



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

February, 2005

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org



February... the month of bitter weather, yet it also brings a hope that winter's end is perhaps in view. As Groundhog day approaches everyone wonders, "How soon will we see an end to the coldness?"

How similar are our thoughts on our personal grief..."How soon will we see an end to our coldness and pain?" In spite of whether Punxsutawney Phil sees his shadow or not, we have come to know that the spring will eventually come, even though we may have many bleak days before it finally arrives. Likewise, as those who have traveled the road of grief longer than many of us have shared at our meetings, there are better times ahead, even though that may not seem possible to the newly bereaved. Those cold and bleak days will always be there...even far into the future... but the sun shines through more frequently as time moves on.

Please accept our invitation to attend our monthly meetings . If you are far along in your journey of bereavement, your sharing of how you have learned to deal with your loss can be of great value to those who have recently suffered the death a child, young or grown. For those of you who are newly bereaved, we offer the caring and warmth of someone who knows the depth of your feelings. Please join us.

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 Kathy Franklin in memory of her son
Tanager Ru Ricci

The mailing has been donated by Rick and Carol Tomaszewski in memory of their son
David William Tomaszewski



**Bereaved Parents of the USA
Anne Arundel County Chapter
P.O. Box 6280
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-0280**

This newsletter is published monthly
Copyright 2004 All Rights Reserved

Editor

Rick Tomaszewski
410-519-8448
akuahi@aol.com

Chapter Leader

Dave Alexander
410-544-3634
dralex@sdalex.com

Mailing: Barbara Bessling - **Librarians:** Debra & Richard Kerr
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.

March submissions are due by February 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: February 3, 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: "Using Music in Dealing with Grief"

MARCH PROGRAM: "Understanding Mourning is a Monumental Task"



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)
- * **Baltimore-metro area of The Compassionate Friends of Maryland, Inc. and Bereaved Parents of the USA, (410-321-7053).**
- * **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,

CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

Upcoming Meeting Topics

February 3, 2005: "Using Music in Dealing with Grief"

Some bereaved parents find music can be helpful in dealing with their grief. Paul Balasic will relate his experiences with music in his grief journey and talk about the role he believes music can play in the grief process. Members are urged to bring CDs or cassette tapes with music they have found particularly meaningful and helpful as they deal with their grief. We will use these as part of the discussion in our non-newly bereaved sharing groups.

March 3, 2005: Fran Palmer will share her thoughts on "Understanding Mourning is a Monumental Task"

Annual Conference of Hope and Healing

Saturday, May 21, 2005

To Help and/or for information
contact
Pat Schultz



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, February 2nd, 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

Sponsoring a monthly newsletter in your child's name can be arranged through Lisa Beall (bealls@comcast.net). Newsletter printing costs \$150 and mailing is \$50

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:

Elizabeth Burns in memory of her son **Eric Reynolds Burns**

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

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



The Cemetery

Oh, where is that face
Full of laughter and joy –
That face that belonged
To my sweet baby boy?

He's buried out there
All alone in that grave –
Whilst I struggle here
And try to be brave.

There are 2 sides to the coin –
As to going or no.
I like it and don't
But who else would go?

I like placing flowers –
'Tho he wouldn't care.
But a stone without flowers
Seems too hard to bear.

I know he's in heaven,
Not under that stone.
So I guess in the end
He's not really alone.



*Margie O'Malley
in memory of her son, Michael
BPUSA Anne Arundel County Chapter
Annapolis, MD*

I Held You First, I Held You Last

Today they took away your toys,
All the games you used to play.
They should have stayed forever, but,
Like you, they've gone away.

The days spent in friendly sun
Were replaced with days of rain.
Your innocence was swept afar,
Lost in waves of pain.

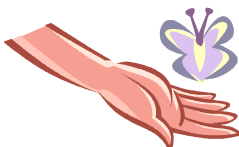
Even in the darkest times
With no hope left to seek,
You stayed cheerful just for me
And never once felt weak.

All through that last hour
You held up brave and strong.
And as the minutes died away
I felt your death was wrong.

"Mommy, can I hold him first?"
A voice echoed from the past,
And as my tears began to fall,
I bent to hold you last.



*Lisa Perreault
TCF, Westminster, MA*



Count the night by stars, not shadows.
Count your life by smiles, not tears.

— Proverb



SIBLING PAGE



We are Seven

by William Wordsworth

-----A Simple Child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage Girl:
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad:
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;
--Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? Seven in all," she said
And wondering looked at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."
She answered, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

"Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And, in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven!--I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be."

Then did the little Maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree."

"You run about, my little Maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five."



"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little Maid replied,
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side.

"My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.

"And often after sunset, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

"The first that died was sister Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain;
And then she went away.

"So in the church-yard she was laid;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side."

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
Quick was the little Maid's reply,
"O Master! we are seven."

"But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"



Your Face

Lisa Angel TCF—Citrus County, FL

I woke up this morning, finding everything in a haze.
Wiping tears from my eyes, I saw your smiling face.

I reached out and touched you, yet all I could feel was pain
You felt nothing, from your life within a frame.

I spoke, - receiving no reply, I told you that I loved you
And then I asked you, "Why?"

I'll never have another, no one to take your place
All I have, little brother, are memories
And the picture of your face.

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



Michael Allen Barker
Son of Diane and Seth Barker
January 18, 1990 - February 10, 1999

Susan Lawrence Barr
Daughter of Bryant and Missy Lawrence
July 14, 1961 - February 16, 1991

Darius JoVan Brown
Son of Victoria and Robert Brown
February 1, 1992 - May 30, 2004

David Norton Cann
Son of Ruth W. Cann
August 21, 1956 - February 4, 2004

Elizabeth Caitlyn Carr
Daughter of Bill and Sandy Carr
July 13, 1989 - February 24, 2003

Owen F. Carr IV
Son of Peggy Carr
June 29, 1978 - February 18, 2003

Chrystal M. Clifford
Future daughter-in-law of Marilyn Mabe
July 17, 1978 - February 17, 2001

Ashlea Marie Cranston
Daughter of Mary and Thomas Cranston
July 4, 1984 - February 25, 1985

Tyler Dudley
Son of Julie Cremen
December 29, 2000 - February 23, 2001

Katie Fritz
Daughter of Carol Fritz
October 29, 1977 - February 27, 1993

Kimberly Judith Gardner
Daughter of Joan Gardner
February 6, 1968 - August 16, 1992

Steven Joseph Garvey
Son of Mark and Cheryl Sylce
January 21, 1985 - February 1, 1985

Lee Robert Hayden
Son of Terri Hayden-Molton
Grandson of Mary M. Senier
November 12, 1979 - February 19, 1990

Michael Thompson Heany
Son of Frank and Jean Heany
February 7, 1973 - December 23, 2004

Thomas Michael Howard
Son of Tom and Donna Howard
May 27, 1984 - February 10, 2000

Sandrine J. Ingulia
Daughter of Michele Ingulia
January 17, 1965 - February 14, 2003

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

Charles William Kelm
Son of Kathy Kelm
July 17, 1974 - February 26, 1995

Matthew Louis Lupero
Son of Barbara and Guy Lupero
March 24, 1965 - February 16, 1991

Timothy J. Mabe
Son of Marilyn Mabe
October 29, 1977 - February 18, 2001

Ethan Matthew MacPherson
Son of Scott and Kim MacPherson
January 22, 1994 - February 13, 1995

Jolene Dawn McKenna
Daughter of Charlene Kvech
February 8, 1967 - November 22, 1971

Richard McKinney Jr.
Son of Richard and Ellen McKinney
March 6, 1975 - February 19, 1998



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

Graham Kendall Miller
Son of Ken and Abby Miller
February 3, 1981 - May 4, 1999

Jennifer Margaret Neafsey
Daughter of Beth Neafsey
March 20, 1969 - February 25, 1984

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

John David Openshaw
Son of David and Lily Openshaw
November 9, 1994 - February 21, 1997

Brian James Para
Son of Joan and Carl Para
February 19, 1970 - March 19, 1991

Mackenzie Jean Payne
Daughter of Karyn and Eric Payne
February 2, 2003 - February 2, 2003

Jackson Platts
Son of Sandy and Jeff Platts
February 7, 1998 - February 10, 1998

Tanager Ru Ricci
Son of Kathy and James Franklin
October 19, 1977 - February 16, 2004

Zachary James Rich
Son of Tracy and Peter Rich
February 25, 1999 - February 11, 2001

Christopher J. Rogers
Son of Louise Rogers
February 21, 1990 - November 4, 2003

David C. Schmier
Son of Gordan and Virginia Schmier
June 26, 1964 - February 10, 1992

Donna Jean Shrodes
Daughter of Lydia Shrodes
February 5, 1974 - May 23, 2002

Frank Spencer Spurr
Brother of Terri Tuono
January 27, 1966 - February 1, 2002

Roderick William Stallings
Son of Robin Stallings
February 7, 1967 - September 14, 1996

David William Tomaszewski
Son of Rick and Carol Tomaszewski
September 4, 1974 - February 6, 2001

Timothy Allen Umbel
Son of Richard A. and Mary Ann Umbel
Brother of Dawn Umbel
February 16, 1982 - September 15, 2002

Evyn Bryce Wygal
Son of Pamala and William R. Wygal Jr.
February 15, 1991 - February 24, 1994



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@sdaalex.com



Happy Birthday, Happy Valentines Day

Valentina Cupid was to be your name
You were going to be born on Valentines Day
But 15 minutes you couldn't wait
So Friday the 13th became your day



Now Bethany Anne is a beautiful name
And a beautiful girl deserves a beautiful name
We weren't superstitious about your Birthday
We just thought we were blessed in every way

In 15 years you grew to be quite a lass
Pretty, spunky, smart with some sass
Being with you was a joy and a blast
You made us proud to be your parents

Field hockey, basketball, softball, lacrosse
You could play them all and do it with class
You loved to run, to smile and to laugh
You always gave it your all and lived by
your heart



It ended as quickly as it began
A ride to the hospital after the call
The nervousness, the excitement, the fear of it all
And then you were gone

That end was a beginning, a new day dawned
Not as bright or as shiny as the one we lost
But that doesn't matter for it is what it is
And all we can do is live it best we can

But to live it with out you has been no easy task
The hurt, the anger, the sadness and the tears
But survive it we have for 8 long years
Eight long years and many, many tears

Years of yelling and screaming, of silence and pain
Years of darkness and fear and of going insane
Years of sighing and crying and cursing the world
That could do such a terrible thing to our little girl

But now on the 9th birthday without you here
As we look back on those long, long years
The first 15 now give us some joy
That out weighs the bad, the sad and the dark

Your light will always shine brightly in our dark
Especially in Mom's and my heart
We miss you and love you and yearn for you here
But know we will see you when it's time over there

That light has been a guide which has helped us survive
In a real sense it has helped us to just stay alive
To honor your memory and to make you proud
With our time here without you is all that we ask

Happy Birthday to You
Happy Birthday to You
Happy Birthday Dear Bethany Anne
Happy Birthday to You



We Love you and Miss You!!!

Mom and Dad

Claudia & Paul Balasic
BPUSA Anne Arundel County Chapter
Annapolis, MD

Please Ask!

Barbara Taylor Hudson
Cincinnati, OH

Someone asked me about you today. It's been a long time since anyone has done that. It felt so good to talk about you... to share my memories of you... to simply say your name out loud. She asked me if I minded talking about what happened to you or would it be too painful to speak of it. I told her I think of it every day and speaking about it helps me to release the tormented thoughts

whirling around in my head. She said she never realized the pain would last this long. She apologized for not asking sooner. I told her "Thanks for asking." I don't know if it was curiosity or concern that made her ask, but I told her; "Please, do it again, sometime soon."

Life Changed.....

Life changed when he was born.

He was full of energy, happiness and love.

He was so active.....

running, climbing, biking, swimming, skateboarding,
playing baseball and soccer..... always doing something.

I tried to keep up with him, but often

I had to learn to let him run and just enjoy his spirit.

He taught me to laugh and find joy in life.....

he loved to play jokes, and
his laugh was infectious.

He taught me to expect the unexpected.....

broken bones, straight A's, class president, high school letters,
poetry, drug rehab, a mural at school, car wrecks, quitting high
school, calls in the middle of the night, a rose on my windshield.

He taught me to face adversity with a strong spirit.....

just as he fought alcohol and drug addiction, and
buried two of his best friends during high school.

He loved his family and friends.

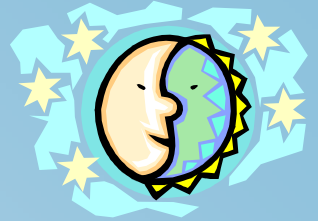
When he was around you felt his energy and love.
He wanted everyone to be happy and know peace in their lives.

He gave me the best gift a mother can get.....

another little boy to love and cherish.

Then he suddenly died.....

And life changed.



Carol Tomaszewski
BPUSA Anne Arundel County Chapter
Annapolis, MD



FROM BEYOND



If she still speaks, I want to hear, and so I listen to the wind and eavesdrop on the rain. And in the silken silence of softly falling snow, I seem to see her frozen breath, uniquely formed and finely wrought. And then I do not hear, but rather watch in wonder as her patterned whispers dance into my soul.

Shirley Cognard Ottman

Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

P.O. Box 6280

Annapolis, MD 21401-0280

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org



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.