother's Day with the greatest loss of all - remembering the loss of her son. Fortunately, with the help of her husband, her son, John, her family, friends and most of all her faith, she faces this year with her head held high and a determination to help stop the ever climbing number of deaths caused by drunk drivers.

"Keith was just a wonderful, wonderful son. He was a good student, well liked. He did well in school and took his Bible to school with him every day. He was quiet and he had a wonderful loving relationship with his little brother, John. We were blessed because we were all so close as a family. We love and miss

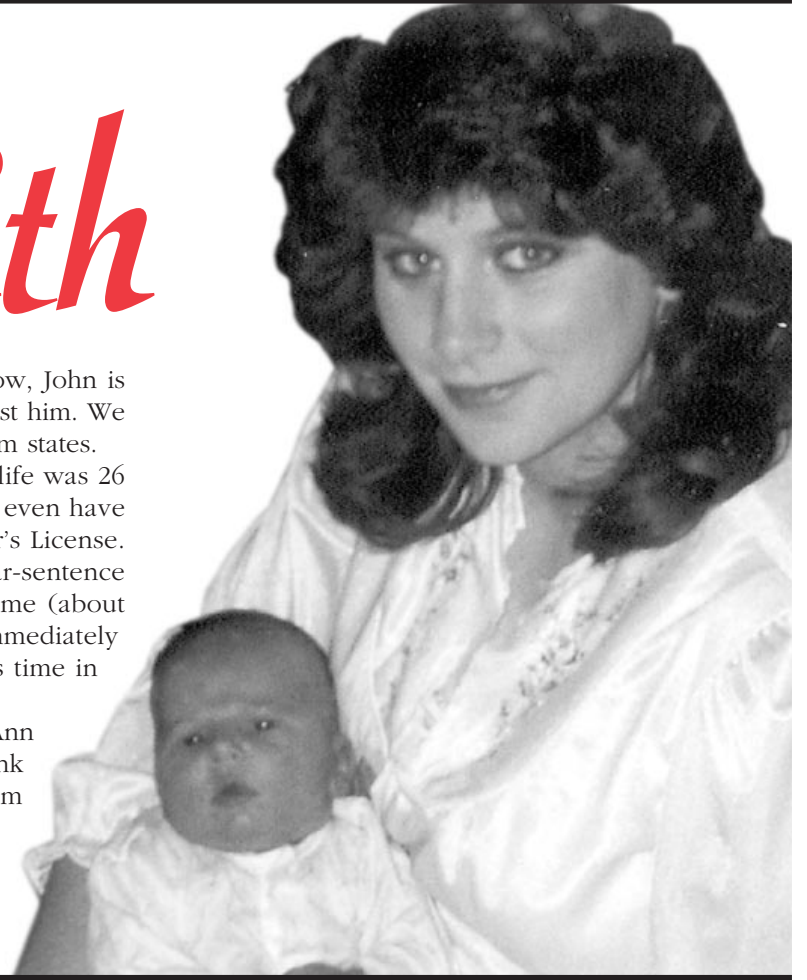
him so much. He would have been 18 now, John is already 16, the age Keith was when we lost him. We pray and feel Keith with us everyday." Pam states.

The driver of the car that took Keith's life was 26 yrs. old. He was not a US citizen, did not even have a green card, but he had a Florida Driver's License. At his trial he was sentenced to a 15-year-sentence for which he has to serve 85% of that time (about 12-1/2 years). He will be deported immediately back to his own country after serving his time in prison.

The Sullivans said Nicole Brooks and Ann Adams from MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers) have been lifesavers for them through this entire ordeal and with them every step of the way. Pam is now involved with MADD and devoted in her fight to join forces with others to stop this. She states being involved with MADD has been very therapeutic for her entire family. "John will soon be driving. I have to do this for him, for us, for all mothers with children to keep these people out of their cars and off the streets. The man who hit us could have walked less than a mile to the store for more alcohol, but he chose to get into his car, already intoxicated, and took the life of our son."

Keith Sullivan, Jr. has been memorialized in the past two years at his school, church functions, and organizations. The "CanaanLand Boys" Gospel Group are releasing a new CD with a song dedicated in memory of Keith Jr. The song "How Great Thou Art" is sung by his dad, Keith Sr.

"I'm sure he is happy and he knows he is



Pam Sullivan and baby boy, Keith.

remembered and so loved." Pam remarks. "Mother's Day will be especially hard this year, but with the help of the Lord, my husband, John and memories of Keith, we will all get through it. Keith would want it that way."

We see them on the sides of the road all the time — little white crosses, some with flowers, some with balloons. They are grim reminders daily of the safety we need to exhibit on our roads. For a few moments, we slow down or we take a few seconds to ponder who is the person memorialized by that little white cross. This is the story of one such cross on US 441.



Art provided by Hubbard House

The Dirty Little Secret

Domestic Violence

By Lee Martin

Our homes are supposed to be places of love, acceptance, refuge, and nurture. The dirty little secret is that all too often our homes are not the pictures of tranquility we would like to believe. Domestic violence is far more pervasive than the statistics show. You

may even at this moment be thinking about someone who is a victim of domestic violence or someone who you suspect is a victim. The dirty little secret is domestic violence goes under reported by victims, family members, neighbors, and co-workers.

Only after reporting domestic

violence can intervention take place. Intervention comes through many sources such as law enforcement, the courts, various social agencies, and churches. Help is available.

Don't curse the darkness, strike a match!!

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