



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

October 2006

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

Strange Words Welcome New Members

I am always amazed at the instant empathy we each feel as new members come to their first meeting. We have the strangest welcome for these parents: "We are so sorry you have to be here."

In other organizations the questions are probing: where did you go to school, where do you work, where do you live? All designed to "size up" the newcomer, put him or her in the proper perspective of a neatly ordered world. For us, this information is meaningless. We know the world isn't neat and orderly; we discovered that when we lost our children. We care about you, the newly bereaved parent, whose life was tossed into a cosmic blender when your child died.

We care because we are you. We have been here a while, in this purgatory of pain. We have learned to live our lives in a different way, to place value on understanding and hope, the intangibles of the purest meanings of life. We have learned to value each other, to reach out and talk, to wait patiently

during the silences needed to form thoughts. We listen intently as you quietly say your child's name, tell your child's story, speak of your heartbreak.

Yes, this is a different kind of welcome. But it is the most deeply sincere welcome we will ever receive. We are kindred souls, you and I. Each of us lives in the "after death" world of losing our child. Each of us has learned gradually that the hope we have attained has made life better, lessened the pain, moderated the isolation, tears, emotional devastation and pure mayhem that once overtook us. Each of us has learned this slowly, in our own time and in our own way.

Each month new parents who have suffered the most horrific loss that a human can endure are welcomed into our group. We reach out, we listen with our hearts and we remember.

Annette Mennen Baldwin, In memory of my son,
Todd Mennen, TCF, Katy, TX

Ed. Note: I think these thoughtful words echo the feelings of this chapter's not-so-newly bereaved. R. Tomaszewski

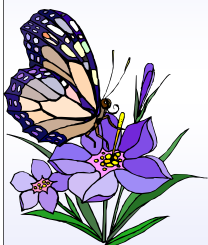
GOALS OF BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA

- 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 October issue of the newsletter has been donated
In Memory of*

Brittany Nicole Tyler

***By Mom and Dad, Grammy,
Aunt Lisa and Uncle Chuck, and
Aunt Sherry and Uncle Bill,
For her 20th birthday***



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

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Treasurer: Fran Palmer - **Hospitality:** Carol Tomaszewski
Mailing List: Dave Alexander - **Programs:** 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.

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.

November submissions are due by October 13.

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 information, contact Carol Tomaszewski at 410 519-8448.



MEETING INFORMATION

Next meeting: October 5, 2006

Doors open at 7:15 p.m.

Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

(Meetings usually held on first Thursday of month)

Calvary United Methodist Church

301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis

Please park in the lot behind the church

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

HELP WANTED/ OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Opportunities are available for you to help others while helping yourself. Perhaps you can now reach beyond your initial grief and help yourself heal by doing something to help our Chapter continue to reach out to others. Don't think you have to make a major commitment. There are many small services you can provide that will help ease the burden on others. Please consider the following needs, and call to chat with one of us to discuss these and other possibilities that may "fit" you.

Our Chapter needs:

Core Group Members – attend bi-monthly meetings where Chapter business and plans are discussed.

Recording Secretary – take minutes of Core Group meetings and distribute to Core Group members.

Webmaster – maintain & update our website with provided information.

Special Event Helpers – help with the December Service of Remembrance, or May Hope & Healing Conference.

Call POCs: Carol Tomaszewski 410 519-8448
Sandi Burash 410 551-5774
Dave Alexander 410 544-3634

MEETING TOPICS NOTE:

Each of our monthly meetings follow the same basic format. We first have a general session attended by everyone. During this first one-half hour we usually have a speaker or panel addressing a topic of interest and value to families mourning the death of a child. Following the general session, we break up into sharing groups. We always have the sharing groups, and the topics they discuss -- particularly for the newly bereaved groups -- do not necessarily focus on the program topic unless it is relevant to the members in the sharing group. We try to cover a range of topics in the programs we schedule, so that over the year we will have covered many topics which are of value to a broad range of members.

MEETING TOPICS

October 5: Holidays and Special Days

The holidays, particularly those in November and December, can be very difficult for bereaved parents. A panel of members will discuss these issues and offer suggestions on preparing for and dealing with holidays and significant dates such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chanukah, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Valentines Day, the birth date of the child, the death date of the child, the day the child would have first gone to school, etc.

November 2: Where Was God When My Child Died?!!

For some grieving parents, their faith helps them through the grief process. Others experience great anger with their god or religion. Rabbi Steve Weisman will explore these issues with us.

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: THANK YOU!

Donations may be made to offset the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, the Chapter website, 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:

Judy and Ed Bessling in memory of their son Jamie Bessling
Dorothy and Norm Heincelman in memory of their granddaughters Cortney Belt and Traci Heincelman
Ken Smith in memory of his niece Tracy Ann Fotino

Parade Magazine, June 11, 2006 -- Keanu Reeve's daughter was stillborn in 1998 and the "love of his life" the baby's mother died instantly in a car accident in 2001. This is an excerpt of the article:

Bolstered by success onscreen, actor Keanu Reeves is determined to find joy.

"I don't want to flee from life"

By Dotson Rader

"Grief changes shape, but it never ends. People have a misconception that you can deal with it and say, 'It's gone, and I'm better.' They're wrong. When the people you love are gone, you're alone. I miss being part of their lives and them being part of mine. I wonder what the present would be like if they were here – what we might have done together. I miss all the great things that will never be. Damn it! It's not fair! It's absurd. All you can do is hope that grief will be transformed and instead of feeling pain and confusion, you will be together again in memory, that there will be solace and pleasure there, not just loss" When asked if loss had changed him, he replied, "Much of my appreciation of life has come through loss. Life is precious. It's worthwhile."Keanu Reeves

Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying "I will try again tomorrow."



"In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life:
it goes on."

Robert Frost

SIBLING PAGE

Do whatever it is you do to get through
your own grieving of your loved one...

A Tribute

I think of you in silence,
My feelings seldom show,
But how it hurts to lose you,
No one will ever know.

I hope there is eternal life,
So we can meet again.
I not only lost my brother,
I lost my very best friend.

The reason you left so early,
I'll never understand why.
I just wish I'd known you were never
Coming back,
Cause I would have said good-bye.

By Martha King
Concord, NY



From "Straight Talk About Death For Teenagers"
By Earl A. Grollman,

But just as you will never take the place of the sister or
brother who died,
No one can take your place.
Each person is unique.
You have your own personality.

Just be you.

Know that others have experienced the death of a brother
or sister.
They, too, had to struggle through feelings like yours.
They have survived.

You will too.



Treasuring Your Memories

From "Straight Talk About Death For Teenagers"
By Earl A. Grollman

There are mementos – pictures, letters, songs,
personal items—that remind you of your special
person's life. At first you may feel depressed just
looking at them. Why not just throw them away?

Wait.

Walk through grief; don't run.

If the reminders are too painful because your loss is
so recent, put them away for the present. There
may be a day when you will treasure them.

The Sibling Prayer

Beneath the amber glow
Of the newly rising sun,
Or standing on the hillside
When the day is nearly done,
Riding down the highway
When my work day is at end,
Or sitting on a park bench
Talking to a friend –
No matter where I am in life,
No matter what my task,
Please give me peace of mind,
Dear Lord,
That is all I ask.
And when those haunting memories
Of the night he passed away
Come rushing in my broken heart
Please do not delay.
Remind me that he is in
A far, far better place,
And grant me a glimpse of his hazel eyes
And sweet angelic face.
Please grant me reassurance
That we'll someday meet again
In heaven's bright tomorrow.
In your name I pray, Amen.



Laura Carpenter
Onancock, VA
From "The Sibling Newsletter" 1993

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

James "Jamie" William Henry Alexander
Son of Dave and Sue Alexander
October 12, 1970 - October 26, 1998

David Sheridan Astle
Son of John and Jayne Astle
October 21, 1974 - December 6, 1997

Joseph Phillip Baressi IV
Son of Sandy and Joseph Baressi
October 26, 2002 - October 28, 2002

Lydia Suzanne Barr
Daughter of Cyndi Barr
October 15, 1996 - October 18, 1996

Jamie Bessling
Son of Judy and Ed Bessling
October 23, 1974 - September 23, 2002

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

Eric Reynolds Burns
Son of Beth Burns
October 20, 2000 - November 7, 2002

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

Hannah Lindley Campbell
Daughter of John and Cathi Campbell
October 10, 1992 - October 10, 1992

Tria Marie Castiglia
Daughter of Noel and Ann Castiglia
Sister of Carla Castiglia
July 6, 1963 - October 14, 1984

Vincent Mark DiBerardinis
Son of Laura and Mark DiBerardinis
October 16, 1996 - June 14, 2002

Gary Lee Downey Jr.
Son of Pat and Gary Downey
Brother of Melissa Barnhart
October 30, 1980 - December 24, 2005

Andrew George Eser
Son of Karl and Linda Eser
August 12, 1982 - October 10, 2000

Bill Evans
Son of Walter and Marlene Evans
June 5, 1964 - October 12, 1990

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

Lisa Michelle Foster
Daughter of Audrey E. Foster
October 17, 1979 - October 11, 2003

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

Craig Robert Galyon
Son of Susan Galyon-Pyle
August 23, 1979 - October 11, 2001

Jennifer Marie Garvey
Daughter of Mark and Cheryl Sylce
November 4, 1983 - October 18, 1999

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

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

Romana Alice Hale
Sister of Bobbi Remines
October 8, 1948 - November 5, 1976

Brian Jeffrey Haley
Son of Jerry and Pam Haley
October 26, 1973 - March 4, 1990

Traci Jeanne Heincelman
Daughter of Ed and Jeanne Heincelman
Granddaughter of Dorothy and Norm Heincelman
Niece of Terre and John Belt
Cousin of Eryn Belt
October 6, 1980 - March 10, 2002

Charles "Chip" Marshall Hodges
Son of Betty and John Hodges
October 24, 1954 - March 14, 2005

Ty'Lik De'Shawn Jenkins
Son of Tonya Lyons
July 28, 1999 - October 16, 2001

Mark Charles Knepper
Son of Pat and Joe Knepper
June 28, 1968 - October 17, 1988

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

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

Raymond Wilson Leager
Son of Tom and Betsy Leager
October 3, 1991 - October 3, 1991

Temple Sidney Leager
Daughter of Tom and Betsy Leager
October 3, 1991 - October 3, 1991

Andrea Jean Loatman
Daughter of Janet and John Hewitt
January 12, 1980 - October 5, 1999

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

Julia Milesky
Daughter of Stanley Milesky
October 26, 1986 - November 22, 2003

Calvin Russell Miller
Son of Laura and Curtis Miller
October 11, 2003 - October 11, 2003

Kyle Brenner Millman
Son of Susan Millman
October 27, 1976 - June 10, 1989

Chad William Muehlhauser
Son of Paula and Bill Muehlhauser
October 3, 1983 - September 16, 1992

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

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

Connor "Jag" Persons
Son of Deirdre Persons
June 19, 1990 - October 16, 2002

John Christopher Poe
Son of Sharon and Ben Poe
October 12, 1967 - September 24, 2001

Jayla Monet Powell
Daughter of Dorie Powell
September 26, 1998 - October 22, 2005

Robert Rey
Friend of Peggy Smeltzer
September 14, 1965 - October 2, 2003

Tanager Rú Ricci
Son of Kathy Franklin
October 19, 1977 - February 16, 2004

Michael Louis Rixham
Son of Susan and Louis Rixham
July 5, 1977 - October 8, 2004

David John Rose
Son of Carol Rose McAuliffe
October 21, 1969 - September 1, 1988

Thomas "Tommy" Richard Short
Son of Karen Short
September 25, 1997 - October 16, 1997

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

Deonte Joseph Simms
Grandson of Deborah Simms
October 1, 1981 - September 8, 2001

Jami Leigh Smith
Daughter of Deannie and Gerry Smith
October 19, 1977 - September 30, 1987

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

Marshall Maurice Tullier
Son of Martin and Kathryn Tullier
October 29, 1986 - November 10, 1986

Brittany Nicole Tyler
Daughter of Janet and Danny Tyler
October 12, 1986 - August 23, 1992

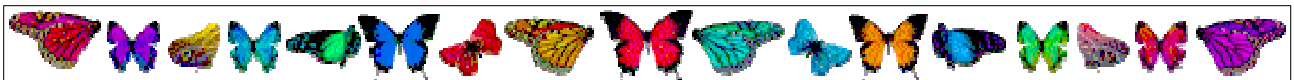
Richard C. Watts
Son of Tom and Fran Cease
December 28, 1966 - October 28, 1998

Kevin Michael Wengert
Son of Debbie and David Wengert
October 2, 1987 - September 3, 2005

Grant Alan Williams
Son of Mark and Randye Williams
October 25, 2000 - October 25, 2000

Samuel Mark Williams
Son of Mark and Randye Williams
October 25, 2000 - October 25, 2000

Hope Marie Williams
Daughter of Nicole Hawkins
September 26, 1998 - October 6, 1998



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

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.

The First Empty Year Without You

It has been one year since you left us with only a note.
You begged us to let you go, "it's better this way," you wrote.

The pain is more real now than when I heard from your wife,
She had found you in the shower; you had taken your life.

With each new day, I struggle to find a reason to live,
I can't stand not knowing, what more could I give?

Why did you choose to leave us this way?
What could we have done, what words didn't we say?

Life is such a precious gift, one only God can give.
How could we believe that you really didn't want to live.

We loved you so very much and wanted you here.
We could not understand all of your pain and your fear.

Tears fill my eyes now almost all of the time.
Your taking your life was such a terrible crime!

As this pain-filled year passes, we go to your resting place.
We stand there praying that we may just see your face.

If only we could go back and change that day last year.
We would give anything in this World to have you here.

Why did you leave us this way, couldn't we just have one more day?
We would hold you longer and love you more than words could say.

I hope that you know that my love for you is as strong as ever.
I will hold you in my heart and forget you never.

— Nancy Doherty
Anne Arundel County Chapter/BPUSA
Dedicated to the memory of my son, Eric Paul Haynal
Who left this earth, September 13, 2005 at the age of 36½
With all my love

THE WORDS

--You will not always hurt like this –
These words are true.

If they do not reach
Your heart today,
Do not reject them;
Keep them in your mind.

One morning –
Not tomorrow perhaps,
But the day after tomorrow,
Or the month after next month –
One morning the dawn will wake you
With the inconceivable surprise:
Your grief will have lost
One small moment of its force.

Be ready for the time
When you can feel for yourself
That these words are true:
You will not always hurt like this.

Sascha, "Wintersun"

Sometimes we are lucky
to find someone in our lives
who stays in our hearts forever!

For Stephen

So sad to hear all the tragedy in Darfur and the Sudan,
But what about the little boy who died in Maryland?

No top story news with the sad story to tell
Just two families torn apart living through this hell

The doc said it was viral – drink your fluids and get rest
I'm convinced he would be here today had they run a blood test

The night of St. Patrick's Day when most would drink and drive
My little boy lay awake fighting to stay alive

Saturday morning we rushed him in, this virus went awry
We never thought that morning we would have to say good bye

Now we're left to try and fill this never ending hole
I wonder if he'd be alive if he were a Cruise or a Paltrow?

America the beautiful, the world's greatest nation
How could you let my baby die from a mere strep infection?

Streptococcal Infection was the final cause of death
So hard to comprehend, so hard to take a breath

To all the moms and dads – listen to your gut
Who cares if the doctor thinks that you're a nut

You know your baby inside and out, better than they do
They'll never kick you out the door before the payments due

They push us through like cattle, a file number not a name
My baby's name was Stephen and I'll never be the same

But Stephen left me something I never knew I had
A voice with strength and courage, and not just fragile and so sad

So sorry to the world for missing all that he could be
His name was Stephen Kilian, he meant the world to me

My precious baby boy, I hope you'll someday see
They haven't heard the last of mom and you'll be proud of me.

I love you and miss you every minute of every day for the rest
of my life.

— Written by Aimée Kilian
Anne Arundel County Chapter/BPUSA
In loving memory of Stephen William Kilian
January 15, 2004 – March 18, 2006

Forgotten? – Never!

Friends may think we have forgotten,
When at times they see us smile.
Little do they know the heartaches,
That our smiles hide all the while.
Beautiful memories are wonderful things,
That last till the longest day.
They never wear out, they never get lost
And can never be given away.
To some you may be forgotten,
To others a part of the past.
But to those who loved and lost you
Your memory will always last.

-unknown-

IN MEMORY

Never a day goes by
We don't think of you.
Never a night goes by
We don't hold you.
Never a season changes
We don't love you.
As long as we live
We will remember you.

Mary Steighner
TCF Northeast Ohio Chapter

Death's Aftermath

(To a recently bereaved parent)

Just a little while ago
I walked where you are walking now.
Your child was special, too ! I know
And was quite different from mine.
Yet love is love
And death is death
And pain is pain.
Your pain is mine, my pain is yours.
Come, friend,
Let us search for hope together.

- unknown-

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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.