



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

April, 2005

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

As more and more of our newsletter readers have gained access to the internet, whether by a PC or laptop at home, or by going to their local library, they now have direct access to a great website. Of course, I'm talking about our chapter's website, which can be reached by going to: www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

The site, designed by Eryn Belt and updated quite frequently, allows you to find out about topics ranging from details on upcoming events (such as the Conference of Hope and Healing, being held on May 21, 2005), to National and special events, tips for dealing with bereaved friends, links to other chapter's sites, great photos and the names of our children who have died, and even on-line copies of current and past Newsletters.

I heartily encourage everyone to not only check out the website, but take time to leisurely browse through it. You'll be pleasantly surprised at the content. I also hope that you will pass the site's link to others that may not be familiar with this great resource.

A thank you goes out to all who contribute to the content and upkeep of the site!

To our newly bereaved readers, we offer these words

that to me, capture the essence of our reason for our monthly meetings:

I'M HERE...by Jeanne Losey (In Bereavement Magazine)

I cannot ease your aching heart;
Nor take the pain away.
But let me stay and take your hand
And walk with you today.

I'll listen if you need to talk;
I'll wipe away your tears.
I'll share your worries when they come;
I'll help you face your fears.

I'm here and I will stand by you;
Each hill you have to climb.
So take my hand, let's face the world;
Live one day at a time.

You're not alone, for I'm still here.
I'll go that extra mile.
And when your grief is easier,
I'll help you learn to smile.

- Rick Tomaszewski

GOALS OF BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA

- to educate families about the grief process and all its complexities as it applies to the death of a child at any age and from any cause.
- to aid and support those who are suffering such a loss, regardless of race, creed or financial situation.
- to provide a library at each meeting place where members may borrow books with up-to-date information about the grief process.
- to supply the telephone numbers of other bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents who are able to offer support to other more newly bereaved families.
- to inform and educate members of the helping professions who interact with bereaved parents as to the nature and duration of parent/sibling/grandparent bereavement.
- to provide monthly meetings with sharing groups and occasional informative programs.

The printing of this newsletter has been donated by Carol Boslet in memory of her grandson

Christopher Ryan Boslet

The mailing of this newsletter has been donated by Gloria McDonald in memory of her grandson

Christopher George Gilmour

Bereaved Parents of the USA
Anne Arundel County Chapter
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Thank you notes: Fran Palmer - Treasurer: Fran Palmer
Mailing List: Dave Alexander - Programs: VACANT
Hospitality: VACANT *note - as you can see we have several vacancies... we hope someone will consider helping!

It is our sincere hope that you will find comfort somewhere in this newsletter. It is our intention to offer you hope in knowing that you are not alone. We encourage you to write about your feelings and to share your feelings with others who understand...your compassionate friends.

Material to be printed "in memory of" must be sent to the editors 6-8 weeks in advance of the newsletter in which you wish the item to be printed.

May submissions are due by April 15th.

Library:

Our lending library is available to help you understand and deal with your grief. Most of our materials have been donated in memory of a child. When you have finished with them, please return them at our monthly meeting or mail them to the post office box listed above. Thank you.

Refreshments at our monthly meetings:

A sign-up sheet is on the refreshment table at the meeting. Drinks, ice, and paper products are provided by the chapter. For questions, contact Dave Alexander at 410-544-3634



Inclement weather on a meeting night:

Meeting canceled if Phase 1 of the Snow Emergency Plan is in effect at 5:00 p.m. You can also check our website on the day of the meeting for an announcement about cancellations.



MEETING INFORMATION

Next meeting: April 7, 2005

Doors open at 7:15 p.m.

Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

(Meetings usually occur on first Thursday of the month)

Calvary United Methodist Church

301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis

Please park in the back of the church

PROGRAM: "Preserving Your Memories"



TELEPHONE FRIENDS:

Sometimes we feel the need to talk to someone who understands the pain we feel and will listen to us. When you have questions to ask, a need to talk, or have a difficult day, these people welcome your call.

Marie Dyke, single parent, daughter, 17, only child, car accident.

Janet Tyler, daughter, 5 and brother, 33, car accident. 410-969-7597

Tia Stinnett, miscarriages and infant death. 410-360-1341

Sandy Platts, infant death. 410-721-6457

OTHER RESOURCES:

- * **Bereaved Parents of the USA, (BPUSA)**
National contact number (708-748-7866)
- * **Stephanie Roper Committee, for victims of violent crime, Anne Arundel County chapter**
representative is James Donnelly
(410-544-1473).
- * **Survivors of Suicide Group (SOS)**
meets the 1st Tuesday of each month from 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., at Severna Park United Methodist Church, 731 Benfield Road, Severna Park (410-987-2129).

CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

Upcoming Meeting Topics

Upcoming Meeting Topics

April 7: "Preserving Your Memories"

After we lose our child, we often seek ways to preserve photos and other things that remind us of our child. One of the forms this takes is photo albums and scrapbooks of mementos. Darla McDonald, a Creative Memories Consultant, will talk with us about the importance of preserving our pictures in photo-safe albums and the value of writing down the stories behind the pictures, which makes them meaningful. She will discuss how creating such keepsake albums can be a meaningful tradition, helping to deal with the loss of our child.

For those who will not be joining the newly bereaved sharing group or the non-newly bereaved sharing group, Darla will conduct a hands-on workshop on the creation of an album. If you plan to attend the workshop, bring to the meeting at least 8-10 photos which either go together or have a theme. You will have the opportunity to create your first album page. If you are concerned about making your first album page with the originals, make copies of the photos ahead of time. You will learn how simple, easy, and quick it can be to create your own treasured keepsake albums.

May 5: No Program Scheduled at this Time

Chapter Website

To place your child's name on our website, email Dave Alexander (dralex@sdalex.com), or send him a note, (PO box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401). Include your name, your child's name as you would like it to appear, and your child's date of birth and date of death.

To have a picture of your child on the website, email a digital file with the picture or send a printed picture to Dave. (Photos will be returned.) If you have any questions, please call Dave at 410-544-3634.

Many of you who receive our **newsletter** were referred by a friend, physician, or clergy. You may have never attended a meeting. In this case, it is likely that your child's name does not appear in our **monthly list of "Children Remembered"**. This is because we require your permission to do so. If you would like your child's name added, please send a note to our post office box. List your child's name, your name(s), and the dates of your child's birth and death. Please allow 6 weeks to be sure it arrives in time for the appropriate month.

EASTERN SHORE BEREAVED PARENTS GROUP

The Queen Anne's County Bereaved Parents Group meets on the ***First Wednesday of each month***. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 6th, at 7:00 pm. The Group meets at the ***Calvary United Methodist Church in Queenstown***. The Church is located at the intersection of Maryland Avenue and Steamboat Lane in Queenstown.

All are welcome to come. Please pass the word to other bereaved parents. For more information, contact Joan Gray at 410-827-7471 or Dave Alexander at 410-544-3634 or send an email message to QueenstownGroup@sdalex.org

Sponsor Our Monthly Newsletter or Website

You can help underwrite the costs of our newsletter or our website by sponsoring a monthly issue of the newsletter or by sponsoring a month of the website. To sponsor either one, contact Dave Alexander (dralex@sdalex.com) Newsletter printing costs \$150 and mailing is \$50 each month, and website sponsorship costs \$25.00 each month.

DO YOU USE AMAZON.COM?

If you use Amazon.com, perhaps you could use the Chapter's website to make the connection and purchase. We have a link to Amazon.com on the home page of our website. Amazon.com gives our chapter a commission of 5% of any purchases which are made through that link. Using the link does not increase the cost to the purchaser. Alert your friends, relatives, and colleagues to the link and suggest they use it as well.

You can access the site at:

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

click on the butterflies on the welcome page to enter our site, and then scroll down the first page to the bottom. On the bottom left corner is the Amazon.com graphic. Clicking on the graphic takes you to Amazon.com's site. When it does so, it links information relevant to our chapter to the visit to the site. If a purchase is made, it will be credited to our site. Purchases made without going through that link do not get credited.

Since our chapter is a not-for-profit organization and has no dues or fees, we are dependent on donations and fund raisers. We are hopeful these commissions will help fund some of our community outreach activities.

Donations

Donations may be made to offset the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, the annual Remembrance Service, the annual Conference of Hope and Healing, and books and other materials for the Chapter Library.

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations made in the last month:

Ken Smith in memory of his niece **Tracy Fotino**

Dorothy & Norm Heincelman in memory of their granddaughters **Cortney Belt** and **Traci Heincelman**

Donation to Library:

There were 4 books about sibling grief titled "Kindnesses" graciously donated by the author, **Terry Walton**

THOUGHTS

Sometimes the light goes out,
but is blown again into flame
by an encounter with another human being.
Each of us owes the deepest thanks to
those who have rekindled this inner light.

Albert Schweitzer
German philosopher and humanitarian

The most important gift you can give
your children at this time
is the feeling that
Life continues despite pain.

Rabbi Earl Grollman
Belmont, MA

Hope is the thing with
feathers
that perches in the soul,
and sings the tune without words
and never stops at all.

Emily Dickenson

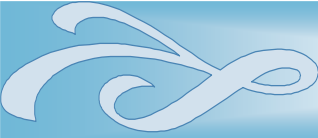


Grief cannot be conquered
Like an enemy.
Grief can only be changed
From pain to hope,
From hope to deeper life.

- Sascha Wagner
Poet laureate of TCF

Lord, grant me the grace to seek a rainbow -
but, most of all,
grant me the courage to go into the rain.

- unknown



SIBLING PAGE



EASEL SMEARS



Suicide is the **gray-bland** drone of the coroner's voice as he describes my brother's body. The **pinkish** cast of the skin...is a sign of carbon monoxide. He left a note that explained... and, "Cause of death is suicide." The coroner's push to wrap up the paperwork. "We'll need more information. Can you get his social security number? Was your brother married?"

Suicide is the **drained-white** color of my mother's lips as she listens to words that, once uttered, will forever change her life. It's **black** vinyl chairs and **bright gold** curtains swimming in tears of sorrow. It's a **brown** leather book and my father's faith, in a desperate search for an answer. It's a **yellow** ribbon of hope threaded through the day, a wish from the world of "can't be" as I wait by the window for my brother's truck, his bounce up the stairs, his bound through the door, and smile that says, "I fooled you."

Suicide is my brother's **gray** Dodge still locked in his garage, still out of gas. It's his favorite **brown** pipe, perched on the dash, and the too-sweet stench of upholstery splashed with perfume, someone's half-hearted effort to hide the smell of death.

Suicide is **black** remorse in waves of guilt as the questions tide over and over. "Why didn't I see? Was it something I said? Why couldn't I say I love you? Burning **red** embers of anger and pain flare and subside again.

Suicide is **burgundy** drapes and a **pale blue** box and flowers and preachers and prayer. It's the **white** light of promise in a song about Canaan, a land where the soul never dies. It's the widow in **black**, like a devil's young bride, along with neighbors and family and friends.

Suicide is a **gray** granite stone on cut **green** grass—afresh—turned soil frame on eternity. It's **bright blue** skies and last goodbyes and a fear of the forever after. And, in the end, suicide is **ice-clear** emptiness as two parents walk away and leave the son they love buried beneath the ground.

It has been seven years since my brother died, but the memory is as young as yesterday. The pain is less, the anger is gone, and I have learned that life is for the living. But no matter how long or how distant the past, each sunset, every rainbow—all life's goodness and mercy—will remain forever tainted, forever faded by all the shades of suicide.

No Words

There are no words...
There is sympathy,
There is grief,
There is understanding,
There are memories,
and there is love...
But there are no words.

My Thoughts of You

I miss your goofy laugh,
I miss your temper tantrums,
I miss you bugging me for money,
I miss your punches in the arm,
But most of all I miss you.

So I will remember
Our good and bad times.
And share them with others,
So I can keep you alive in my heart.

DeAnn Kouse, TCF/Louisville, KY



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

Bethany Anne Balasic
Daughter of Claudia and Paul Balasic
February 13, 1981 - April 5, 1996

Jeff Baldwin
Son of Aurelia Ferraro
April 27, 1967 - April 26, 1991

Hope Barber
Daughter of Doug and Vonda Barber
March 11, 2003 - April 25, 2003

Patrick John Bennett Jr.
Son of Deborah and Patrick Bennett
September 27, 1975 - April 15, 1999

Travis Brandon Beyerle
Son of Maren O. Sheidy
April 17, 1981 - June 23, 1995

Alexandra Elizabeth Bolander
Daughter of Susan and Tom Bolander
April 1, 1996 - April 1, 1996

Wendy Jean Bolly
Daughter of Judith and Louie Bolly
April 6, 1977 - October 11, 2002

Paul Shane Brough
Son of Theresa and Steve Bleemke
Friend of Helen Connors
May 18, 1982 - April 4, 2003

John Christopher Campbell
Son of Kathy and Jeff Campbell
April 18, 1981 - October 9, 2002

William F. Carter Jr.
Son of Dorothy Carter
Brother of Lisa Beall and Janet Tyler
April 24, 1959 - August 16, 1992

John Scott Droege
Son of Teri Droege
April 30, 1984 - April 5, 2002

Isaac Paul Elliot
Son of Paul and Deborah Elliot
August 24, 1979 - April 27, 2003

Joseph F. Errichiello
Son of Susan and Joe Errichiello
April 6, 1979 - May 29, 2004



Joe A. Esterling Jr.
Son of Michelle and Joe Esterling
June 7, 1967 - April 27, 1990

Sherri Leigh Fant
Daughter of Vern Pierce
January 24, 1958 - April 1, 2003

Andrea Faith Fiscus
Daughter of Debby and Kenny Fiscus
April 27, 1982 - October 9, 1993

Donald R. Forbes III
Son of Janet Hall
August 3, 1975 - April 12, 2002

David Jonathan Frame
Son of Carol Brothers
April 12, 1967 - September 11, 2001

Christopher George Gilmour
Son of Paul and Carole Gilmour
October 17, 1997 - April 2, 2003

Andrew Thomas Gwaltney
Son of Hope Dorman
October 1, 1987 - April 6, 2004

Mallory Heffernan
Daughter of Dianne and Edmund Heffernan
December 19, 1985 - April 18, 2003

Chrystal Lynn Isaacs
Daughter of Tish and Darrel Isaacs
April 12, 1984 - February 1, 2003

Lilith "Lily" Sappho Kelm
Daughter of Kathy Kelm
April 4, 1973 - April 6, 1973

Steven J. Landis
Son of Edwin and Susan Landis
April 4, 1968 - October 10, 1991

Zachary Laurence Luceti
Son of Linda East
April 20, 1978 - July 5, 2003

Matthew David Miles
Son of Donna and David Miles
March 24, 2000 - April 7, 2000



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

Robert Antonio Morgan Jr.
Son of Kathy and Paul Waters
April 23, 1984 - June 21, 2003

Amelia Evans Mufson
Daughter of Beth and Neil Mufson
April 6, 1995 - September 28, 2002

Melanie Carol Murphy
Daughter of Fred and Phyl Murphy
April 21, 1966 - October 17, 1985

Craig Steven Nelson
Son of Karen Nelson
April 2, 1974 - January 31, 1995

Jonathan Michael Noon
Son of John Noon
February 3, 1982 - April 18, 2004

Glynn Allen Owens
Son of Michael Owens
October 21, 1973 - April 2, 2003

Lee Ann Platts
Daughter of Sandy and Jeff Platts
April 21, 1999 - April 21, 1999

Dennis Richard Rohrback
Son of Joan and Dennis Rohrback
April 8, 1964 - July 3, 1988

Matthew Jason Temple
Son of Karen and Jim Temple
October 6, 1987 - April 23, 1995

Gregory Adam Thorowgood
Son of Margie Strong and Kenneth Wenk
July 24, 1975 - April 8, 2004

Albert W. Whitby Jr.
Son of Rita and Albert Whitby Sr.
April 25, 1951 - June 2, 1981

Alisa Joy Withers
Daughter of Jan Withers
July 7, 1976 - April 16, 1992

Austin Wolfe
Son of Bonnie and James Wolfe
April 3, 1999 - April 6, 1999

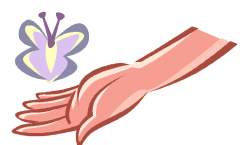


Note: If your child's name appears in the printed version of our newsletter but does not appear in this online version, it is because we have not received explicit permission from you to list it online. If you would like your child's name to also appear in future online editions of the newsletter, please send an email to dralex@sdalex.com



Little by little, step by step
I learned that I didn't need
To hang on to the death
To remember the life.
What a joyous discovery

By Kittie Brown McGowin
TCF Montgomery, AL



It is the gift of hope which reigns supreme
in the attributes of
The Compassionate Friends.
Hope that all is not lost.
Hope that life can still be worth living
and meaningful.
Hope that the pain of loss will become
less acute, and, above all else,
The hope that we do not walk alone,
that we are understood.
The gift of hope is the greatest gift
that we can give to those who mourn.

Reverend Simon Stephens
Founder of The Compassionate Friends

We did not lose our children.
They died,
taking with them
our hopes and dreams for the future —
But never, never taking away their love.
Though death comes, love will never go away.
Hold it tight, the love our children gave us.
Hold it tight through storms of grief,
and bring it with you today.
LOVE NEVER GOES AWAY.

Darcie Sims
Grief Counselor
Former officer of National TCF Board of Directors

Each of us comes to this circle with a
private urgency, even agony and sorrow.
Each of us comes asking for time to speak,
possibly for a safe place to cry.
Uplifted by another's caring, we believe
that we can pick up the pieces ourselves,
yet live more richly because of
the gift of compassionate hearts.

Father Tom Welch
TCF, Dover, NH

When you're lonely, I wish you LOVE.
When you're down, I wish you JOY.
When you're troubled, I wish you PEACE.
When things are complicated,
I wish you simple BEAUTY.
When things are chaotic,
I wish you inner SILENCE.
When things are empty, I wish you HOPE.

Unknown

ALIKE

We're so alike, you and I.
I lost a daughter.
You lost a son.
She was eight months.
He was thirty-seven.
She never spoke.
He called you every Sunday.
She died nine years ago.
He's been buried two months now.
I always look at the babies.
You see all the young fathers.
I miss my daughter.
You miss your son.
You see, we're so alike, you and I.

- Cathy Heider
TCF Algona, IL

The Visitation

Hadn't known sleep
since just days before
Both our lives ended
when I opened your door

Are you at peace
my mind didn't know
Who'd hold your hand
since I had to let go?

Moon in my eyes
night called to me
Stepping outside
no wind in the tree

I knew you could hear me
I looked to the sky
Saying the words
tears to my eyes

Breaking my heart
I whispered goodnight
I had to let go
you had to take flight

Resting my head
sleep washed over me
You came to my side
to give me your peace

I held you in my arms
so warm our embrace
My heart filled with joy
as I gazed at your face

The disease you had fought
still shook your small frame
My heart always broke
thinking I was to blame

Outside our window
in the glow of white light
I saw angels dancing
in dresses of white

There was the joy
of children at play
I turned to you
You helped me to say,



I'm so sorry my love
this life gave you such pain
Doctors and drugs and
tests could not name

Do you want to play, Son,
as every child should
Beyond the stars
in a world full of good?

The nod of your head
was your last gift to me
I know you will grieve, Mom,
when my soul is set free

But I'll let you know
that I am alright
I'll send you a flower
that's graceful and white

I'll paint you a smile
out of clouds in the sky
I know you will see it
I'm sorry you'll cry

I'll drop you a ribbon
that's curly and blue
I got the balloon
and the note that's from you

You won't forget me
but you will live on
You have the heart
and a will that is strong

Then at the end
when all's said and done
You will see my face
you'll see me run

Into your arms
so warm our embrace
My heart filled with joy
as I gaze at your face

Again.

Carole McDonald-Gilmour
In memory of Christopher
October 17, 1997 - April 2, 2003
BPUSA Anne Arundel County Chapter
Annapolis, MD

Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

P.O. Box 6280

Annapolis, MD 21401-0280

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL



Bereaved Parents of the USA CREDO

We are the parents whose children have died. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life. We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a haven where all bereaved families can meet and share our long and arduous grief journeys. We attend monthly gatherings whenever we can and for as long as we believe necessary. We share our fears, confusion, anger, guilt, frustrations, emptiness and feelings of hopelessness so that hope can be found anew. As we accept, support, comfort, and encourage each other, we demonstrate to each other that survival is possible. Together we celebrate the lives of our children, share the joys and triumphs as well as the love that will never fade. Together we learn how little it matters where we live, what our color or our affluence is or what faith we uphold as we confront the tragedies of our children's deaths. Together, strengthened by the bonds we forge at our gatherings, we offer what we have learned to each other and to every more recently bereaved family. We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA.

We welcome you.