



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

June 2007

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

I made it through Mother's Day
What about Father's Day?

I used to look forward to Mother's Day along with the surprises & dinner. Now it's a day that I just hope to make it through without offending anyone in my family because it's so hard to deal with the grief.

And I wonder if Father's Day is the same for my husband.

But this year was a little different. I attended Church by the cemetery where my son is buried, rather than the church I sometimes attend. The service was soothing and uplifting. Perhaps because of the change, or perhaps because my son was close. For whatever reason, it worked for me.

Then the sermon ended with the "Popsicle Prayer."
It made me smile. It made me sad.
It made me remember many precious moments with my son.

And it reminded me that there are many children in this world who have never shared a love like I had with my son.

I have learned over the years that helping others helps me.

So I suggest to you that perhaps one way to deal with the loss in your life, is to help other children in some capacity. Make donations to local, national or international groups providing food, shelter or medical aid. Volunteer at a school, library, hospital, summer camp. There's many ways Try it. It may work for you.

You can read the prayer on page 8.

Carol Tomaszewski
Anne Arundel County Chapter BPUA

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 Karen Fedor and Jerry Moore in memory of their son

Gavin Adler Moore

and

by Charlotte and Donald Scott in memory of their daughter

Michelle Inez Scott



**Anne Arundel County Chapter
Bereaved Parents of the USA
P.O. Box 6280
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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.

July submissions are due by June 18.

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: June 7, 2007

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).
- ♦ **MADD Maryland "Family Forever"**
Weekly support group for family and friends of homicide victims and victims of drunk driving crashes
meets every Monday at 7:30 p.m.
Contact Jan Withers at 301-627-1743



CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

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 (dralex@sdalex.com). **For the Newsletter**, in 2007 full sponsorship of an issue of the newsletter is \$200.00. Up to two people or families can sponsor an issue, and the cost will be divided equally – \$100 each. If someone has already signed up for full sponsorship of a month, and another member would like to share in that month, they will be allowed to do so. When there are more than two members or families wishing to sponsor an issue, preference will be given to members who did not sponsor an issue the previous year, otherwise it will be on a “first-come-first-serve” basis. **For the Website**, sponsorship is \$25.00 each month.

DO YOU USE AMAZON.COM?

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

Anne Arundel Co. Chapter Answer Line:

443-57-BPUSA or 443-572-7872

Our chapter has a telephone message line to provide Information about Chapter activities such as meeting time and locations, our website, monthly meeting topics, upcoming special activities and meeting cancellation announcements. You can also leave a message and someone from the Chapter will get back to you to discuss any issues or concerns you may have. Hopefully you will find this an easy way to keep in touch with “What’s Happening” with the Chapter.

Upcoming Meeting Topics

June 7: No program scheduled

July 5: To Be Announced

Recommended Reading

The keynote speaker (Dr. Richard A. Dew) at our May 19th Conference of Hope and Healing has published several books that I highly recommend:

“Rachel’s Cry—A Journey Through Grief” is a highly acclaimed book of poetry, and,
“Tunnel of Light” a novel of love and loss.

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.

We Can Always Use the Help!

There are dozens of tasks that go into running our chapter and our special events, from helping set up the chairs...to greeting new members when they first come in the door...to facilitating sharing groups...to identifying potential articles and poems for the newsletter...to mailing out invitations to one of our events...to working on public relations.... We can always use the help. If you feel you are now in a place in your grief journey where you can help and give back to the chapter in little or large ways, please contact Dave at 410-544-3634. Most of us find that when we reach a point of giving back to those who come after us, we gain far more than we give.



Donations: THANK YOU!



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

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

Marlen and Gene Maier in memory of their son **Eric Eugene Maier**
Karen Fedor and Jerry Moore in memory of their son **Gavin Alder Moore**
Jane and Chuck Schindler in memory of their daughter **Emily Ann Schindler**
Charlotte and Donald Scott in memory of their daughter **Michelle Inez Scott**
Ken Smith in memory of his niece **Tracy Ann Fotino**

And a **THANK YOU!** to everyone that contributed to the success of the May 19th Conference of Hope and Healing.

We particularly want to thank the workshop presenters who gave so generously of their time and expertise: Dave & Sue Alexander, Marilyn Apirian, Paul Balasic, Byron Brought, Bob & Sandi Burash, Richard Dew, Darlene Goatley, Kathleen Grapski, Gordon Livingston, Ellen Patterson, Lynn Rosenberg, and Peter Wilcox.

Special thanks go to Debi Wilson-Smith, the Conference Leader, and to all the core team members and other volunteers that contributed with their time and assistance, including Dave Alexander, Barbara Bessling, Bob & Sandi Burash, Marla Dickens, Carole Gilmour, Jan Hylan, Aimée Kilian, Janice Kunkel, Bobbi Remines, Diane Royer, Jane Schindler, and Carol & Rick Tomaszewski. The balloon and the Monarch butterfly release sponsored by the Kilian family and Debi Wilson-Smith, was a touching conclusion to a memorable and beautiful day.

BEING A SURVIVOR by Rita Milburn-Dobson

Recently, I had the opportunity to facilitate at our local Bereaved Parents meeting on "Being a Survivor." I attended the meeting both as a professional and as a bereaved parent. In preparing for the evening, I looked up various definitions of the word, "survivor." The dictionary used words such as "preserves, endures, persists, remains, and comes through," but as the night unfolded, I learned the true meaning of "survivor."

The meeting began, as most do, with introductions and talking about our child/children who have died. A tall gentleman came in and asked if this was the Bereaved Parents meeting.

Though the gentleman lives approximately thirty miles from our meeting place, he works in the city. He had been waiting for the train that would take him home when he had an epileptic seizure, and he was brought to the hospital where our meeting is held. Since his laboratory work showed that the level of his anti-seizure medicine was normal, the physician asked, "Is there something stressful in your life that may have triggered a seizure?"

The man replied, "Today is the one-year anniversary of my son's death."

As he was trying to regroup and collect his thoughts, the police walked into his cubicle. The father was puzzled, as their line of questioning began with, "What did you have with you?" as the father had lain on the platform having a seizure, onlookers watched as his wallet and a gift box containing a brand new leather jacket were taken from him. He was shocked to have awakened in a hospital bed with an intravenous line in his arm, being told that he had been robbed.

A hospital worker in the next cubicle heard the first part of the conversation about the death of the man's son. As the hospital worker introduced himself and shared that he had many friends who had lost a child, they talked further, and the bereaved father asked about any support groups in the area. The hospital worker said, "Funny you should ask. There is a Bereaved Parents group that meets here in the hospital, and they meet here tonight." That is how the man found our meeting.

As the evening progressed, it became apparent to everyone in the room that destiny had brought this father to our meeting. Those of us who give presentations are often encouraged to use audio-visual tools. I was fortunate that my audio-visual was six feet, five inches tall. While I had "scholarly" prepared for the presentation, the bereaved father personified what it is to really be a survivor and to persevere with determination in the face of adversity.

That bereaved father was brought to our meeting by fate to show me/us how to survive on a daily basis. Often, those of us who go through the pain and suffering of grief do not want to go on with life, but we can find the strength to endure and become true survivors.



SIBLING PAGE



MY WISH TO ALL

My arms reach out to all those who are hurt:

To those who cry late at night,
Longing for someone to hear,
Understand and ease their pain;

To those who cannot face their grief
And desperately try to forget it;

To those who see no hope,
No future and no point to it all –

I cry with you and frantically search for any answer.

To those who fell into a bad, bad dream
And still haven't awakened;

To those whose hearts were torn and trodden on;

To those whose lives were shattered
And were then powerless to do anything about it –
As, essentially, we have no control over our own destinies

There is not a guarantee on our lives.

Rebekah Brady
Western Australia

I had a prayer answered today, one I'd like to share.
I found I'm not alone in my grief, I found someone to care!
I've been in pain for quite awhile, but kept it deep inside.
But now I know there are people in whom I can confide.

They'll let me cry or scream or yell, and they know just how I feel;
You see they also know that pain and know it's very real.
Each one has suffered a loss, one like I have known;
Yet now we stand together.
This unique group of siblings is bonded, you might say.
And strength to carry on is for what each one must pray.

One by one we keep going, although painful it might be,
And the emptiness we feel, many will never see;
Because we choose what face to show the world and
courage keeps us going,
We have a constant ache inside;
No matter what the outside is showing.

And whether it takes me a year or two,
Time is all that can heal;
So I have been sent some
"Compassionate Siblings"
Who know just how I feel.

Bless those who need to be understood
When tears come and go without warning.
May we help heal the wounds so deep
That are hurting all the hearts left empty by the death of a sibling.

Stacie Gilliam
TCF/N Oklahoma City, OK



Dear Sweet Ann,

Although we never held you, we'll hold you in our dreams. Although we never touched you, we'll touch you in our thoughts. Although we never talked to you, we'll see you in every sunny day. Thank you, Annie, for sharing nine months with us, for love, laughter and happiness. We'll never forget you.
Your loving Family ...

Written by the older sister of a stillborn baby named Ann.
(from TCF publication, "Grieving, Healing, Growing")

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

William P. Anthony Jr.
Son of Bill and Linda Anthony
June 1, 1965 - January 2, 1999

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

Deneen Leigh Bagby-Lins
Daughter of Jack and Audrey Bagby
June 21, 1957 - August 6, 1987

Merwede Baker
Son of Anna Baker and Paul Reid
January 15, 1978 - June 24, 2004

Jay W. Barnett
Son of Virginia Barnett
March 13, 1988 - June 15, 2005

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

Maranda Machele Callender
Daughter of Dean and Christina Callender
Daughter of Dawn and Ralph Johnson
Granddaughter of Olive Hubbard
November 11, 1988 - June 2, 2006

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

Joseph William Cranston
Son of Thomas and Mary Cranston
June 11, 1972 - June 11, 1972

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

Jack Turner Dumont
Son of Jill and Dave Dumont
June 26, 2003 - June 26, 2003

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

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

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

Ronald Wesley Farley
Son of Dorothy and Donald Farley
September 15, 1955 - June 28, 2000

Christina Ann Fisher
Daughter of Rick and Carol Wilson
December 17, 1985 - June 30, 2001

Sara Elizabeth Hohne
Daughter of Donald and Karen Hohne
January 2, 1980 - June 13, 2003

Colin David Humphrey
Son of Robert and Julie Humphrey
August 23, 1998 - June 16, 2001

Allison Carol Jimenez
Daughter of Carol and Russell Fritz
June 29, 1973 - August 2, 2005

Stephen William Kain
Son of Janet Houlihan Kain
February 2, 1958 - June 4, 2001

Darin Michael Kilton
Son of Gil and Twanda Kilton
March 21, 1974 - June 5, 1985

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

Nicholas Paul Liberatore
Son of Larry and Pat Liberatore
September 27, 1980 - June 9, 1997

Michelle Anna Markey
Daughter of Shirley and Rick Markey
Sister of Robert Markey
June 19, 1992 - June 9, 2004

Christopher "Chris" Logan McFeely
Son of Samantha and Darell Sisteck
Brother of Taylor Sisteck
June 27, 1987 - January 15, 2005

Brian Richard Melcher
Son of Norma and Donald Melcher
Brother of Cheryl Lewis
August 30, 1960 - June 14, 2002

Benjamin James Miller
Son of Laura and Curtis Miller
June 2, 2003 - June 6, 2003

Michael Wesley Miller Jr.
Son of Michael Miller Sr.
November 11, 1981 - June 19, 1985



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

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

Gavin Alder Moore
Son of Karen Fedor and Jerry Moore
June 11, 2004 - June 11, 2004

Julia Lyn Moore
Daughter of Dorothy Becker
August 22, 1973 - June 19, 2002

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

Sarah Elizabeth Patterson
Daughter of Cindy Patterson
June 28, 1987 - September 19, 2006

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

Daniel Keith Rogers
Son of Thomas and Lauri Rogers
June 16, 1981 - March 18, 2000

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

Karen Ann Scully
Daughter of Ann Boteler
June 30, 1970 - November 14, 2004

Scott Christopher Shaffer
Son of Barbara Shaffer
March 17, 1967 - June 5, 2004

Jeffrey Steven Simpson
Son of Stephen and Linda Maszgay
June 3, 1972 - June 21, 2002

Christopher John Smith
Son of Debi Wilson-Smith
March 27, 1981 - June 30, 2000

Laura Ann Smith
Daughter of Lois and Joel Smith
July 30, 1985 - June 7, 2003

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

Deon J. Summers
Son of John E. Summers
June 5, 1989 - September 2, 2003

Heather Brooke Tepper
Daughter of Michelle Tepper
June 11, 1986 - April 3, 2005

Michael Shane Wheeler
Son of Lita L. Volcjak
June 22, 1976 - January 11, 1997

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

Sean Amaro Wilcox
Son of Anne and DeWitt Wilcox
June 25, 2003 - June 24, 2003

Wayne Wilson Jr.
Son of Needra Gorman
November 22, 1968 - June 24, 2003

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

An Ordinary Day

It was just another day.
No one special came.
Nothing unusual happened,
The evening was the same.
Just an ordinary day
And the telephone rang.
From that moment on

Forever
Everything was changed.
Time does not really heal a broken heart –
It only teaches a person how to live with it!

Richard Dew, MD
TCF Knoxville, TN From: Rachel's Cry

A PRAYER FOR THE CHILDREN

(affectionately known as the Popsicle Prayer)

We pray for the Children
who sneak Popsicle's before supper,
who erase holes in math workbooks,
who can never find their shoes.



And we pray for those who stare at photographers from behind barbed wire,
who can't bound down the street in a new pair of sneakers,
who never "counted potatoes,"
who are born in places where we wouldn't be caught dead,
who never go to the circus, who live in an X-rated world.

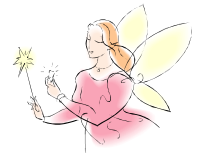
We pray for children
who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions,
who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money.



And we pray for those who never get dessert,
who have no safe blanket to drag behind them,
who watch their parents watch them die,
who can't find any bread to steal,
who don't have any rooms to clean up,
whose pictures aren't on anybody's dresser,
whose monsters are real.



We pray for children
who spend all their allowance before Tuesday,
who throw tantrums in the grocery store and pick at their food,
who like ghost stories,
who shove dirty clothes under the bed,
who never rinse out the tub,
who get visits from the tooth fairy,
who don't like to be kissed in front of the carpool,
who squirm in church and scream in the phone,
whose tears we sometimes laugh at and whose smiles can make us cry.



And we pray for those whose nightmares come in the daytime,
who will eat anything,
who have never seen a dentist,
who aren't spoiled by anybody,
who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep,
who live and move, but have no being.



We pray for children who want to be carried and for those who must,
who we never give up on and for those who don't get a second chance.

For those we smother and . . . for those
who will grab the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it.



-- Ina J. Hughs, *Children* 1990

To My Little Girl on Father's Day

We were basking in the joy of new parenthood when your doctor stepped into our room and softly told us you were having problems. Our pride was suddenly replaced with fear.

As we stood over you in NICU I wanted to apologize to you; to explain why all these machines and needles were necessary. I felt so helpless! I am your Daddy, but there was nothing I could do to help you. It was obvious that you were going to die.

Later, you slept in my arms as I marveled at your perfect beauty. We listened to the soft little sighs you made with each exhale, 'knowing' these were the only sounds we would ever hear from you.

As my tears fell on your cheeks, I kissed you good-bye, hugging your little lifeless body close to mine, and promised you would never be forgotten. For a short time, we babied you, then we handed you through a magic window, back into the arms of God.

After you died there were two sides to our grief. First, we mourned for the life that would never be - our little girl who lived the nine months of pregnancy.

Then there were the hopes and dreams. All the fantasies we had for our future together - your first words, the holidays and birthdays, your wedding day, bringing us your babies, your hugs and kisses. For nine months our perfect dreams were filled with you, but now, these too, died and were buried with you.

One of the most important things I have learned from you is that by sharing my grief with your Mom, I become a stronger man. I've found it takes more courage to share my pain than keep it hidden. Neither one of us are feeling brave right now, and I think your Mom needs to see my tears more than me trying to pretend your death didn't hurt more than anything in my life.

Every day I think of you. Especially today, Father's Day, while your sisters cuddle up close to me and say, "Happy Father's Day, Daddy. We love you."

I never heard you say those sweet words, but you will always be my precious little angel-child. I will hold you again in heaven, and I will hold you forever in my heart. We will love you and miss you always!

Paul Genlser - Lindsay's Dad
BPUSA/St. Louis March-April 1997

You're Not Alone

At first you are numb -
Family and friends, they do care;
But when you can feel again
Family and friends are not there.

It may take them weeks,
It will take you years
To get through the pain
That still brings you tears.

So you cry, then you search.
You pray and you plan
To find answers to questions
They don't understand.

It takes someone special
To help ease that pain.
Someone who will listen
Because theirs is the same.

In the room full of people,
You have never known -
In this room there's compassion
And you're not alone!



Tonie Mason
BPUSA/St. Louis
March-April 1997

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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.