

JAMES E. MACLENNAN

EVERYDAY HERO AWARD

2014 Honoring alumni who have served others steadily with countless small yet effective acts of kindness and time commitment; founded, been involved in, or led community service projects; and/or responded to emergencies or human misery, whether domestic or foreign.

MARCELLA MILLOT JOHNSON

C84, USA

GRIEVING MOM CREATED HOPE YOU CAN HOLD

AFTER BABY SON DIED, WOMAN DEVELOPED COMFORT CUB BEAR

by John Wilkens, U-T San Diego, May 10, 2014



"Since the inception of The Comfort Cub program in 2001, over 6,000 Comfort Cubs have been received by those in grief." - Comfort Club website

Marcella Johnson remembers thinking she was crazy.

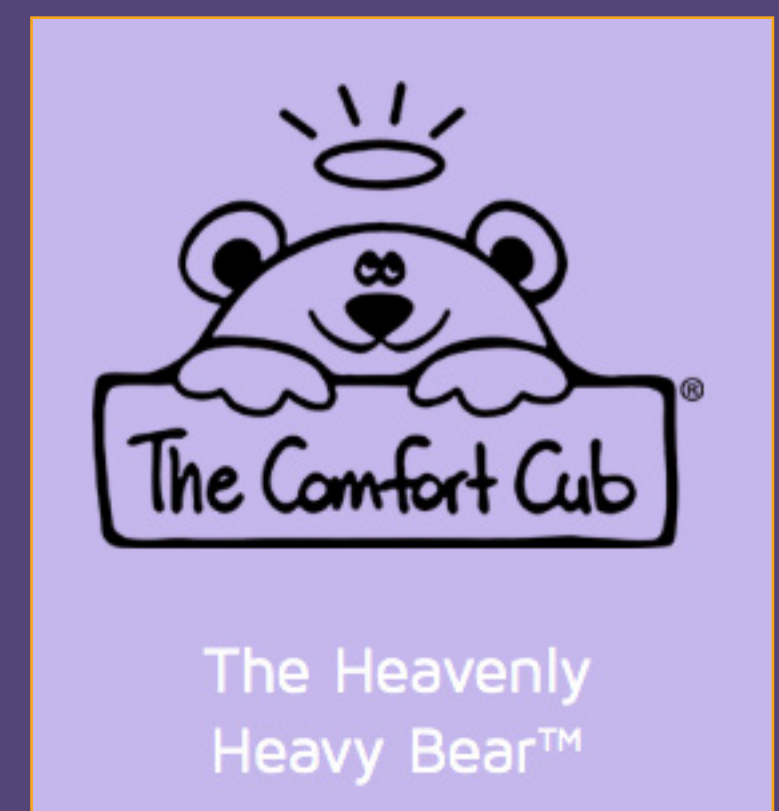
A week after her baby son George died, she was at the cemetery with her father. Her heart ached. She was grieving. But why did her arms hurt, too?

Her father handed her a terra-cotta flower pot that someone had brought to the grave site. "You should take this home," he said. She wrapped her arms around the pot and hugged it to her chest. Her arms stopped hurting.

"I thought I had gone off the deep end," she said.

The more she thought about it, though, and the more she read about others who found solace clutching various objects, the more it made sense: Her arms ached because they were empty.

The Comfort Cub got its start then.



The Comfort Cub® is a therapeutic teddy bear that helps people to heal from the pain of a broken heart. It was created by a grieving mother, after the loss of her son, to help others who were also in need of comfort. This teddy bear is specially weighted and was originally intended to feel like holding a newborn. Since then, the Comfort Cub has been used to comfort anyone experiencing a loss of any kind. It has also been clinically proven to help alleviate the symptoms of grief. This healing teddy bear has been bringing comfort to people of all ages for over 14 years. We hope it will bring comfort to you and your loved ones too.

NOMINATORS' COMMENTS

"I want her and all of you to know that she is my Everyday Hero because she was the one who reached out to me when I miscarried a child in 1998 in a way that no other person thought to, or perhaps could. Something in her honesty that has always been part of her seemed to get through to me. She sent me one of the Comfort Cubs she created after the loss of her own son. The bear is specially weighted and intended to feel like holding a newborn. In my personal life, and I suspect in the lives of many others, her impact has been extraordinary."

Marcella Fontenot Babcock, C84, USA

"I was a castmate of Marcella's in C84. In one of my first interactions with Marcella, I mocked her incredibly positive nature. Although I don't think that I ever apologized, she clearly forgave me and became a dear friend in the years after UWP. We attended weddings and funerals of other castmates but I wasn't prepared to receive her call inviting me to the funeral of her soon-to-be-born son, George. She told me how important it was for her to stay strong for George and her other children. It was an odd mix of sadness and gratitude that I felt as I attended George's funeral. So now it's 30 years later and the person that I once mocked for being "too positive" is the person that I wish I was more like. She is a perfect candidate for an Everyday Hero, because she is one."

Scott Heimer, C84, USA