



Photos by Brooke Wolfe / Times-News

Diana Gardner-Williams and son Shivere sit in a memory garden created in honor of Tanner Lee Williams, the stillborn son of Diana and Todd Williams. The Williamses created the garden as a way to memorialize their late son.

Fond memories grow here

Couple creates memory garden to honor late son

By Charity Apple
Times-News

LIBERTY — The sound of wind chimes whistle in the wind, inviting you to come closer and see what lies at the bottom of this long gravel road.

Situated at the end of a pasture is a memory garden dedicated to Tanner Lee Williams, infant son of Diana Gardner-Williams and Todd Williams. Tanner died Sept. 28, 2003. He was stillborn; the umbilical cord was wrapped around his neck.

A photo of Tanner is inserted in a hand-carved cedar log. Baby shoes, phrases engraved in stone and loving reminders of their baby boy can be found in and around the garden. Todd carved a wooden cross out of cedar, and friends donated wind chimes in the shape of butterflies and angels.

Some of Tanner's ashes were also sprinkled onto the soil when the garden was first planted one month after his death. White plants and flowers bloom year-round, and Diana created a circle of Natchez Crape Myrtle trees, which she said "will provide shade as they grow."

Diana and Todd are landscape designers, so this project was something they could do together. The garden is a few feet from the home of Todd's parents, Ron and Carrie Williams. At the time of Tanner's death, the couple didn't live here, and they wanted a way to memorialize their son — a place they could return to on holidays and special



A photo, statue, flowers and trees fill the memory garden in honor of Tanner Lee Williams. At this time of year, the garden features red bows, Christmas lights and other ornaments.

occasions.

They now live next door. When the couple moved here in June, Diana had hoped she could see the garden from her kitchen window, but instead, it's only a golf cart ride away. Diana loads up Shivere Joseph Williams, the couple's 1-year-old son, and takes him to the garden, some-

thing she's done countless times since Shivere's birth on Oct. 17, 2004.

"It's our special place," she said as she and Shivere (which is Hebrew for "gift from God") make their way to a stone bench.

Red bows, Christmas lights and ornaments now decorate the garden.

"At night, you can see the lights. It's

just beautiful," Diana said.

Sometimes, Diana just comes out here and talks to her son.

"I feel so connected to him now," she said. "When I was pregnant with him, there was proof he existed. Now that there's no physical evidence of

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