



Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

May, 2005

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

They Don't Know What to Say...

Now I know I never knew,
when you lost your child,
what you were going through.

I wasn't there,
I stayed away'
I just deserted you.

I didn't know the words to say,
I didn't know the things to do.
I think your pain so frightened me,
I didn't know how to comfort you.

And then one day my child died.
You were the first one there.
You quietly stayed by my side,
Listened, and held me as I cried.
You didn't leave, you didn't go.
The lesson learned is...Now I know.

Written by Alice Kerr, Lower Bucks, PA, TCF Member

The prior words are understood by so many of us who attend our meetings. The loss of words we suffered when we had to comfort a friend that lost a child prior to us confronting the death of *our* child. And then the lesson learned at such a price, now we know!

- Rick Tomaszewski

CONFERENCE OF HOPE & HEALING REMINDER

This year's Conference date is Saturday, May 21, 2005. We urge you to get your registration in as soon as possible and by the deadline: May 7, 2005. You may download the registration form from our website at: www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org.

HAS YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGED?

If you change your email address, please send a note with your new email address so we can update our records to: WebMaster@sdalex.org

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 and mailing of this newsletter has been donated by
Ken Smith*

*"In memory of my beautiful niece, Tracy Ann Fotino.
Her mother and I miss her, and Tracy is in my thoughts every day."*

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

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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 editor 6-8 weeks in advance of the newsletter in which you wish the item to be printed.

June submissions are due by May 12th.

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



MEETING INFORMATION

Next meeting: May 5, 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 lot behind the church

MEETING TOPICS

May 5 - No Program Scheduled

June 2 - Memorial Garden Stones



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

PLEASE! PLEASE! PLEASE HELP US SAVE ON PRINTING AND POSTAGE

If you *move*, please let us know your new address. If you *don't want* to receive our newsletter any more, please let us know. If you would rather read the newsletter on our website, please let us know, and send us your email address, and we will send you a reminder each month when the newsletter is put on the website. (The newsletter is loaded on the website as soon as it has been produced — about 10 days before it is delivered in the mail.)

You can contact us by mail at our address at PO Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401-0280 by sending us an email at ChapterLeader@sdalex.org.

It costs us over 50¢ per copy to print and mail the newsletter. The Postal Service will not forward the newsletter since it is sent by Bulk Mail. However, for 37¢ a copy they will return any non-deliverable copies which are sent to an old address. That means we have spent 87¢ to find out someone has moved. Not much on a case by case basis, but it adds up. So please take a moment before you move or if you decide you no longer want to receive the newsletter, and let us know.

THANK YOU!

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 "Our 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, May 5, 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. These commissions 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**

Debra & Ken Fiscus in memory of their daughter **Andrea Faith Fiscus**

THOUGHTS

It is the faculty of beholding the golden rays of sunset
after the night has fallen.

It is the ability to bear in mind the sweet melody after
the instruments have stopped playing.

It is a conversation with someone who can no longer
speak, and seeing a smile on a face no longer there.

Karen Russel

National Grief Support Services

PERHAPS

Perhaps, if we could see
the splendor of the land
to which our loved ones are
called
from you and me,
we'd understand.
Perhaps if we could hear
the welcome they receive
from old familiar voices all
so dear,
we would not grieve.
Perhaps, if we could know
the reason why they went
we'd smile and wipe away
the tears that flow, and wait
content.

Unknown Irish author



We will
always need
other people
and even
more so
in the
darkening
hours of
personal
tragedy.

Robert W. Williams

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

- Proverb



SIBLING PAGE



What Was He Really Like?

After meeting a friend that I had not seen for quite some time and exchanging catch-up information, something wonderful happened to me. This beloved friend expressed the usual condolences over the loss of my brother but went on to pose the question “What was he really like?” My eyes must have sparkled like fire. The question itself ignited an unbelievable response. Unleashing all my memories, I began immediately bursting at the seams.

Oh he was so kind and gentle. He was so seldom angry that you remembered the exact moment when he lost his temper—because it just didn’t happen that often. And he was so good at telling stories. Believe me, he could embellish a story. His left eye would wink, and he’d get a silly grin on his face as if he weren’t going to tell you the ending. But then he’d spout out the ending, knowing that he had teased you once more.

And oh, he was so respectful to Mom and Dad that I wanted to slug him sometimes. He would always tell me that I wouldn’t get into trouble if I’d just keep my mouth shut! And never, never could I outlast him at night. He would come in from a date at midnight and still have enough energy to watch the late movie. Brilliant—why he never had to crack one book in high school!

And I could have gone on and on. I told my friend that I didn’t want to keep her and that I certainly didn’t mean to get so carried away, but so few people ask me that question. She told me that she would have liked to have known him. This instance may be a rarity with friends who have not experienced the death of a loved one. But may we, in Compassionate Friends, keep asking each other over and over, “What was he really like?”

*Julie Cameron
TCF, Louisville, KY*

Siblings: Everything Is A First

Everything is a first. Many moments must be faced. There are the first holidays, the first anniversary, the first birthday. Thoughts about my brother Dave, will always be with us. It’s never more than a sentence away from me—NEVER. The ordinary cannot be ordinary. A certain phrase, a look, or an article of clothing trigger thoughts and emotions.

The joy of my senior year in college was interrupted by sad reality. FORGET? How is this possible. The days and months following my brother’s death were filled with grief. Flowers and food were everywhere. Love and concern were translated into strength that kept me moving one step at a time.

People don’t know what to say. Nothing is NORMAL. Tragedy has brought a seriousness to my life. Thoughts about the meaning of life and the unimportance of a lot of things I previously found important

are circulating in my mind. I think about my own funeral now. When will it be? Tomorrow, next week, next year, before or after my parents? There are good days and bad days. I am learning to deal with all of this.

People ask me, how are you? Here is my answer. I am mad Dave died at the age of 17. I am angry that my parents have to go through all this. I am confused about my role in the family. I am sad. I am fearful about the future. I am hopeful things will get better. I am courageous. I think about my brother every day. I will be strong.

*By: Lisa Ann Jones
Avoca, PA*



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

Jordan Edward Ambrozewicz
Son of Beverly and Steven Ambrozewicz
May 27, 1993 - May 10, 1995

Veronica Anne Arata
Daughter of Rick Arata
June 12, 1968 - May 25, 2000

Christopher Lewis Borngesser
Son of Diane M. Borngesser
December 21, 1961 - May 28, 2001

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

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

Kathleen Yvette Denevan
Daughter of Gregory J. Denevan
August 10, 1970 - May 13, 1971

Michelle Marie Dyke
Daughter of Marie V. Dyke
May 19, 1975 - November 10, 1992

Joseph Frederick Errichiello Jr.
Son of Susan and Joseph Errichiello
April 6, 1979 - May 29, 2004

R. Daniel Ferrer
Son of Anna Ferrer Severn
May 25, 1972 - August 29, 1986

Tracy Ann Fotino
Daughter of Martha Murphy
Niece of Kenneth Smith
May 14, 1971 - August 25, 2000

Andrew Thomas Gawthrop
Son of Brenda Gawthrop
May 25, 1990 - August 12, 2002

John Joseph Goetz Sr.
Son of Mary and John Goetz
May 6, 1958 - July 21, 1996

Matthew Gordon Haines
Son of Peggy and Gordon Haines
May 3, 1977 - July 4, 1996

Devin Arthur Hall
Son of Cyndia Hall
November 10, 1985 - May 17, 1990

Ronald Michael Hall III
Son of Mike and Julie Hall
May 17, 1980 - September 20, 2003

Sidney Mark Hardesty Jr.
Son of Dawn Watkinson
March 10, 1979 - May 17, 2003

Todd Stafford Henschen
Son of Linda Stafford
May 16, 1970 - August 31, 1988

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

Brian Keith Jones
Son of Jeanne and LeRoy Jones
May 22, 1974 - May 22, 1974

Brice Charles Kelley
Son of Hannah and Chris Kelley
September 24, 2002 - May 31, 2004

Stephen Aaron Luck
Son of Charlotte and Paul Koehler
August 2, 1966 - May 27, 1985

John F. Marinelli
Son of Annette and William Marinelli
May 30, 1964 - December 19, 1986

Joseph A. Miller
Son of Mary J. Miller
Brother of Marlene Miller
December 13, 1956 - May 12, 1977

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



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

Daniel Michael Milord
Son of Mike Milord
July 15, 1982 - May 5, 2004

Emily Marie Parker
Daughter of Valerie Nowak and Brian Parker
May 9, 2002 - July 18, 2002

Sydney Elaine Patronik
Daughter of Holly and Michael Patronik
March 26, 2002 - May 11, 2002

Wendy Dawn Saunders
Daughter of Aljuana and Ronald Saunders
May 20, 1972 - May 14, 1998

Stanley "Jerry" Schisler
Son of Pam and Stan Schisler
May 31, 1980 - May 9, 2001



Mary Senier-Egan
Daughter of Mary M. Senier
Sister of Terri Hayden-Molton
May 8, 1951 - June 24, 1993

Donald Lee Seyfferth Jr.
Son of Jody Seyfferth
December 16, 1977 - May 8, 2000

Ryan Michael Sheahy
Son of Deborah L. Sheahy
May 4, 1977 - March 16, 2001

Rachel Beth Showacre
Daughter of Daynie Showacre
May 7, 1980 - October 30, 2002

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

Christopher Lewis Strader
Son of Peggy and Lewis Strader
May 27, 1979 - June 21, 1997

Russell J. Tarr
Son of Lorraine A. Tarr
December 22, 1963 - May 12, 1994

John Leroy Waters Jr.
Son of Stella and John Waters
September 19, 1970 - May 23, 2000



Carole Ann Wilford
Sister of Aljuana Saunders
January 7, 1944 - May 4, 1998

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



What Makes a Mother?

*I thought of you and closed my eyes
and prayed to God today.
I asked "What makes a Mother?"
and I know I heard Him say—*

*"A mother has a baby
This we know is true"
"But, God, can you be a Mother
When your baby's not with you?"*

*"Yes you can" He replied
With confidence in his voice
"I give many women babies
When they leave is not their choice"*

*"Some I send for a lifetime
and others for a day
and some I send to feel your womb
But there's no need to stay."*

*"I just don't understand this, God
I want my baby here"
He took a breath and cleared His throat
and then I saw a tear*

*"I wish I could show you
What your child is doing today
If you could see your child smile
With other children and say*

*'We go to Earth to learn our lessons
Of love and life and fear
My mommy loved me oh so much
I've got to come straight here.*

*I feel so lucky to have a Mom
who had so much love for me
I learned my lesson very quickly
My Mommy set me free*

*I miss my Mommy oh so much
But I visit her every day
When she goes to sleep
On her pillow's where I lay*

*I stroke her hair and kiss her cheek
and whisper in her ear
Mommy, don't be sad today
I'm your baby and I'm here.'*

*"So you see my dear sweet one
Your children are okay
Your babies are in My home
And this is where they'll stay*

*They'll wait for you with Me
Until our lesson is through
And on the day that you come home
They'll be at the gates for you*

*So now you see what makes a Mother
It's the feeling in your heart
It's the love you had so much of
Right from the very start."*

Author unknown



THE GREATEST GRIEF



A sudden accident killed **your** child. That terrible phone call changed your life with no warning—you didn't get to say goodbye—this has to be the most terrible loss of all.

Your child died by suicide **you** feel you should have been able to prevent it. Your guilt is devastating. How can you live with such an incomprehensible tragedy?

You had only one child—now you have none and your focus in life is gone. What's the point of living? What could be more devastating?

You've experienced the deaths of more than one of your children—will it happen again? How does one survive this pain again?

When **your** baby died, your dreams died—you have few memories and you're too young to be suffering like this—this loss is the most unfair.

Someone murdered **your** child—an unbelievable violation—you're angry and your frustration with the legal system feeds your anger. This must be the very worst.

You're a single parent—your child has died and you have no one to lean on, no one to share your grief—surely your suffering is the most painful.

The unbelievable has happened—**your adult** child died—you had invested so much in that child.—now who's going to care for you in your old age?

You had to watch your child suffer bravely through a long illness—you were helpless to ease his pain and to prevent his death—how do you erase those horrible images? Yours must be the greatest grief.

The truth is that the **death** of any child is the greatest loss, regardless of the cause, regardless of the age. Our own experience is far more painful than we had ever previously envisioned, so how could we possibly comprehend what others have undergone? To make comparisons between our own suffering and the pain of others is an exercise in futility.

It accomplishes nothing and sometimes can be hurtful to others. To say that one type of death produces a greater or deeper grief than another tends to place different values on the children who have died. Each child is worthy of 100% of our grief, each person's sorrow is 100%, because we love each child, those still living and those who have died, with 100% of our being. I can't imagine wanting to walk in the shoes of any other bereaved parent, can you?

*Peggy Gibson
TCF, Nashville, TN*



Grief is the ceremony
of lost treasure.
Grief is the homage
you pay to the love
you were once blessed to share.
Grief is not an enemy.

Sascha

Bereaved Parents of the USA

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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.