In Preparation for the 2017 Newsletter, The Twin Research Registry sent an e-mail to its participants asking for stories and any interesting facts or anecdotes to share, including:

1. Do you have unusual twin names? How did your parents decide to name you?
2. What is your funniest story about being a twin? Did you play tricks in school?
3. Do you feel more connected or close to each other than regular siblings?

Below are the great responses we got from our twins. Enjoy!

**SCHARLYN**

We have identical names, Scharlee and Scharlyn. We were supposed to be a 9-pound boy but were two identical twin girls. My sister came out first and I was a totally surprise to everyone. When we were in high school we used to trade classes. I would take her math class and she would take my history class. When we lived in the Philippines we were in the same class and the teacher accused us of cheating on a test. Our mother told them to separate us and give us the test again. We did the same thing. We have a lot of ESP and even buy the same blouses. When my sister was pregnant I gained the same amount of weight that she did. When her daughter was born I lost the weight. We are very close to each other and are Mirror Twins. We have a great relationship and call each other 2 or 3 times a day. In 1971 we were on a "Miss California Twin Contest. We met 18 sets of twin and had a fantastic time.

**BARBARA**

Our twin names are Beverly and Barbara. My parents had NO idea they were having twins until my mother gave birth. Initially we were labeled Baby A and Baby B. My dad suggested Beverly and Barbara (apparently names of his old girlfriends). I am not sure my mother ever knew that. When we were young and we looked so much alike (we are identical), my dad would get frustrated because he could not tell us apart. He would combine and abbreviate our two names to “Bebar”. In elementary school, we were best friends with another set of twins: Marie and Bev were in the same class, while Pascal and I were in another class. We decided it would be fun if we all switched at the same time. We thought we got away with it until a peer in Bev and Marie’s class kept staring at me. I tried to hide my face behind a book but he started saying, “hey, you are not Bev, you are the other one.” Finally, the teacher said, “Is it true, are you Barbara?” I couldn’t lie so I said, “yes, but if I am not Bev, that is not Marie, it’s Pascal.” We were sent down to the park to retrieve our sisters. Bev was giving an impromptu speech on my run for class secretary—that was unexpected for her and I know she was not happy! I had forgot to mention that little detail when we decided to switch. Our teachers were NOT amused and we had to write on the chalk board that we would not trade classes with our twin 100 times. We finish each other sentences, say the same thing at the exact same time, feel the same way, think the same way and enjoy the same things.

**KRISTI**

My twin, Kerry, and I will often pick up the phone to call one another at the same time or say the same thing at the same time with the same voice. It confuses people. :) Having a twin means having a built in best friend for life. I do not ever want to know what it is like NOT to be a twin with Kerry.
MARTHA
Martha and Mary were born in 1937 in California. Twins were not expected (though Mother said she knew!); when the nurse told their dad that he had a new baby daughter, he said, "There's another baby!" Mary appeared 18 minutes later. Their maternal grandmother named the identical twins after Mary and Martha in the Bible. When Mary was born she was lying quietly; whereas Martha was rambunctiously kicking and screaming. The biblical names have fit perfectly to this day! When Mother took Martha and Mary to school on their first day they were in awe when they saw another set of identical blonde twins in the same classroom. The two sets of twins immediately gravitated to each other and became best friends. Their relationship remained strong all through school, while raising families, and even into their golden years. In grammar school, the two sets of twins drove the teachers crazy because they would switch clothes. In those days identical twins always dressed alike! After graduating from high school, the twins were all married within a year of each other and they continued to be friends. They maintained their close relationship for years. Identical twins are definitely much closer than other siblings, and only another set of identical twins can fully understand the relationship. When Barbara died, Beverly said, "Half of me is gone". Martha and Mary were very blessed to have known Beverly and Barbara, as they had a very special friendship with them. Identical twin girls definitely have a very unique relationship.

GERRIE
My name is Gerrie and my twin’s name is Sherrie, 59-year-old female twins and identical. Sherrie was the first female firefighter in Dallas 40 years. I am a registered nurse. In school we would trade places on April 1 a lot. One year we got caught and received zeros for the day. We were in the same class for first grade, then they separated us for 2nd grade and I really struggled. There is a closeness with my twin sister that I don't have with the 3 other siblings. My sister and live our (own) lives but touch base with each other frequently by phone. It's as if my grandchildren are also hers and vice-versa. When I call my twin sister to talk, it's as if we can describe something and I can envision what she is saying. We don't let each other get away with things. Immediately, issues are brought to the front of our discussion and any necessary correction is discussed immediately. There is an understanding between us I cannot explain. We love each other and communicate deeply. Sherrie always wanted curls and I would like my hair straight. In high school, things seemed to change. Sherrie played basketball and I was in drill team; I got married and became a stay at home and she was a fireman. I taught in nursing like: CPR, hemodialysis, ACLS,PALS and EMS. Sherrie taught CPR, EMS, OSHA and she is a lecturer and keynote speaker. She and my mother are authors. Sherrie wrote "Faith on Fire" about being the first female fire fighter in Dallas.

COURTNEY
One time I was getting ready to leave the house. Our front door at had a glass window that filled the top half of the door, and as I was walking towards it, I could see my reflection. I opened the door and WHAM slammed right into my sister. Turns out it wasn't my reflection. She thought the same thing. Now I can't trust glass, mirrors, or shiny things in general. I'm never sure who's looking back at me.
KWIXUAN
We have pretty interesting names, Kwixuan and Zurvohn. My mother made up the names because after having her first child the doctor told her that it will likely be her last. She decided to give him a very unique name, Quijuan (pronounced “cool-Juan”). Two months after giving birth to Quijuan she was pregnant with twin. So she came up with the names Kwixuan (pronounced Quiz-on) and Zurvhon (pronounced Zur- on). She had three more kids and they all had the same sounding original names Vyhyahn, Xatrohn and Yhunuan. As for playing tricks at school….of course! What other benefit do you get out of being identical twins? As a matter of fact, we still play tricks.

BLAKE
Bo and I are each married with three children. Even though he is a healthcare consultant in Utah and I am a university administrator in California, we still talk every day at least once. We are much closer than most siblings. The funniest story I can think of is during our college years. Bo was committed to his long-term girlfriend, Katie, who was also a friend of mine. I decided that, assuming Katie was cool with it, this situation could be the ultimate wingman experience for me. With Katie's blessing, Bo would keep his eyes open on campus for any girls he felt I would like to go out with. When he would find someone, he would flirt a bit, set a date, and I would show up on that first date without them knowing it was a different person! I ended up marrying someone he helped set me up with. Bo and I have also stayed close through the past few years by partnering on a book publication. You can learn about it at www.the12conversations.com. When Bo and I were in grad school, we reflected on the experiences that helped us get to good colleges, as low income students from Utah and put the principles into a book titled, "The Middle School Student’s Guide to Academic Success." The book was published by Simon & Schuster last year. One of the main points of the book is to have a close partner like a twin to help you through it.

JUDY
When my mother learned she was having twins, she was sure we would be boy and girl (she was correct), and selected what she considered cute twin names - Judy and Jerry. One time my twin brother and I were discussing family birth dates. I was trying to remind him when other family members’ birthdays were. He took note, then, in all seriousness, turned to me and said, "Hey, when is your birthday?" He was not kidding. I think we felt much more connected when we were younger, more so than with our other siblings. We even thought we would marry each other!

JEANNE
We attended the Twins Days Festival in Twinsburg, Ohio, for our 75th celebration, and we have a good photo from that event. There were a mere 2,000 SETS of twins plus multiples in attendance! My twin, Joanne, lives in California, and I live in Illinois. We can recall how we celebrated every "decade" birthday and are looking forward to this BIG one!
JESSICA
We have fun twin names: Jessi and Joci (Jessica and Jocelyn). Our parents came across the name Jocelyn in a movie. Jessica was a family name. One of the funniest moments being a twin was being dressed the same, sometimes by color (me pink, her purple). With a large family, Joci and I always had to share a seat in the car. One morning on the way to church as Joci and I (7 years old) shared the front seat together. We looked down and couldn’t figure out whose leg was whose! We stared at both legs intertwined for a couple minutes in confusion laughing hysterically from the shock. Before we moved our legs, we guessed... and were both wrong. Spoiler alert - we then reclaimed our legs and went into church. We tricked our high school teachers a handful of times but our classmates always gave us away! Joci and I have been inseparable ever since I can remember! We played soccer and basketball all of our lives together and had to go to college together where we both played soccer. Having a twin is a bond that I am thankful for every day. As I said in my Maid of Honor speech last May at her wedding, I always grew up in her shadow. She always got better grades, could run faster, and started dating first... So whenever anyone would confuse us and call me “Joci”, it was the biggest compliment.

DAVID
After nixing Romulus & Remus, our parents named us David & Jonathan, because they were great friends in the bible (Torah). As MZ twins in those days, we were placed in separate classes in kindergarten. Then we were both in a school "Gifted" pilot program, and so had the same teachers in the same class from 3rd grade thru 6th grade. At summer camp, we traded cabins one year, completely fooling our counselors and cabin mates. At college, when he dropped out of pre-med, I took his finals for 2 courses. When I was a senior resident in the Pulmonary ICU and he was a visiting Professor of anthropology at UC Irvine, one day he dressed like me (with white coat, wrist watch & my glasses), and led PICU rounds for 10 minutes, completely fooling the junior resident, intern, medical student and pulmonary fellow until I stepped out and inquired why they were listening to a non-physician. A bit later I drove down to UC Irvine, donned his garb, pocket watch and glasses, and started his lecture in a 500 student lecture hall, until 10 minutes into the lecture, Jonathan, sitting in the last row, started heckling me and asked his class why they were listening to me - much fun was had by all. As MZ twins, we are definitely closer than typical siblings, and much closer than either of us are to our brother or sister. In my experience, MZs are roughly 2/3 of the time closer than usual siblings, and about 1/3 of the time show an exaggerated sibling rivalry. We have participated in a number of SRI twin studies over the years, including pain response and emetagenic response to opiates, response to nicotine, immune response to HPV and influenza vaccination, among many others. And my son now works at SRI.

ADRIENNE
What fun! Our parents had no idea they were having twins because Mom was healthy, the doctor only heard one heartbeat during checkup and this was a routine pregnancy ... or so they thought. Mom went into labor one month early. Slightly groggy with anesthesia Mom heard her baby's first cry and said to the doctor "oh, that's my baby?" and he replied "well that's one of them" and the second baby was born 14 minutes later. She thought he was joking! We were Baby A and Baby B until our parents’ shock wore off and they could come
up with suitable twin girl names. Being identical twins we used to switch classes all the time in high school and college just for laughs. People would brag about their ability to tell us apart so we occasionally showed them their hubris. We are close with our other siblings but we have a definite and palpable twin bond. We talk or text almost daily and we try to see each other every two weeks despite having family and job responsibilities and living 150 miles apart. When we are together we are always happy, can talk endlessly and feel like we've been given the most joyful gift possible. We thank our parents constantly for this gift!

ELAINE
Our parents did not know they were having twins. During the era in which we were born, ultrasound technology did not exist. The doctors listened by stethoscope for heartbeats, and since my sister and I were facing each other and our heartbeats were in sync in utero, one baby was all that was expected. During delivery, our mom, who was anesthetized, asked groggily, "Is that my baby?" after my sister was born, upon which the doctor replied, "Yeah, that's one of them..." Our mom chuckled at that "joke", and drifted out of consciousness, not realizing that he was telling the truth. When she came to, she was shocked to learn that there were, indeed, 2 babies, and for that matter, identical twin GIRLS. Mom and Dad thought they were having a boy, and they had a boy name all picked out. One of our most amusing twin-swap stories occurred while we were out on a double date in San Francisco. We were wandering in and out of shops along the wharf, and inside a fascinating gadget store, my sister's boyfriend came up behind me, thinking I was her, and gave me a big ol’ bear hug. My sister and I knew right away it was a case of mistaken identity, but our boyfriends had no clue. I played along, letting my sister’s boyfriend cozy up to me, while she and I enjoyed the ruse. Eventually, the boyfriend nuzzled my neck and moved in for a kiss, at which point my sister cried out, "Alright, that’s enough!” Apparently, that was a line that dare not be crossed. Both boyfriends were embarrassed by this incident, which is why it remains alive and well in our twinsie lore. I'm certain there are regular siblings that have an incredibly special bond. But how many of them can go shopping together and say, "Here, try this on, so I can see what I look like in it." Ha, ha! 😊 I feel eternally lucky and grateful for having a twin, I relish our talks and time together, and love, love, LOVE her! So yeah, we're pretty darn close.

SCOTT
My twin brother and I live about an hour away from each other across two bridges. We both like art and to shop second hand stores. One day my brother came to visit bringing me a gift; when I opened it up I was totally shocked- it was a water color painting I had seen and admired two months before but decided not to buy. It was from a store in a county neither one of us ordinarily shop in. I always had regretted not buying it and yet here it was in my hands now. When I asked If I had told him about the painting before he said no but he was passing thru Solano County, saw the second hand store and stopped to browse. He saw the painting and bought it because he knew I would like it.
MARY
The day we were born was a hot, humid fall day in 1935. Dr. Scott and both Grandmothers were there to help Mother give birth to us on the kitchen table. I have known my sister 9 months longer than anyone else, and we are as close today as we were the day we were born; our names rhyme—Betty Fay & Mary Kay. We did everything together......We lived in rural Missouri the first 6 years of our life and started taking piano lesson at the age of 4. We began our education in a country school but moved to town to enter 2nd grade. All of the time that we moved from place to place Mother always made sure that we continued our piano lessons. We played duets and two piano pieces in recitals and won prizes in several competitions. We had had polio the summer before we started 6th grade and spent most of the summer recovering. We had physical therapy to strengthen our legs. I can remember Mother sitting with us to be sure we did all of our home exercises. Daddy would sometimes get down on the floor with us too. We were majorettes with the marching band all through junior high and high school. There was another set of twins that were majorettes also. Our senior year there was a total of four sets of identical twins in our high school. That may not seem too unusual until you take into the account that our high school had an enrollment of approximately 200 students. Three of the four mothers were teachers. Although we live many miles apart now—Betty Fay in Montana and Mary Kay in California—we talk every night on Skype. Being twins is indeed a very special thing.

CAROLYN
Thanks for asking! Recently, my sister and I wondered how anyone knew back in 1948, when we were born, whether twins were fraternal or identical. We had a DNA test done, and yes, indeed, we are identical. As for names, "Mary" had been selected, but then 5 minutes later, I showed up. I think the first choice was "Cary," rhyming with "Mary." But my birth certificate has “Cary” crossed out and "Carolyn" written in. Most of our photographs from our early years identify us as "Mary" and "Cary." We were both Math majors in college and I was one semester ahead of her in the math curriculum. She took off to California, and insisted that I take her final exam in calculus. I had taken that test the quarter before and got a C, but she insisted so I did and got a five credit D. To this day, she blames me for that. There is nothing better than having an identical twin. Ordinary siblings do not understand the bond between identical twins. It goes deep. Nothing matters. Only death can separate them. Maybe not even death. I love my sister.

CHERYL
One of our favorite stories happened when we were about 38. We were at a store in town and getting this “back and forth look”, you know the one! The girl behind the counter asked if we were twins, “Yes” we said and she pipes up, “I’ve never seen OLD twins before!” My sister and I looked at one another, and said, “I didn’t know we had a shelf life!” On the same day we went to a supermarket, my twin Carol had her four-year-old son with us. While checking out he started to fuss for something close to the register; she was patient and told him no. The cashier looked at Victor and said, “What’s the matter, Grandma won’t let you have it?” I started to laugh and I could hardly keep my composure. She replied “What’s so funny? You look just like me!” She got the last laugh on that one! To clarify, we didn’t look our age then and we still don’t, it was not uncommon to see youngish women with grandchildren in our area! We now live within three miles of each other and we in each other’s company most of the time. If not together, we are often asked “where is your
sister?” We are recognized more as twins now than when we were younger. This seems strange to us. Our experiences throughout life have made us closer than other sibs. Our mother had THREE sets of twins (without fertility help), seven children total.

ROBERT
I’m an identical twin; my twin’s name is Ronald. We were born in August 1941, now 75 years young. I was 3 pounds 5 ounces my brother was 2 pounds 15 ounces, and we both made it! I was named after a famous mover actor at that time...Robert Young. My brother was named after a “grade B” actor...Ronald Reagan...What ever happened to him? We joined the Navy together. In the military you go by your last name, and first initial. We ended up in the same unit. I think the Navy thought we were one in the same person! Years ago we had the same primary doctor. One day, while I was having my annual exam the doctor was discussing a procedure that he stated I had a few weeks earlier. I told the doctor I didn’t have a procedure done a few weeks previous. So we look up the information and guess what...my brother’s report was in my file. After the exam we went to the receptionist and explained the problem. She asked “what is your birth date?”. The doctor and I both laughed and corrected the problem. When people find out we are identical twins we get asked:

- “What’s it feel like being an identical twin?” Our answer, “what’s it feel like being a single?”
- “Do you feel each other’s pain?” I then hit my brother and tell them I didn’t feel a thing.
- “Do you forget which twin you are, i.e. name?” Not yet!

I have two granddaughters. When they were little, they would look at my brother and I and start to cry! They didn’t know which one was their “Nonno”. My cousin has identical twins. My mother’s mother had fraternal twins. We didn’t play tricks in school, but my brother and I dressed identical all through school. Our parents always made sure we were treated the same. If someone gave me a football and my brother a baseball my dad would buy another football and another baseball so we would each have the same. We didn’t have other siblings. I think my parents were afraid of have more twins!

LINDA
We were born in 1947, and at that time they had no Ultra sound . My mom only gained 18 pounds; they thought she was going to have 1 tiny baby. My sister was born 6 min before me; then they realized another baby was coming out! My dad wanted a boy but my aunt told him it takes a real man to have twins; that perked him up. My sister was named by my mom, my dad named me after Linda Darnell the actress. The Doctor who delivered us did not know there would be twins, so he did not charge my parents for me, I was free. When we were in our teens we had the same voices, so when we did not want to talk to our boyfriends the other would, that was fun. We are very close fraternal sisters, always have been. I have always enjoyed being a twin, but my sister did not like it when our mom would dress us alike; everyone is different! Thanks for the twin registry, and keeping in touch.

BARBARA
Our folks named us after our grandparents. My father's mother's name was Barbara. My twin sister's name is Emily after our maternal grandfather Emil. When we were growing up, we knew so many Barbaras but very few Emilys. Now there are many younger Emilys but very few Barbaras. My twin is lucky that they didn't name her after our maternal grandmother, Bertha.
FRANK
This is my favorite picture of my sister Janet and me, taken at a family picnic at Blackberry Farm many years ago. She was coming from San Mateo and I was traveling from San Jose. Neither one of us knew what the other was going to wear. We were both so surprised, and congratulated each other on our “similar look.”

REBECCA
Born in the late 60’s to hippie parents, naturally they wanted to give us names of peace. My twin, Shanti, means peace in Hindu and my middle name, Shalom, means peace in Hebrew. Born to a British mum and Jewish dad, we joke that we are, “part British, part Yiddish!” When we were born on our father’s birthday, we were just over 5 pounds each. Shanti was born first and almost half an hour later, I came along. I joke that I stayed longer in the womb because I finally had the place to myself, so why come out? Or maybe it was because I heard her screaming out there! I was more crinkled, a tad smaller and jaundiced. The doctor said I would need to stay a few days in the hospital to recover, but she was free to go home with the healthy twin. Mom said, “Doctor, I came in here with 2 babies and I intend to LEAVE with 2 babies!” She was always devoted to both of us. Having a twin is an extremely close bond and I assume it’s typically closer than most normal sibling bonds. The only time we grew apart was in high school when one tends to push against all family members anyway. We never physically fought, but that’s because we knew words hurt EVEN MORE! SO yes, we had our fair share of emotional battles. In the first grade we met a classmate who looked just like us, so we posed as TRIPLETS! We did get a lot of attention (even free ice cream cones!) with her in tow since most people have seen twins, but not triplets. As adults, we look very different from her. One time in high school, I was late for my next class and running from the gym at the same time my sister was running to the gym. We almost ran right into each other and for a split second I thought I was about to run into a mirror, not an actual person! And it turns out our dental images are mirror images of each other too.

BOB
My twin sister and I will be 88 years old in June 2017. When we were in our fifties I began to notice that whenever my sister would injure herself, I would suffer the pain in the same place even though she would be thousands of miles away. It got to the point that if I suddenly suffered a pain in my knee I would telephone and ask how she hurt her knee (she twisted it while skiing). One day I awoke with a terrible pain in my back and left leg. I called her up and asked what happened; she was in an automobile accident which left her with a sprained back and a broken left leg. There were too many examples for them to be passed off as coincidences. We are wondering if any other set of twins experienced the same phenomenon.

TYLER
Thanks for reaching out. Here’s a little bit about me and my twin brother, Nathan: We are "mirror image" identical twins, which means he is right-handed and I’m left-handed. Approximately one out of every 100 sets of identical twins are "mirror image." My dad wanted to name us "hippy-ish" names like Moonbeam and Stardust. Our mom wanted to name us more common names. So they settled somewhere in the middle with
Nathan and Tyler. My brother and I are extremely close. We have shared an apartment together, currently work together, and have worked on creative projects together, including film projects (iMDb.com), are in a band and created a comic book together. We were born fairly far apart for twins -- almost 50 minutes. We switched all of our classes once in high school on April Fools' Day -- none of the teachers could tell. Nathan and I are both big collectors and have collected comic books, and vintage action figures. Our hobby has led us to meet some really interesting individuals, including John Cusack, Bruce Campbell and Stan Lee.

GAY
A funny thing happened this week - a good story! We have come back together again as identical twins to turn 80 years old and live in a continuing care residence together. We haven't been living together for 60 years! Last week we both had lab appointments for blood draws on the same morning. I have not used the lab much at all and my twin Gwyn has gone frequently for blood tests. So when I went in first to the phlebotomist, she asked for my name. "Gay B." I said; she looked on the computer and said, "Excuse me, what is your name?" I answered her again and she excused herself and went to the reception desk. I heard later that she told the receptionist: "I have a client who is terribly confused; she doesn't even know her name." She did come back in and draw my blood, but when my twin sister came in next she said: "Oh my goodness, I didn't know you had a twin!" That's one of the best confusion jokes yet, thought you might enjoy the humor of moving into a senior center as a twin! I'll attach a picture; you can see how much fun we have!

TED AND BILL
Ted: Bill and I joined the Navy Reserves in 1956 when we were seniors in high school and turned seventeen. We were inducted into active duty after our first year of college and we both elected to request electronics schooling in the Navy. We were both accepted and attended electronics training and both passed. Near the end of that training period there was a request for volunteers to go into the submarine service; we both volunteered, passed the testing and were accepted into sub school. We both passed the sub classes and were then assigned to advanced sonar training school. By this time, they knew us quite well. We eventually parted ways after two years. He was assigned to the USS MAPIRO, a submarine that was being recommissioned to lend-lease to the Turkish navy. About two months later I happened to be assigned to the USS LAMPREY, a sub which was being recommissioned to be given to the Argentine navy. These two submarines were in side by side dry docks. So we finished our navy enlistment basically still together even though it was unintentional. The USS MAPIRO was preparing to get underway for sea trials one morning. I was standing on Bill’s boat talking with him and others when the horn blew to signal departure time. I ran for the gangway to get off quickly and their executive officer saw “Bill” going AWOL right before his eyes! He yelled “HEY, Rose, where the hell are you going?” Bill was standing behind him and tapped him on the shoulder to let him know he was still on board. The “exec” turned around, looked at Bill and started laughing. It’s a good thing he had a good sense of humor as the deck crew, who knew what was going on, were laughing too.

Bill: Another problem that has come up by being identical twins; Sometimes people who think they know you well but you ignore them because you are the “other one” and they become offended or hurt; Or think you are just one strange person. For a while we both lived in the (same) city. I was a salesman and had an open schedule for work. Ted had been a firefighter for many years and had risen to the rank of Assistant Fire Chief. Because of his work he was well acquainted with many politicians, city management members, all members
of the fire department, of course and others who did not know he had a twin brother. Especially fellow firefighters, who tend to have a special closeness, and you walk right by them without a hint of recognition. We were at a wedding together and there were other firefighters there. One female firefighter came up and hugged and kissed me and I was unreactive to her. She then shouted “It’s me, Wendy.” And I said “It’s me Bill.” Everybody started laughing.

MORGAN
I can’t recall why our parents chose the names Morgan and Lauren, but as of today I really do like them. They don’t sound too similar, and they’re both nice and androgynous! When we were little, we had bits of our own "twin language". In middle school, our computer teacher coined the name "Lorgan" which we still occasionally use today! At a small award ceremony in the gym, he announced the winners of some art-related award as "the Lorgans!" Everyone had a good laugh. As for the rest of school, we never played any tricks. I believe we have a much stronger connection than most siblings, as I'm assuming many identical twins do. The longest we’ve ever been apart is when my sister went to a high school engineering camp for about two weeks. It was an odd two weeks, that's for sure! People ask us if we have twin telepathy, and after much thought I am now answering it with "kind of". Because we grew up in the same environment, we often have the same reaction or answer to something! I'm wondering if other twins feel the same way regarding this. Thanks so much for the opportunity to share some of our stories! Included is a picture of us which was featured in an agriculture newspaper (scroll through to see all images).

ANDRE
Judi and I are turning 66 in June and neither have been married nor had children and we both live separately in a 2 bdrm - 2 bath condo. Pretty similar

BARBARA AND LARRY
Barbara: Larry and I are fraternal twins and 70 years old. We call each other by names that no one else knows. I'm not sure how or when that began but it's existed for many years. Family and friends have no idea of it. My entire life I have said, "our birthday". Although we rarely see each other now, we are still very close because of being twins, a very different closeness than we have with our sister. We understand what each other says, even a couple of words, or a key word. If one of us contacts the other, the other usually was about to do the same. It has always amazed me what different paths our lives have taken and the different choices we have made, while being raised exactly the same. And yet we both had the same opportunities. I always idolized my brother, laughing at his jokes, thinking he was the greatest. When we were little I would be mad at my mother if she reprimanded him; I was always sticking up for him. I have loved being a twin, loved the closeness, the feeling of being special, and the joy of sharing a lifetime of significant "twin" love that is like no other.
Larry: Twinness comes up for me often in conversation with people I encounter while shopping, especially when I see little kids who are obviously twins. I am not at all bashful about being a semi-bright goofball. I tell people that I have been a twin most of my life. That often goes right over their heads. I get asked what it is
like to be a twin. My standard response to that is that I will tell them IF they will tell ME what it is like NOT to be a twin. I often get asked another question after I announce that my twin is female (I am not): “are you identical?” I reply by saying that the word, "Identical" means the same in "Twin" as it does in English. There was an almost five-year-old sister when we twins auditioned for life. Man, did we steal her thunder and rip the rug out from beneath her! Things worked out. We all went to Hebrew school and our folks kept kosher for a while.

DICK
My identical twin brother and I used to play tricks on girls during high school. We found that we were so identical that we could "switch" girls during double dates. We never got caught! Sometimes, we would meet girls, at the movies or maybe at a county fair and switch a couple of times during the evening. It was so much fun. We laughed about these adventures so many times! It should be noted that we never, not even once, "switched" with the girls who eventually became our wives. Both of us, having been married for over 50 years were pretty happy with the girl we got and weren't about to give her up.

BRUCE AND BART
Bruce: Bart was named Bartholomew after our Sicilian Grandfather whose name was Bartolo. I was named after our Fathers father, Oscar. He said no kid should grow up with the name Oscar....so they named me Bruce. We had Deaf parents and learned sign language very early on and used it to keep secrets from the teachers. We changed seats in our Spanish class in high school and the teacher did not know the difference. Bart grabbed a paper from a girl and tore it up to get even with her. Of course, the teacher took me to the office and scolded me for being a bad boy. When he finally realized I was not Bart he apologized and Bart got nothing! Many times in family gatherings and at school they would call us Bruce-Bart! We are two guys who are close because we both are gay and have had unusual lives. On one occasion I was walking in San Francisco and someone stopped to say "Hi Bart!"

Bart: They named us after our Grandfathers but did not like the name Oscar so they named my brother Bruce. I was named Bartholomew after my Italian Grandfather and I also have five other cousins named after him...many Barts. Yes, we switched desks on teachers. One time in Spanish class the teacher thought I was Bruce; she liked my answer and said “good job Bruce, you get an A”...I yelled “no, I am Bart”. Bruce yelled back “he is lying”. Once we were in the football game in high school and a player came into the game and yelled “Carlson out”. We both left and then the coach yelled, Carlson get back in and you can guess why the coach had to call a time out...We were closer in the younger years because we were both gay and felt different; as we got older and our family totally accepted us we got very close to my sister and her kids and grandkids....

COREY
My identical twin and I are Candice and Corey. My maternal grandmother had twin brothers, Elbert and Delbert. My maternal grandfather has twin sisters, Wilma and Thelma. My parents didn't want us to have weird names but have the same first initial. We did play tricks at school. When the school asked our mother not to dress alike (because she absolutely loved to do that), we would change our clothes in the bathroom at recess and sit in each other’s seats.
ANNETTE
Me and my twin brother are very close - we talk everyday all the time. But the funniest story is when I shaved my hair off like him and my whole family will call me Eddie sometimes.

LLOYD AND LARRY
Lloyd: The story is that my twin brother sent you the same photos and story that I sent you about our TWIN license plates. I did not tell him and he did not tell me. Twins at work.
Larry: My twin brother, Lloyd, lives in Washington and I live in Oregon. Our vehicles both sport “TWIN” license plates, so we have the “TWIN” plates tied up for the whole Northwest. We are both retired teachers, but I am still subbing. As I go around to different classrooms I carry copies of my “TWIN” plate and pass out copies to twins that I encounter - they always appreciate the recognition.

KAREN
We never tried to fool anyone, but it happened a lot anyway. As a matter of fact in photos of us as children I cannot tell which one is me. We DO have a closer relationship with each other than we do with our other eight siblings. Our mother says that when we were babies, we had our own language with each other. There have also been a number of occasions when I experienced pain when she did, even though I didn't know until later that she had been injured. An amusing incident happened in high school when a classmate asked us how long we had been twins; of course she realized the silliness of the question immediately after she asked it. I am five minutes older than Kathleen. I tell people it's because she is always late for everything.

ALISON
I am an identical twin. "Alison" was spelled with one "L" so that Alison and Alexis were both 6 letters. Originally, we went by Ali and Alex, but we were called "Ali and Lexi". On our first day in kindergarten in 1997. Lexi had an award winning teacher, who was very engaged with his students. I had a cranky fellow who had his assistant do most of the teaching. After our first day, Lexi was so excited to start her homework. I did not have any assigned homework at all, which made me upset; I began to cry. Lexi said, "Here, you take my name tag and go to class as me, so you can get homework too!" Fortunately, our parents stopped us from attending each other's class, but it definitely got a laugh. In 2014 my twin and I turned 21 years old. Unknowingly, we both had ordered a Long Island Iced Tea as our first legal drink, from opposite sides of the state! We didn't know until the day after. I have 3 other siblings, not including my twin sister. I can definitively say that she and I are much closer than I am to my other siblings. She is my absolute best friend.

RITA AND AMY
We weren’t always in close proximity, but were always on the same ‘wave length’. When we gave birth to our children we were between two thousand and three thousand miles apart; at almost the precise time of
delivery our ‘wave lengths’ always connected. We shared the deaths of our parents and exalted in the graduation of our offspring...we experienced in duplicate many of the variations that life presents. Perhaps, because of this duplication, we both tend to understand, appreciate, and treasure occurrences that often pass through time unnoticed. From poems written at age ten:

She’s love and life and laughter – and “my twin”.
She’s now and yet and after – and what’s been.
Her name is – call her Amy and she’ll sparkle with a grin
That lights the mist of memory, for she’ll always be “my twin”.
It’s so strange to separate, to live our lives apart.
Like one strain of blue music, a long chord at the start.
We two are from together-land as we tread into this singleness.
We are no longer hand in hand – it is Rit and I now, not us.

BETSY
We were named after our grandmothers, Mary and Betsy. Although identical we were never able to trick anyone at school. One time in high school for a rally I was sitting on the bleachers and she walked in. At that moment I totally thought it could have been me. As adults we live a mile apart. We have kids at the same schools and many of the same friends. Those who only know one or the other get us mixed up. We have to try to smile and say hi to anyone looking at us funny or just ask them if they think we are the other one. It happens almost once a month. We are very much connected. We have 2 other sisters and a brother that we are close to but it’s a different bond for sure. We are the person who has been there for every life event. We are each other's biggest support and encouragements. Our children consider us each their 2nd mom.

JOY AND JILL
My fraternal (or “sororal,” as we have long called ourselves) twin and I were given single-syllable names that were purposely difficult to shorten. But by giving us names beginning with the letter “J,” they failed to consider the confusion this would cause. They assumed that because we had different hair colors (she is a blonde; I am a redhead), it would be easy for others to pick us apart. Not so—we were frequently confused as kids, even though we don’t look alike ... or do we? There must be a strong resemblance because on numerous occasions we have been mistaken for each other, even as adults. For many years we lived in the same small city, and were fairly well known as local teachers. We often frequented the same stores, and on at least one occasion, I entered a shop and was greeted by the cashier saying, “Hi, weren’t you just here today?” Although we are close, our closeness seems to be more like that of singleton siblings than that of other twins. In fact, I have been able to compare our friendship with that of my identical twin sons who look so much alike that even some of their best friends cannot tell them apart. For this reason, they were more successful at playing tricks on people than Jill and I were; once one took a math test for the other, and when one was being awarded for being in the Top Ten of their class academically, the other took his place to receive the award! In the hope of avoiding the same name confusion that Jill and I endured, my husband and I gave our twins “G” names, but one with a “hard G” and one with a “soft G.” But our cleverness did not deter their being mistaken for each other. Even though they live in different cities, they are often mis-recognized. Once Greg got on the train in
San Diego and a friend of Gian’s from Northern California whom Greg had never met began talking to him. Another time I was walking with Gian downtown when a friend of Greg’s—assuming that Gian was Greg—came up and began talking to us!

KATHY
Carol and I were born soon after WWII into a family barely making ends meet living in southern CA. Both our parents were first generation Americans who had Russian immigrants as parents. Our older sisters named us after famous actresses. We were loved and always well taken of. We had our own rhythm to the way we played, fought & totally understood each other even when we weren’t verbally exchanging words. Our instincts were as one and everything we did just blended together, even finishing each other’s sentences. When we were about 4 years old we ran away. We found friends that shared their bikes & away we went, far away from home. Down steep hills, crashing at the bottom with torn up arms and legs; it just didn’t matter. We were having fun! Our home was surrounded by orange groves and down the street was an old man who lived alone. A big verandah wrapped around the old place and we made friends with him. Carol & I lived in the trees in his front yard – we played chipmunks for hours and we snuck onto his front porch & looked through the screen door. We were hoping he would share a piece of hard candy with us and he usually did. Summertime was the best as we had our adventures in the surrounding fields. My brother Mike had built a fort along with all his friends where they flew kites, rode bikes and made bonfires. One day we got caught a little too close to the fort – my brother tied us back to back far off into the field. That escapade took us several hours to recover from and get home. Mike was in a lot of trouble for that one and we were glad for it! Being the two youngest in the family, we got away with a lot! We were extremely mischievous, had personalities with absolutely no fear and lived every day to see how much fun we could have. My Dad brought home a brand new car so Carol and I proceeded to play gas station. We pretended to drive it everywhere and one of us thought the car might be out of gas; we got the outside water hose and filled up Dad’s tank. That afternoon when we went to the market our new car conked out. We all had to walk home! Today I live in Texas and Carol lives in California – a day does not go by where we don’t talk to each other, text or connect on FB catching up on the day. We are so close yet have our own individual lives with our own families – our children are all close to each other as well. Our siblings are close but we definitely have our own unit together and remain extremely close.

JANE
I would love to be a part of this! I don't know how our names came about: Judy and Jane. We also have identical twin brothers Larry and Barry, who passed away 3 years ago. My fraternal twin and I are close ...we can sense things going on. We are part CHEROKEE.

CONNIE
We were named in 1955 after Hurricanes Connie and Diane. Even though we were born in Ohio, the news of the hurricanes was known. So we became the “Hurricane Twins”. We feel more connected to each other than we do to our older brother. However, he was able to tell us apart since we were babies. Our father could not. Dad called us “Sis” and “Hey You” since he didn’t want to be wrong with the names. We never took offense and pretty much answered to anything!
IRENE

I have one story that my Mom always told us. She could not always tell us apart when we were very young and was very busy with the two of us running around. One morning when she dressed us, one of us got 2 pairs of underwear and the other none. When a neighbor came over to visit, she mentioned that one of us was going commando.

JIM

Thank you for your interest and invitation. James & Ronald are common names; my middle name Nelson does reflect the strong English heritage however. Funniest story? There were many, however this article covers our amusing/amazing ID twin "habit sameness". As identical twins residing in San Jose & Boise, ID, in 2011 during a family visit to Boise, Ron casually remarked he had accumulated a collection of 40-some hats, which were termed "roadside rescues." Flabbergasted, but not dumbfounded, I then confessed I had been gathering/rescuing hats on the South Bay highway network over the recent years!! Naturally, our values of chivalry, curiosity, adventure, human psychology, sanctity of life, and 'controlled risk' were identical... One more resounding vote for heredity!! Best in Doubles! Don’t recall a high mark/index of mischief in high school; however, in undergrad experience at our college, we developed a practice of asking out dates for each other, with the strategy that it was " less anxiety arousing," and if there was a rejection, then "minimal ego sting!" Feel intimately more intra-psychic connected than to other siblings and peers. Although 700 miles apart, we communicate daily on a cognitive and affective level; many times, just a few words can connect & evoke a deep mutual personal experience.

DIANA

When we were in our early 20's, Cedar Point Amusement Park was opening their new roller coaster "The Gemini" - which is a twin racing coaster. Twins were asked to enter a drawing to be included in a photo shoot showing the roller coaster packed with identical twins. Connie entered the contest and we won. I was not a fan of roller coasters and was very nervous about the ride, but she was confident. She convinced me we had to go so we did. After the ride was over I loved it and she refused to go again!

ANDRA

Hi, thanks for all your research and great information for twins! At our birth, my Mom was not expecting twins, and they didn't know the sex. They had picked the name Jennifer Andra if it was a girl. But, Surprise! There's another one... my sister Jennifer right behind me. Each of my parents got to pick another name for our middle names. Frequently at school we were put in separate classes - mostly I think because the teachers couldn't tell us apart. One year, in seventh grade we were in the same home room class and decided to switch places. Everyone always asked us if we did that - shouldn't we try it once? After lunch we had switched, but the other kids somehow thought it would be funnier if they told on us, so the teacher made us switch back right away. I never felt like there was anything more special about being a twin. I think twins have the same spectrum of relationships as siblings. Twinness itself is just one more thing that can be a factor in drawing you together or pushing you apart.
LORI
Lisa and I are MoMo identical twins, meaning we shared the same amniotic sac within our mother's uterus. We started out in October 1963 at 3:01 when Lisa was born. The pressure of bearing down during her delivery forced all of the blood out of me and into Lisa. The doctors delivered me at 3:03, dead on arrival. The doctors performed resuscitation and did an immediate blood transfusion. My dad was in the waiting room and in quite a panic since Dr. F ran by him in scrubs headed to my mom. As we got older we learned that I was left handed and Lisa was right handed. We always wondered if we could have been Siamese twins.

When we were young we tricked our friends and family a lot, even though we are different in personalities and style. We switched classes on a few occasions. Our friends knew us apart so it was difficult to keep it quiet. We did get caught a few times but the teachers were not really mad about it, we were just trying to have fun. When we were teenagers Lisa took my motorcycle to a friend's house to get some homework assignments and on the way back had a horrible accident. I was at my grandmothers and didn't know about it. I went into a panic and ran home and into the house screaming for Lisa. We didn't share child birth pain or surgery pain but the panic of a situation seemed to be the trigger, like a heightened awareness. She has the same feelings when I am in pain or scared. She called when I had a gallbladder attack and said she felt pain and it was the same location. We often get together to go to a function and end up having on the exact same outfit, same brand, color everything. Lisa is a girly girl and I am a tomboy. But when we were younger and my mother would take us shopping, we would both have to go. On one shopping trip we were at the mall for hours; I kept begging Lisa to stop trying on clothes. She just looked at me with this exasperated expression. So I walked towards her speaking to her about leaving but she kept interrupting me and not listening. I could tell she was getting as peeved as I was by her expression. It wasn't until I was closer to her that I realized that it was me, and I had been talking to a mirror column! This would really make me feel crazy if the same thing hadn't happened to her as well. We live in the same small town and people are always talking to one of us thinking that we are the other. We usually just let them know that they have the wrong one. When the babies were born their expressions of confusion were funny. We finish each other's thoughts, sentences, and call at the same exact time so that you get a busy signal. For whatever reason I am tied to her and she is tied to me, "Through thick and through thin, all out or all in, together, wherever we go!"

MICHAELA
There are lots of stories to tell! We were born with a handicap of eyesight and had to wear glasses ever since I can remember. This was a quite high prescription ever since our childhood and has been more or less equally spread out in terms of development. Since last year this has changed very much. I still have a quite high prescription with +2.5 (which keeps improving yearly) whereas my sister, Andrea, has gone back to +0.5/0.75. As life changes constantly it is funny that we are somehow growing very similar but also very different in terms of our adulthood.
SHARON
Our names are not unusual. Our German parents chose KAREN and the twin name SHARON. High School...Catholic all-girls...uniforms. Our homeroom teachers were so sure that they could tell us apart. We exchanged homerooms. We had to do it! We are very close as sisters with no telepathy as twins. We talk, support spiritually and otherwise, share and enjoy each other. We have always called each other "Sis", which makes it difficult for others to learn our names. Most of our mutual friends still call each of us "Sis". Wonder if they really can tell us apart?

JENNIFER
Thank you for the opportunity to add my stories to your 2017 newsletter. This is really exciting! My name is Jennifer (Jenny) and my twin’s is Jacqueline (Jackie). We were lucky enough to be in the same class for 5th grade. Our teacher gave us a nickname - Jenackany. That is what everyone referred to us that school year! My mother did not know she was having twin girls until she was about 7 months pregnant! When we were born we were listed as Baby A and Baby B because my parents had only picked out two boys' names! They got the idea for my name from a baby names book. My twin and I have worked for the same employer 4 different times. Our first job, at age 16, was at a sandwich deli. We are identical twins and still look very much alike. The dress code was khaki pants, white polo shirt, green apron and a green visor. Many times while we were working the same shift one of us would help a customer at the register and walk to the back right of the deli, and then the other twin would instantly appear from the left. The customer would be shocked with mouth wide open. That happened to us a lot! My twin and I used to be so connected to each other when we were kids that I would feel tense or uneasy when she was feeling it and we were away from each other. There were many times where I would have a certain song in my mind and at the next verse at the correct part of the song she would sing it out loud! We had the same dream one night too. We would be able to almost read each other’s minds by just looking at one another. We both wonder often if somehow we will pass away together. You know how it’s been said you’re always alone, you are born alone and will die alone. Well we were born together. So what does that mean?? And another interesting fact is we are Geminis. June 1st is our birthday! Thanks again for this awesome opportunity. If you would like to know anything more please do not hesitate to contact me. If you would like I will ask my twin to send you her comments as well.

SHANNON
My identical twin and I are as close as close can be, given that we are 3000 miles apart! She is in California and I am in South Carolina. Despite the distance, we still "sense" when something is off or our twin is having a bad day. When growing up, my parents dressed us alike. We grew up liking the same activities, playing the same sports, having the same friends. In high school, our grades were so similar that when graduating our senior year, we were given the SAME rank. Our GPA was exactly the same to the tenth of a point. We both attended the same college and received degrees in Athletic Training and Physical Therapy. After graduation, we were hired by the SAME company but for different clinics. It wasn't until I got married and moved away that I had my own identification and not just the label "one of the twins." It is a bond like no other😊!
CHANETRA
Our parents wanted us to have names that were different from others. They are French, Chanetra and Chantene. We played tricks throughout school and into adulthood. Still today, it is difficult for people to tell us apart. When we started dating our husbands, they did not know the difference when we were together so each of them would wait for “his girlfriend” to approach him affectionately. The funniest story about being a twin is when one of us is ill, we call the other and ask how she is feeling. She responds with the same illness not knowing the other one feels like that. We can finish each other sentences. We cook the same dishes on the same night exactly the same. Our children are fascinated with our ability to say what the other is thinking. We live only a couple of blocks from each other.

JOSHUA
Our uncle tried to get my brother and I to call each other "Bro" when we were young but couldn’t pronounce the "R" so we would run around saying "that's my Bo"- Hence we became the "BoBo's". We switched classes multiple times growing up. I was scared to get in trouble at the time but ended up doing it anyways. I lined up for the door and before I even got to sit down some of Zach's class mates were tattling on me. The teacher had a good laugh; I’ve been caught, time to go check on my brother. As I walked into my class, he was sitting there quietly while the teacher opened her agenda for the day. Once she takes a look at me, she understands instantly and starts to laugh. We switched classes in High school; once again Zach's class rats me out. I walk back to my class and there is Zach sitting quietly as the teacher rambles on. One look at me and the teacher stares directly at my brother and points out the door as the class laughs. In High School our friends would always meet in the same spot before class next to several benches. As we walked up to the circle with my girlfriend's back towards me, my best friend gets the idea for us to switch. Although we looked identical in high school there were several identification factors everyone used, like our colors. Our mom always dressed me in Blue and my brother in Red. So we dropped our backpacks and switched our red and blue sweatshirts. We thought it would be best for him to walk up to her and hold her from behind. Also, at the time I had the deeper voice. So that meant no talking. My brother walks up behind her and gives her a long hug, I sit down on the benches behind them so she can’t see me. She holds on to his arms and begins to sway with him. My friends are doing the best they can from busting out laughing as I refrain from entering in on the conversations. Finally, someone says something that I had to react to and made a comment. She heard me! My girlfriend jumps back instantly. Looks at me on the bench, then looks at my brother. Slap! He gets one across the face and my friends and I are busting up!

OSCAR (parent of twins)
I am the father of twin boys who are not identical but could very well be. When they were two years old, I was able to spend the whole day alone with them. I was still not great at identifying who was who and my family often got them mixed up. One has a mole on top of his head so we would check their heads to be sure. I am alone with them and being unsure of who is who, I wait till their backs are turned from me and call one of them by name, "Odin." He turns around while Octavio doesn't. I play with Odin for a bit and then I test it
again. I wait for the boys to turn around, and I call out “Octavio!” He turns around while Odin doesn’t; I continue to test them in this manner throughout the day to be sure they are not tricking me. When my wife got home she called Octavio, Odin, and Odin, Octavio! I smile and tell her she is mistaken. Daisy looks at me, with an all knowing motherly looks and says "have you been calling them by their wrong names all day!?" To which I stutter out I had tested them and I was absolutely positive who was who. We refer back to the mole on the top of the head...of course she was right and I was wrong. I was utterly baffled, and amazed, my boys totally got the best of me. They try to trick me now, but they have grown with more differences. Most people including their older brother, have difficulty identifying them, but their younger sister never has had a problem distinguishing them. Those boys are inseparable and have huge hearts. I am a proud papa.

JULIA

We used to switch a lot in school and we're really good at communicating without talking She helped me cheat on tests a lot; she was the "smart twin". I have been close to my other siblings, very close to my little sister the past 4 years. But if I run to anyone crying or to borrow money or send a good morning text, it’s always “Behr” first. She gets it on a different level, like taking a persona of your brain out and having a conversation with yourself.

JENNIE (parent of twins)

Our twins’ names are not exactly typical. Twin A (male) is named Carter and Twin B (female) is named Callen. We decided on these names before we knew the gender because Carter is my (mother) maiden name and Callen is the paternal grandmother's maiden name. When our twins were born we often referred to them as C-squared! Our twins are fraternal so they can't really trick us by looking just alike but they constantly trick me and their father with their voices. They are 7 years old now and it’s very difficult for anyone to distinguish their voices so they answer for each other and trick us all the time! Our twins are inseparable. They still share a room (regardless of other options) and are even in a Montessori classroom at school together all day. They constantly do things for each other that I feel parents would typically do, like make drinks for each other, tie shoes for each other, and the funniest thing is switch food on their plates while I'm not looking when one prefers meat and the other prefers vegetables! They never fall asleep at night without saying "I love you first twin".

ELENA

My name is Elena Bea, and my twin sister is Julia Rose. When we were in preschool we would tell people that that I was a bee and Jules was a flower so we could feed each other; even in our adult lives we share clothes, pay each other’s bills when necessary, and cook for each other. In preschool my sister and I would give our teachers a different princess name every time they asked us who was who. By kindergarten we were trading identities. I learned to use my right hand to do everything just because my sister was right handed and we didn't want people to catch on. Juji and I are closer than other siblings, closer than any friend or significant other could be. When we're together we talk a million words a second, there's no barrier between thought and voice. I can sing at the top of my lungs in a car ride with her, and I can't even do it alone! Being with her is the baseline, it's natural - when we're apart it feels like something is missing.
MAKEBA AND MASUKA

Makeba: I was born in Washington State, but grew up in Kenya. I am an identical twin, C-Section and 2 minutes before my twin Masuka. I was named after a famous South African musician - Miriam Makeba. Makeba means vessel. Masuka who I fondly call Suka, was named after a Zimbabwe singer Dorothy Masuka. Masuka means motion. We used to play tricks on friends, classmates and our boyfriends. They often got confused when it came to our voices over the phone. One day I walked in to get some money at the bank where my sister works, and her co-workers asked what I was doing there on my day off. They could not believe I was not Masuka and the president of the bank asked to see my driver’s license. In post High school, our mother helped us get ready and made sure our hair was styled the same. Masuka was the only student attending at that time. She had a friend help me and I was coached on her homework and directed to her class. None of the other classmates had a clue until they saw Masuka walking nonchalantly down the hallway from the library. The looks on their faces said it all, like they had just seen a ghost. We excelled in the same sports and so when it came to the 4x100 m relays, I often started and she was the finisher. At a national meet with a rival school, they wanted to disqualified our team for having an athlete run twice, but when we stood before the officials, we got the look again, like they saw a ghost, and they presented us our winning awards. So we always wore the same track shoes at meets when we had relays or played on the hockey team just for giggles.

Masuka: Our parents were African students in the diaspora and at the time fighting with others against apartheid in South Africa. We were dating brothers and on April fool’s day we called the other boyfriend to fool them. At the end of the day they were surprised that they were not able to tell on the phone who their girlfriend was. We took tests for each other. I was not great in Art and she was not strong in math. So we helped each other. We don’t even have to speak and we can gauge each other’s mood. We love each other’s kids like our own.

ALICIA (parent of twins)

Natalia & Elena are Fraternal and 7 months old. Funniest story to me is that one twin is bigger than the other and always has a grumpy serious look; the other one is skinny and always has a smile.

ELISA

My twin sister and I are mono-mono twins. When we do something similar we call it "twining." Some examples: Buying the same clothes or accessories and realizing it after the fact. Wearing the same or similar outfit that day and only realizing it when meeting up or over a video chat. We both lived in apt 207, in different states, at the same time. We have the same taste in food and music. We are both homosexual. We both study or have careers in mental health. Our hair appointments often get scheduled on the same day, without prior planning. I made a Peanuts character of myself using a variety of haircut styles, clothing, skin tone, etc. Andrea made one of herself. We exchanged images via text message and basically made the same person.
KATE

I would love to be a part of this! Our names, Sarah and Kate are not unusual, although the way we got our names is. Our parents couldn't decide what to name us, so they agreed that each parent could choose a twin to name and they chose family names. Sarah (baby A) was named after someone on our mother's side (Sarah Elizabeth) and Dad got to choose my name. He chose Anna Kathryn after a favorite aunt, but our mom didn't want to call me Anna, so they agreed to call me Kate. As soon as people hear that story, they always ask Sarah if she has a fun secret name, too, and tell her she should change her name to Liz. We always played tricks in school! We went to many different schools growing up, so we were always the new kid. It was fun to switch classes before people got to know us enough to tell us apart. Our older sister was only a few years ahead of us in school so we were in the same elementary school. For a science project, she created an invention called the "Quick-o Change-o Machine", which was a refrigerator box decorated with buttons and fake screens. One of us hid in the box before the rest of her class came in, and then the other one stood outside the box while she introduced her invention. It would change clothes with the touch of a button! She had one of us walk behind the box, she pressed a few fake buttons, made some sound effects, and the other twin came out a few seconds later in completely different clothes! None of her classmates knew she had twin sisters so everyone was amazed, and then she brought the other twin out and everyone laughed. We have 3 sisters and while we feel very close to those siblings, the bond we have with each other is inexplicable. It almost feels as if we are the same person, or that we're each one half of a single person. We often think and say the same things at the same time, and will show up somewhere wearing the same clothes. It's hard to explain to anyone who isn't a twin, but it's more than just a "close" relationship or sibling bond, it's like having another one of yourself.

SILVIU

Our names are Daniel and Silviu. We had friends who did not know we were twin brothers and we were always changing with each other, and we played many tricks in school. We are together all the time and closer to each other than regular siblings.

JULIE AND LIZ

When we were first born, our mom named us Julie and Jennifer. A few days later, she changed my sister's name to Elizabeth because she wanted us to be more easily differentiated. Growing up, we spoke our own "twin language", known as idioglossia. My nickname was "JuJu" and Liz's was "Lib". Our school district had a rule that twins were not allowed in the same class; it was a good thing to develop separately but still be together. One time we played a "trick" on April Fools’ Day in Kindergarten. We switched places (different classes) and no one noticed because we were so IDENTICAL. Friends and family told us apart because Liz has a birthmark on the back of her leg. I got my ears pierced in 3rd grade so everyone remembered, "Julie jewelry." Some of our funniest memories are documented on home-videos when we would "perform" on stage (our fireplace) by singing and dancing, and play in the baby pool in our backyard. Liz was the "tom-boy" growing up and I was the "girly-girl" so it made for some funny interactions. We worked in the same place.
from 2012-2015 so we dressed the same on April Fools’ Day each of those years and tricked all the students in the school. They were blown away by "adult twins" and it truly made their day! We were always very close and still are. We had the same group of friends and attended the same college. We were not roommates but still saw each other and hung out a great deal. We would always respond to questions in the same way and/or respond at the same exact time. Looking back at pictures of us as youngsters, we are not able to tell each other apart. Our mom didn’t find out until her third trimester that she was pregnant with twins; the doctor assumed we were identical when we were born. On our 30th birthday, we may take the 'swab test' to see if we are indeed identical and have a twin-reveal party.

ALICIA AND KATIE

Alicia: Our names are Alicia and Katie named after the TV show Kate and Ally. In High School I switched into my sister’s English class and took her final, and she went into my math class to take my final. We went to the same college. The school was so big that it wasn’t like high school where everyone knew we were twins. One day a member from my class who was in my group for our team project mentioned how I never said hi to him in the hallways but I’m always so chatty in class with him. I apologized and told him I must not have seen him. A few weeks later he came storming into our class room and said “Why didn’t you tell me you have a twin!” Apparently he has been saying hi to my sister Katie in the hallways this entire semester and Katie never responded back. From that day on I told my sister if anyone says hi to you just say hi back and I’ll do the same! Yes, I totally feel more connected with my twin sister. I have another brother and sister, but my twin and I have by far the closest relationship. Katie and I believe we are identical twins but never had the test done to find out. We were premature when we were born with some complications. Our dentist mentioned that our dental records are so similar that it would be hard to tell us apart by our teeth. He said he never saw anything like it!

Katie: We definitely switched classes in high school and took each other’s' finals. She took my English final, and I took her math final. Only had to study for half of our courses then switch.

NICOLE

I would love to be a part of this! We definitely feel closer than we do with our other siblings. And we can feel each other, happy or sad, pain. And now that we live close to each other again it’s growing stronger! Let me know what else we can contribute!

DUSTIN

No unusual names, however, they did stick with the typical twin alliteration (Derek, and Dustin). Funniest story would probably be when asked if we were twins when we were younger (around 5), I apparently told a woman that, “I was born in a hospital, and he was found under a rock.” The lady didn’t find it so amusing. We didn’t play any tricks in school because I was more studious than my brother and I worried about him trying to sit in my classes. On the flip side, I would have gotten to attend a lot of gym classes had we switched. Comparatively, we are not as close as what I imagine most twins would be like.
GENEVIEVE
Hi! Our parents named us Samantha and Genevieve, after the actress Genevieve Bujold, and Samantha after the Bewitched show. When we were younger we use to switch classes and pretend to be the other all the time. One teacher told me few years ago that he tells the story to other twins in his class and encourages them to switch classes too. My twin and I are very close, closer to one another than our other siblings. We can tell when something is wrong with one another when we're not even together. Thanks for including me in your survey!

NIA-SHEA
I am a quadruplet, so I have an identical twin sister (Linnay) and a fraternal twin brother (Carson) and sister (Janelle). Before we were born, my parents were told they were having 3 boys and one girl (not the 3 girls and one boy they got) so they scrambled for names. Linnay and I played a trick on a group of kids at our church. She had a scheduling conflict, so I offered to take her place. None of the kids knew she was a twin. I stood by the entrance to greet everyone, while my twin hid around the corner, looked through a window. She told me the names of the kids entering and to ask them questions about their week. I got a few funny looks, but no one believed I wasn't Linnay - until she popped out from the corner and scared everyone. It was a fun night! I am more close to my identical twin than my other twins. We can make each other laugh for hours for no reason. My 4 other siblings recognize this fact, and just let us laugh it out because there is no way they would be able to understand what we find humorous!

PENELOPE
My mother was not aware she was having twins back in 1947. My twin sister was born first; 10 minutes later there was a second baby, each almost 6 pounds. I required an oxygen tent for 24 hours without any brain damage although Paula, questions that!! My parents had picked out a name for a girl, Paula, but when suddenly having to name a second child, they chose the name Penelope! In high school we needed a job to start saving for college, my sister had taken off for the day. I saw an ad for two summer jobs at the local ice cream stand, so I dressed fashionably and proceeded to take the interview with the boss. I was hired! I mentioned that my sister would like to come down for an interview as well, which seemed reasonable to the owner. Paula was not available due to her lucky day at the ocean, so I quickly changed my clothes, combed my hair a bit differently and took the interview with the same man who completely thought I was my sister Paula! She got the job as well! I never let her forget that she "owes me". Another story takes place while I was pregnant with my first child. My OB doctor knew Paula and me very well for we had trained with him in nursing school, but his office nurse was not aware I was a twin. On my 9th month appointment as the nurse called my name to be weighed, my sister, Paula quickly got up and went into the exam room. Paula got on the scale, the nurse moved the small weights to the number about where I was last month, looked at my sister who then said "I seem to have lost this big bump"! The nurse had the look of fear on her face, she said "wait here for just a minute", and ran to bring the doctor right into the exam room. The Dr. looked at my sister and calmly said "OK, Paula, get off the scale and send your sister in". The nurse just stood there bewildered! My twin sister and I are very close although I live in Colorado and she lives in Massachusetts.
We talk every day unless traveling and get together at least twice yearly. We are one of seven children who all love one another but my relationship with my sister, Paula, is so very special. She is part of me and I am part of her. My life has always been the two of us.

ANN
I just wanted to send in a fun twin story, if you are still looking for them! My twin sister, Lydia, and I are both in veterinary school. We attended the same undergraduate college and both were collegiate varsity swimmers. The picture to the right is from our white coat ceremony. Thank you!

MEGAN
Helen and I were Identical mono-sac twins. Our friends always call us is Melen or Hegan. My mom and dad really didn't want our names to rhyme. They wanted to feel like our own person. The funniest story is when we were in Kindergarten and decided to switch spots. We got away with it for the ENTIRE DAY. We had boyfriends that were also twins, Dustin and Justin. We decided that we liked the other ones boyfriend and switched without them knowing. We have two older brothers and we really don't talk that much but Helen and I talk all the time.

MARYRAY
Diana and I were separated at birth and I found her right after our 52nd birthday. We think we are "mirror" twins and that we looked identical at birth; but she had Acromegaly and looked a little bigger with a different face. Even though brought up separately, we have so much in common. At first it was really freaky. The first time she texted me a photo of Poppycock snack in a certain flavor, I was about to grab a box. Looked at Facebook and found out, we were both cooking London Boil for dinner. She was living in San Diego and I in Wisc. We also found out we have the same love for penguins. We both feel we have more connection with each other than the siblings we were brought up with. Diana says I often read her mind. I bought us tickets to see Journey, a band we both have interest in. I wrote in her gift letter that Journey will be our first concert to see since we started this "journey" of life to make up for the last 52 years. Usually, her left pain is my right pain. And my right pain is her left. We have spouses that passed away the same month and same year. He was her second husband and mine was my first. I asked my current husband,“ aren’t you glad you weren’t my second husband?”

PAULA
My name is Paula and my twin’s name is Pauline. My parents were scrambling for twin names three days before we were born when they heard two heartbeats. We were basically called "the twins". When we were 5, my youngest sister cut her own hair, so Pauline and I cut each other’s. When we were in 6th grade, we decided to switch classes. Pauline’s teacher sprung a surprise writing test on them and I had to tell because I’m left handed and she’s right handed. He loved it! He told every one of his classes for years until he retired. We only ever switched dates once. But once when we were later on in years from our teenage years, a very
good looking acquaintance of Pauline's, grabbed me and kissed me; when he was hugging me, I told him in his ear that I was not her, I was her twin. He couldn't apologize enough. I didn't mind. I tell my granddaughter that she got a two for one deal on grandmas; she calls us both grandma. When people ask me what it’s like being a twin, I want to say, I don’t know what it’s like NOT being a twin. We have a very close connection although we live 1200 miles apart. We call it, "the twin thing". Here is a poem I wrote for her:

When I look in the mirror, I see your face
When I speak, I hear your voice
When you're happy, I laugh
When you're sad, I cry.
We started out as one and will always be inseparable. I love you and miss you

KERRY

My sister and I have very basic names: "Kelly" and "Kerry"; we have always answered to both, and it's curious the number of strangers who have never met us (together or separately) that interchange the two. I have always been concerned about in medical records because of the similarities. She married a Fair and I married a Frank, hence KNSF (our middle names are the same). Kelly and I did switch trips based on interests in 1st grade. I wanted to go to the Art Museum, and she wanted to go to the Zoo; we were readily identified boarding the wrong buses as my mom always put Kelly in green and me in orange (it was the 70s). We got in a lot of trouble at school, but my mom just laughed. We are absolutely closer than most siblings. We have different likes and dislikes, lifestyles, have made different choices, and in many ways are very different, but that doesn’t change the spiritual connection we have. Society (teachers, parents) have attempted to push us away from each other by putting us in different classrooms, etc., but the fact is that we function the best together. Nature gave us intrinsic boundaries which we alone have the ability to identify and work out; the times we’ve been pushed to establish "separate" identities we have failed miserably. Alternately, being able to come together and separate on our own has allowed us to establish a rhythm that keeps both of us relatively healthy and happy.

AMY (twin and mother of twins)

I have an identical twin sister (I had no other siblings) and I also gave birth to identical twin daughters, now age 9. This is a photo of my daughters. This morning, they were both drawing pictures on a dry erase board, on opposite ends of our living room. When they held up their drawings, they had both drawn the same thing at the same time, the image being near exact same size. The only difference is, they used different colored markers. My twin and I have done this before when we were kids as well as dreaming the same dream & waking the next morning to finish each other's sentences describing the dream details. It's really neat living this phenomenon in my own youth and later analyzing it from the outside through my twin children. I have an older child, age 12 (singleton) & had I not gave birth to her FIRST to see how singletons get along in social environments with their friends & siblings, I would have assumed twin "oddities" were everyday normal things in life. Raising my singleton gave me insight that twins are different through her type of normal. Forgive their bed head appearance, this photo was taken shortly after they woke this morning.
ROBERT
My brother John and I are identical. We were born in 1963 and the Kennedy brothers were very popular. They decided to use those names but as immigrants, translated them to their native language, Bozidar and Jovan.

LAUREN
Below is a diagram that I made for my "Illustrated Organism" class at Union College. It depicts the stages of embryonic development of twins with Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome, which was something that affected my twin and I in the womb.