



## How to honor your baby with a memorial garden



By Laura Johnston, media chair

It's finally spring in Ohio. Maybe you're thinking of planting a memory garden to honor your baby.

"Creating and caring for that garden is therapeutic for both body and mind. It feels good to work in the soil with your hands, nurturing new life," writes Helen Lammers-Helps, an expert gardener and bereaved mother (who is also my wonderful aunt).

Her son Michael died shortly after birth in 1998. She has since created a beautiful space to commemorate Michael.

My sister, Heather Johnston Welliver, has also created a memory garden for her daughter, Lydia, who was stillborn in 2014.

Memorial gardens can be a wonderful way to bring you peace and include your child in your family. You can take pictures there, as the flowers bloom. You can work on the garden together. You can tell family and friends how your child's garden is growing, and they can buy you decorations -- from sundials to windchimes -- to add to your garden.

There's no wrong way to choose what to plant.

- Perennials will flower year after year, growing with each season. They bloom around the same time each year. Native perennials such as Black-eyed Susan and purple coneflower are especially hardy.
- Annuals create instant color.
- Shrubs, such as forsythia, lilacs and azaleas will fill out your garden.
- Flowers with fragrances, such as early-blooming hyacinths, may make you smile.

You may wish to plant flowers whose names have personal significance. Forget-Me-Nots, mums, love-in-a-mist, love-lies-bleeding and bleeding hearts may resonate.

You could also choose flowers associated with your child's birth month, due month, or conception month, writes Elizabeth Czukas.

## Wishing you love on International Bereaved Mother's Day



International Bereaved Mother's Day each year honors mothers who have experienced pregnancy and infant loss.

The holiday, the Sunday before the traditional Mother's Day, was founded by Marie Dudley in 2010, as a temporary movement to help assuage the pain of the traditional May holiday. This year it falls on May 6.

After all, Mother's Day was created in honor of a bereaved mother. Anna Jarvis created Mother's Day in honor of her mother, Ann Jarvis, who gave birth to a dozen children, four of whom survived to adulthood.

Soon, Dudley hopes, all mothers will feel recognized, loved, supported and celebrated.

"Bereaved Mother's Day is an opportunity for moms grieving for their children to talk about all they've endured," writes Alexis Marie Chute. "They can talk about their experiences, what their children who died looked like, the dreams they had wished for, and how they may be hurting...The day is a celebration and a memorial for families, and how they may be hurting...The day is a celebration and a memorial for families, and how they may be hurting...The day is a celebration and a memorial for families, and how they may be hurting..."

Wishing you peace and love, especially on Bereaved Mother's Day and the traditional Mother's Day as well.

Two events you may be interested in:

In Columbus, our friends at Alive in My Heart are hosting [Forever a Mom - A Memorial Event for Bereaved Moms](#) on May 12.

In Cleveland, our friends at Forever My Baby You'll Be (part of Cornerstone of Faith) are hosting a [Mother's Day Tea](#) on May 5.

"If you have other children, you may plant a tree or flower for each of them to tend and watch grow, surrounded by the flowers that memorialize the child you lost. The most important thing to remember is that this should be a project that helps with your healing process," she writes.

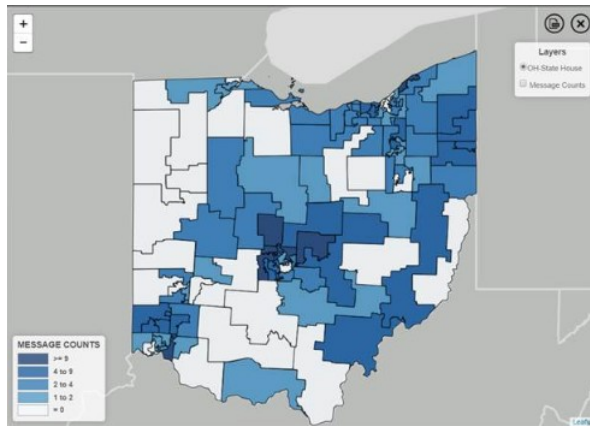
You may want to attract bees or butterflies, as symbols of life transitions. To attract the graceful insects, plant Bee Balm, mallow, purple cone flower, phlox, butterfly weed, butterfly bush, New England asters, Coreopsis, dill and blanket flowers, Lammers-Helps says.

And you may want to add a bench so you can sit with your thoughts about your child.

A few tips to think about before you start digging.

1. Consider how much sun your plot gets. Choose shade or sun plants accordingly.
2. Select a variety of plants so there's always something blooming, spring through fall.
3. Read plant labels for directions. Feel free to ask for help at the store.
4. Add mulch to discourage weeds.

"One of the great things about gardening is that if you don't like the way it looks, you can move things around until you are happy with the result," Lammers-Helps says. "It's a growing, evolving thing so you need not worry about making mistakes."



*No one from the Ohio House districts in white has contacted Ohio representatives about the stillbirth tax credit.*

## Supporting stillbirth tax credit legislation

The Ohio House of Representatives is considering a one-time, \$2,000 tax credit for stillborn babies, as a way to recognize the children and grant some financial relief to grieving families, thanks to the work of the Ohio Chapter of the Star Legacy Foundation.

To get the tax credit passed, we need your help. Please tell your state representative that you support House Bill 507 and you'd like them to vote for it. We especially need help from people who live in the areas in white above.

Ohio Star Legacy members testified March 13, before the House Ways and Means Committee, and the bill is still currently in committee.

Whether you are the parent of a stillborn child, a friend or family member or a citizen looking for an important cause, you can call or email your legislators.

**To make it easy, use the [Voter Voice tool](#). Just fill out your name and address, and it'll send emails to representatives for you.**

## Save the date for Lydie's Loop!



**SEP 22** **Lydie's Loop: Steps against Stillbirth 2018**  
Sat 8 AM  
Helen, Kati and Jaime

Like Comment Share

The Ohio Chapter of the Star Legacy Foundation will host its biggest fund Lydie's Loop: Steps Against Stillbirth, in September.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018, for the third annual eve 5K run, 1-mile walk, children's activities, raffle, silent auction and reading names.

Lydie's Loop, named after Lydia Welliver, who was stillborn in November great opportunity for families to celebrate their children and meet other pe have suffered perinatal loss.

Find more information here: [www.tinyurl.com/lydiesloop](http://www.tinyurl.com/lydiesloop) Want to volunteer Heather Johnston Welliver at [ohiochapter@starlegacyfoundation.org](mailto:ohiochapter@starlegacyfoundation.org).

## We're partnering with the Cleveland Clinic!



The Ohio Chapter of the Star Legacy Foundation is partnering with the Cleveland second perinatal bereavement conference for health professionals.

We'll be presenting at Fairview Hospital July 30!

## Want more Star Legacy news?

Follow us [on Facebook](#) for news, links and upcoming events. Want to get more We're always looking for volunteers! Email [ohiochapter@starlegacyfoundation.org](mailto:ohiochapter@starlegacyfoundation.org) information.