WITH LOVE FROM ANN BOLDEN, BOARD MEMBER, WITH LOVE:

If you are reading this newsletter, then you have a connection to others who have suffered the same kind of tragic loss of someone you knew and loved to suicide. Or, possible you help us with your counseling or medical skills. For whatever reason you receive this newsletter, it is a sort of "lifeline for all of us.

Seven years ago our son, Jeff, ended his life by suicide. Until that day, I knew little about suicide, and I certainly never even considered the possibility that anyone in my family would ever die by suicide.

Suddenly, suicide became an ugly intruder into our lives, and nothing would ever be the same. Through months of shock, anger, blame, guilt and hopelessness we came to the realization that, in fact, it was real. That fact wasn't going to change and it was up to us to face it directly if we were going to survive and, by God's grace, thrive.

For quite a while I did not even care if I survived, often praying at night that I wouldn't wake up the next morning and have to face the awful pain of our loss. Yet, wake up, I did…morning after morning after morning.

Then, one morning I found a small brochure on the counter among a stack of junk mail, cards, newspaper sections, etc. It had the name of Friends For Survival and a phone number on it. I made a call to that number and Marilyn Koenig answered. She listened to me for over an hour…the only person who actually listened to me without interrupting and trying to tell me what to do to "fix" my problem!

Shortly after that conversation, I received a packet in the mail from FFS. I had my first copy of this newsletter, and I immediately read it from cover to cover! I realized that I was not alone in my loss and that there were others in my community who had also suffered a tragic loss to suicide. I read about the support meetings held in my area for survivors. I eventually gathered the courage to attend my first meeting. It was the best thing I did for myself, and it was the first step in my long journey of healing. I met others who "understood" the loss as best as it can be understood. I made new friends and over the months I grew to love this caring and accepting new "family".

I now serve on the FFS Board, facilitate the small Christian meeting each month and, of course, regularly attend the monthly general meeting. I am privileged to give back by sharing with others the care, encouragement and compassion that were so lovingly shown to me.

These are difficult days in which we live. The economy is unstable. These difficulties have threatened our ability to maintain and continue to offer the services that we provide for you and others around the country…including this newsletter. For many, you have no support meetings in your area. This newsletter may be your only connection and means of support, encouragement and helpful suggestions for coping.

If each person reading this newsletter could find it in their heart to send us even one dollar each month it would help us provide full time office staff. Full time office staff means extended hours of live phone coverage, more programs and an improved and expanded newsletter. We also have ideas to expand suicide prevention on our web site. **Join the $1 a month club now.** Of course, if you can and wish to send more, that would be greatly appreciated.

Peace and love, Ann Bolden, Roseville, CA

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MAIL TO FRIENDS FOR SURVIVAL, P O BOX 214463, SACRAMENTO, CA 95821

$______________LOVE GIFT IN MEMORY OF ___________________________________

FROM ____

Special designation: $______ Web site $_____Office staff $_____Cherished Inspirations (book)

$______ other, please specify____

______I am committed to sending at least $1 a month for the next twelve months

Comments.____

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Please consider remembering Friends for Survival, Inc. in your will.

___ I have remembered Friends for Survival, Inc. in my will.