



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

January 2008

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

TAKING STOCK

Happy New Year!!! “How can it ever be again?” “How will I ever make it through another year of this torment?”

When we are hurting and so terribly depressed it is hard to see any good in our New Year, but we must try.

First, we must hold on tightly to the idea that we will not always be this miserable. That we will someday feel good again. This is almost impossible to believe but even when we don't believe it, we must tell ourselves over and over again that it is true, **BECAUSE IT IS!** Many parents whose children have died some years in the past will attest to this. Remember also, no one can suffer indefinitely as you are suffering right now.

Second, we must face the New Year with the knowledge that this year offers us a **CHOICE**. Whether we will be on our way to healing by this time next year, or still be in the pit of intense grief. We must remind ourselves that if we chose to be on the way to healing by the following year we must work to get there. And that work entails allowing ourselves to go through our grief, to cry, to be angry, to talk about our feelings of guilt, and do whatever is necessary to move toward healing.

Third, we must look for good in our lives and find reasons to go on, and accept the fact that our continued suffering will not bring our child back. Many of us have other children and a spouse for whom we must go on. More importantly, we have our own lives that must be lived. Most of us know that our dead children would want us to go on! No, this coming year may not be a happy one, but it can be a constructive one. Through our grief we can grow and become more understanding, loving, compassionate and aware of the real values in life.

LET US NOT WASTE THIS NEW YEAR!

Margaret Gerner
Bereaved Mother and Bereaved Grandmother
St. Louis, MO
from *A JOURNEY TOGETHER*,
www.bereavedparentsusa.org.



The printing and mailing of this newsletter has been donated
by Jan and Leo Hylan in memory of their daughter

Alison Marie Hylan

and

by Juliet and Leonard Rothman in memory of their son

Daniel Maurice Rothman



**Anne Arundel County Chapter
of Bereaved Parents of the USA**
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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 share your feelings with others who understand.



**FEBRUARY SUBMISSIONS
DUE JANUARY 11**

Telephone Friends:



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

Marie Dyke Single parent, only child, 17 year old daughter; car accident.

Janet Tyler (410) 969-7597. Daughter, 5, and brother, 33; car accident.

Tia Stinnett (410) 360-1341. Miscarriages and infant death.

Sandy Platts (410) 721-6457. Infant death.

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MEETING INFORMATION

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 3, 2008

Doors open at 7:15 p.m.; meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.
(Meetings usually held on 1st Thursday of each month)

Calvary United Methodist Church
301 Rowe Boulevard
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**** Please park in lower lot behind church ****

If there is **inclement weather** on a meeting night, our meeting is cancelled if Phase 1 of the Snow Emergency Plan is in effect that same day at 5:00pm. You can also check our chapter website for last minute information on possible cancellations.



Refreshments at our monthly meetings are donated by Chapter members. To make a contribution, please see the sign-up sheet on the refreshment table (drinks, ice, and paper products are provided). For information contact Carol Tomaszewski at (410) 519-8448.



At every monthly meeting we display materials from our **lending library** that are offered to help you understand and deal with your grief. Most of our materials have been donated in memory of a child. You are welcome to borrow them and when you are finished, please return them at our next **monthly meeting** or mail them to our **post office box** listed above.

By any chance, do you have one of our lost treasures? Our lending library is missing 14 audio cassettes and 190 books. Please look around your home, car or office and if you find you're finished with an item you can return it in one of two ways - bring it to our next **monthly meeting** or drop it in the mail addressed to our post office box listed above.



We gratefully acknowledge the following donations :

William R.H. Alexander in memory of his nephew James William Henry Alexander
 Virginia and Gordon Schmier in memory of their son David C. Schmier
 Ken Smith in memory of his niece Tracy Ann Fotino

Memory Walk

David Trohanowsky in memory of Edwin Brandon Molina Jr.



Service of Remembrance

Audrey and Jack Bagby in memory of their daughter Deneen Leigh Bagby-Lins
 and their grandson Nicholas Allen Bowling
 Diane Borngesser in memory of her son Christopher Lewis Borngesser
 Karen Brown and Virginia Potts in memory of their nephew and grandson Russell Joseph Calo Jr.
 Sandi and Bob Burash in memory of their son Paul John Burash
 Denise and Russ Calo in memory of their son Russell Joseph Calo Jr..
 Rebecca and Joseph De Meo in memory of their son Joey De Meo
 Marie Dyke in memory of her daughter Michelle Marie Dyke
 Susan and Joseph Errichiello in memory of their son Joseph Fredrick Errichiello Jr.
 Katharine and George Lawrence in memory of their daughter Susan Lawrence Barr
 Bobbi Remines in memory of her son Joseph William Remines and her sister Romana Alice Hale
 Karen Willey in memory of her son Nicholas Grant Poe

and please kindly patronize Homestead Gardens at 743 W. Central Avenue in Davidsonville, MD. We are thankful to them for their donation of the lovely poinsettias at our Service of Remembrance in December.

Donations are gratefully accepted to offset the cost of: printing and mailing our Chapter's monthly newsletter; maintenance of our website; our annual events -- Memory Walk, Service of Remembrance, Conference of Hope and Healing; as well as books and other materials for our Chapter's library.

Other Resources:

G.R.A.S.P. (Grief Recovery After A Substance Passing)

Provides help, compassion and understanding for families or individuals who have had a loved one die as a result of drugs.
 Website: www.grasphelp.com or contact founders Pat or Russ Wittberger at (843) 705-2217. Their email is mom@jennysjourney.org

T.A.P.S. (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors)

Non-profit Veteran Service Organization offering hope, healing, comfort and care to American Armed Forces families facing the death of a loved one. Magazine; grief camps for kids; online forums and chats. Website: www.taps.org or call (800) 858-TAPS.

M.A.D.D. (Mothers Against Drunk Driving)

Provides emotional support, professional referrals, publications, information about criminal justice system, drunk driving and victims' rights laws, etc. Contact Jan Withers at (301) 627-1743.

S.O.S. (Survivors of Suicide)

Meets first Tuesday of each month at Severna Park Methodist Church, 731 Benfield Road, Severna Park, MD. Call (410) 987-2129.

Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc. (Formerly known as The Stephanie Roper Committee for Victims of Violent Crime)

Call (410) 234-9885 or you can go to their website: www.mdcrimevictims.org. Located at 14750 Main Street, Suite 1B, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

Office of Cemetery Oversight Advisory Council on Cemetery Operations (Division of Labor, Licensing and Regulation)

Monitors individuals, partnerships, corporations and limited liability companies operating cemeteries or providing burial goods and services to consumers in the State of Maryland. Located at 500 N. Calvert Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21202. Call (410) 230-6229, toll free (888) 218-5925. Email: cemet@dlr.state.md.us. For more information (including online complaint form) go to <http://www.dlrr.state.md.us/license.occprof/cemetery.htm>.

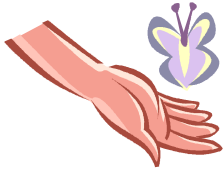
Bereaved Parents of the USA (BPUSA)

National headquarters
 Call (708) 748-7866 or go to www.bereavedparentsusa.org

We Can Always Use the Help!

There are dozens of tasks that go into running our chapter and 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 Chapter Leader Dave Alexander 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.*

Newly announced "Lasting Gift Program" for Anne Arundel County Parks and Trails

A.A. County Executive John Leopold recently announced a countywide Lasting Gift Program that allows donors to memorialize a family member, thank a friend or commemorate an event or milestone. The program will be administered by nonprofit groups comprised of existing "Friends Groups" that are unified in their dedication to helping the county and their own neighborhood parks. Donations made by individuals and/or businesses are tax deductible. You can read more about the program online at <http://www.aacounty.org/RecParks/lastinggift>.



Gifts of various denominations are available and will be used to purchase various park and trail furnishings including: a tree (\$125); a dedicated walkway brick (\$150), park bench (\$1,100 to \$1,800); drinking fountain (\$5,000); or projects including flower gardens, bicycle racks, playground equipment or picnic tables (price varies with project). Donors are asked to work with park administrators to jointly determine where to place trees, benches and other park fixtures. For more information, contact the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks Administration Office at (410) 222-7317 and ask for information on the "Life Program".

REFLECTIONS OF A STEP-PARENT

I watch my mate go through pure hell.
And I felt helpless, useless and sometimes invisible.

Other times I stood strong
while bearing the brunt of my love's anger,
that lashed out at the world.
As an angry God would open the heavens
with roaring thunder and lightning.

I was accused of not understanding and surely, I could not.

I felt the heavy pain for my stepchild. The one I took as my own.
I grieved for the good times we had together,
The tugs at my heart that always pierced through any resentments.

The guilt weighed heavily on my shoulders
for the times we didn't communicate.
And I wondered if...I could have made it better.

At the funeral home, I felt even a pang of...yes...
jealousy towards the natural parent of my beloved stepchild.
Knowing that he and my mate shared a private room from the past.
That I could never enter.

Life must go on...this day to day existence,
but things are different now.

I offer my support as I see eyes staring off into a distant land.
I hold a hand and kiss away the teardrops.

With an added sorrow, I wonder if my love will return to me
or stay in that far-off land...forever.
For deep in my heart I know that this tragedy
will bring us closer together
or tear us completely apart.

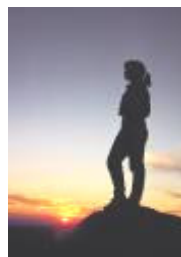
Author unknown
from *A JOURNEY TOGETHER*,
www.bereavedparentsusa.org.

SIBLING PAGE

Exploring Sibling Grief on Screen

Gracie (2007, Rated PG-13). This movie is loosely based on the life of actress Elisabeth Shue (The Karate Kid, Back to The Future, Leaving Las Vegas) who as a teen was a passionate soccer player as well as a bereaved sibling after the tragic death of her brother. In 1988, Shue witnessed her older brother William's death in a sudden backyard fall. This led to a depression she has described as "years of anger and numbness and completely losing my bearings." She recovered, she says, by realizing that her brother lived his short life to the fullest. She says, "It's cliché, but it's really true that people who die young live their lives in a different way. He knew to value loyalty and love. He wasn't swayed by the outside temptations." Shue costars in the film playing the mother of the title character. Directed by Shue's husband, Davis Guggenheim, **Gracie** was released in 2007 is now available on DVD.

Source - USA Weekend
June 1-3, 2007



Nightingale

Nightingale
Sing us a song
Of a love that once belonged
Nightingale
Tell me your tale
Was your journey far too long?

Does it seem like I'm looking for
An answer
To a question I can't ask
I don't know which way the feather falls
Or if I should blow it to the left

All the voices that are spinnin' around me
Trying to tell me what to say
Can I fly right behind you
And you can take me away?

Norah Jones
From her CD, "Come Away With Me"
Muhajones Music (BMI); Capitol Records, Inc.
© 2002



IS THIS A DREAM?

My brother, Sean, died seven years ago. Over the year leading up to this anniversary I have often thought, is this a dream? If it is a dream, I wish I'd wake up.

One night a couple of months ago, I had a dream within a dream. The dream was the strangest I've ever had. It was about the day Sean died. I remembered every moment of that awful day. I woke up from this dream crying to find Sean sitting next to my bed. He was shaking me awake and asking me what was wrong. I told Sean I had a horrible dream. I told him every detail of my dream. He laughed at me and gave me a hug. Then Sean said to me, "How can I be dead? I'm right here with you!" Then we both started laughing. I woke from

that dream laughing with Sean. I felt so good. Then I realized that I had dreamed the last part. When I realized that, I was so angry.

Even after seven years, the pain, the anger, and the hoping are still there. Even though the pain and anger don't come as often for me, it is still there and I know it's okay. Just like I know that I'm not crazy or dumb for holding on to the hope. I do realize that Sean is gone and the only place I will see him for a long time is in my dreams. I know that he loved me and always will and that he is with me every day. All I can do is welcome him into my dreams.

Traci Morlock
Bereaved Sibling
St. Louis, MO
from *A JOURNEY TOGETHER*,
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

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

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

Lisa Marie Bishop
Daughter of Diane and Michael Eye
January 29, 1966 - July 20, 2004

Emily Ann Blazejewski
Daughter of Lee Ann and Doug Blazejewski
January 27, 1997 - January 2, 2004

David A. Boss
Son of Ron and Sally Boss
January 6, 1968 - November 5, 2000

Paul John Burash
Son of Robert and Sandra Burash
January 18, 1972 - August 8, 1992

David Ronnie Cain III
Son of Ginny and Donald Bussink
March 17, 1983 - January 31, 2003

Scott Eric Caplan
Son of Nancy Caplan
September 20, 1986 - January 6, 2006

David Michael Copeland
Son of Jay and Lois Copeland
March 27, 1978 - January 30, 2000

Mark Allen Craft
Son of Marika Bates
January 24, 1961 - January 20, 2004

Kevin Michael Crine
Son of John and Jean Crine
January 30, 1974 - February 8, 2006

David Michael Cutter
Son of Jim and Anne Marie Cutter
September 16, 2002 - January 2, 2003

Jason T. Easter
Son of Janice and Chris Kunkel
January 30, 1973 - September 9, 1999

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

Theresa Karen Gardner
Daughter of Joan F. Gardner
July 28, 1962 - January 7, 1994

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

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

Alison Marie Hylan
Daughter of Jan and Leo Hylan
April 24, 1986 - January 9, 2005

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

Mark Edward Keefe
Son of Debra and Mark Keefe
September 13, 1974 - January 8, 1991

Kevin Murray Kerr
Son of Debra and Richard Kerr
January 19, 1980 - September 4, 2001

Stephen William Kilian
Son of Billy and Aimée Kilian
Grandson of Andre and Anne Denault
Grandson of Jay and Debbie Kilian
January 15, 2004 - March 18, 2006

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

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

Walter H. Maynard IV
Son of Rose Marie Carnes and Walter Maynard III
January 2, 1965 - April 14, 2006

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

James Allen McGrady
Son of David and Shirley McGrady
January 15, 1968 - August 10, 1987

Michele Noble McKinley
Daughter of Louisa and Sheldon Noble
August 25, 1956 - January 29, 2005

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

William A. Miller
Son of Mary J. Miller
Brother of Marlene Miller
September 1, 1964 - January 18, 2004

Richard "Todd" Mohr
Son of Jeannie and Ron Anderson
January 12, 1974 - September 25, 2007

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

Nicholas Grant Poe
Son of Karen and Michael Willey
Son of Nelson and Shirley Poe
November 9, 1982 - January 23, 2002

Kevin Eric Reichardt
Son of Carol and Karl Reichardt
January 20, 1975 - January 26, 1995

Joseph William Remines
Son of Bobbi and Jim Remines
November 16, 1980 - January 3, 1994

Charles "Charlie" Hubner Rice
Son of Doug and Stephanie Rice
January 12, 2002 - January 11, 2002

Phillip "PJ" Bernard Riek Jr.
Son of Pamela and Tracy Peterson
December 29, 1989 - January 17, 2000

Daniel Maurice Rothman
Son of Juliet and Leonard Rothman
January 20, 1971 - September 17, 1992

Thomas Jeffrey Schall
Son of Tom and Joyce Schall
January 16, 1963 - January 7, 2002

Emily Ann Schindler
Daughter of Charles and Jane Schindler
July 27, 1985 - January 27, 2004

Kelly Ann Schultz
Daughter of Jim and Pat Schultz
July 19, 1964 - January 1, 1996

Jonathan Miles Schuppe
Son of Martha and Jim Schuppe
January 18, 1982 - January 3, 2005

Misty Dawn Smith
Daughter of Anne and DeWitt Wilcox
March 15, 1976 - January 12, 1997

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

Reece Nelson Tolbert
Son of Jamie Tolbert
January 7, 2005 - November 6, 2005

Justin James Watts
Son of Jan and Jim Watts
February 15, 1985 - January 14, 2006

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

Daniel "Danny" A.S. Whitby
Son of Rita and Albert Whitby Sr.
January 10, 1959 - August 15, 1974

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

Faith Jordan Williams
Daughter of Nicole Hawkins
September 26, 1998 - January 11, 1999

Roy James "Jay" Wyrick
Son of Patricia Wyrick
August 8, 1962 - January 10, 2002

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



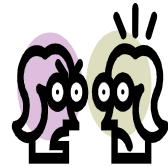
There will come a day
When you would have lived
your life
All the way through,
Mine long gone.
And peace will descend then.
Such a great peace, like a breath
Moving those pines, moving
Even the stone.
And then, then I can let go.

David Ray
Sam's Book
Wesleyan University Press, 2006



People try to be comforting. They don't know how. "It's for the best," they say. "God wanted her with him." As if God were a selfish ogre who delights in our misery. They say other dumb things, too, that hurt much more than they help: "You're young, you can have another," as if one child could replace another; or "you should be getting over this by now." The thoughtless comments are legion and unbelievable, but I do my best to grit my teeth and bite my tongue. I try to remind myself that these people are trying to be helpful.

I wish I could let people know that anything that diminishes or discounts our loss is hurtful rather than helpful. It's better to express sympathy with a look or a touch than to say some stupid thing to "cheer up" a grieving parent or sibling. We don't need cheering up. We need friends who will acknowledge our loss and sympathize with us.



From the book Longing For My Child
Reflections for Parents and Siblings after a Child's Death
 Christine O'Keefe Lafser
 Loyola Press Copyright 2002

MEMORIES

When you need to...

Reach down inside and take out
 one of your precious memories.
 Wipe away the cobwebs,
 lay it out in front of you,
 and let the sunshine and the sounds
 engulf you.

Revel in the experience of it.
 Relive each precious moment,
 be overwhelmed by them
 And taste the wonderful, sweet tears
 that are their gift.

When your needs have been almost satisfied,
 pause for one more second.
 Then gently fold it back up,
 give it a big hug and tender kiss
 and return the treasure to where you found it.

Then to make the experience complete,
 find someone special
 and share the feelings with them.
 For surely something as this
 is meant to be shared!

Don't be afraid of using them,
 that's what memories are for,
 you will never lose them.
 For as certain as the sun will rise tomorrow,
 love, once attained,
 is never lost.

Steve Charming
 in loving memory of his daughter
 who at the age of 18 completed suicide
 TCF/Winnipeg, Canada



You'll Excuse Me

You'll excuse me if the bounce is gone from my step. Or the depth of my laughter has changed. Issues that were once monumental now seem so insignificant. Please excuse me if I don't commiserate that your car needs repair or the faucet leaks. My focus on life has forever changed.

You'll excuse me if my spirit seems lost during holidays of any kind. They are now days "to bear" -- rather than days to share and enjoy.

You'll pardon me if I bring you down or make you feel discomfort, and I'll pardon you for not understanding that MY life will never be the same.. That although I'll survive, there will always be sorrow.

Joan Fischer
TCF/Nassau County NY
from Sharing the Journey

Bereaved Parents of Springfield/Bereaved Parents of Jacksonville
October 2007

HOLIDAY ACES

After the first few holiday seasons after my daughter's death, I thought I had licked the holiday doldrums. After all, two, three, four years had passed. I was unprepared for the dull ache I battled throughout the holidays in 1993; however, it didn't dawn on me until the middle of January why.

December 1993 was the first time since 1989 that both my surviving sons and their families, my step-daughter and her family had been all together during the holidays. I had been looking forward to having them all home at the same time once again. The cousins (all my grandchildren) would be able to renew acquaintances, and I could watch their interaction with interest and glee.

Yet all during the season, I was plagued with a longing, an all too familiar ache. I missed my daughter's presence. Her widowed husband had remarried in May that year, and he and his new wife were also included in our family gathering. I liked his new wife very much. But I suppose subconsciously, I was reminded even more of my daughter's absence. As I wrote my Christmas letter to my daughter Teri and put it into her Christmas stocking, unbidden tears chased themselves down my cheeks. I pushed my thoughts away from sadness; I reminded myself how lucky we were to have known and loved her, and to know and love her still.

Later I realized what should have been obvious to me during the holidays. Although our family was altogether, it wasn't the same as it used to be. Teri was missing from the scene. It's one thing to hold her spirit in our hearts and minds, and quite another to have her sitting in her usual place at the table or leading us in Christmas carols. We all missed her, even after nearly eight years; and we talked about her often. We had a wonderful holiday together and I wouldn't have missed it for the world. I hope we will have many more such reunions. Next time, though, I'll be wiser. I'll know why the ache is there, why the joy is tempered slightly and why as long as I live my life and our family's life together, will be forever altered. The difference will always be noticeable, I imagine. But then, the difference Teri has made in each of our lives is and always will be obvious, too.

Shirley C. Ottman
Bereaved Mother
Denton, Texas
from *A JOURNEY TOGETHER*,
www.bereavedparentsusa.org.



A Word About Approval

A word about approval might be appropriate here. We are a society that lives by approval. Others must approve of our actions, our behavior, and sometimes even our thoughts. If we don't meet the approval of society, we are cast out. We may turn that lack of approval inside, and say to ourselves, "If I don't conform, I must be different or wrong."

If we are concerned with meeting another's approval, we surrender our individuality, our real selves.

If we are to grow from the experience of losing our child, if we are to successfully resolve our grief, we must stop looking to others for approval of what we do. We must have personal confidence that how we handle our grief is good and right. Since we are working toward our recovery, we must do it our way.

Just as no one can live our life, no one can live our grief, and no one can tell us how to grieve. See yourself as knowing what is best for you. Don't let others take that right from you by succumbing to their disapproval.

Margaret Gerner
BPUSA/St. Louis, MO

Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

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www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

NEXT MEETING JANUARY 3, 2008



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL



If there is **inclement weather** on a meeting night, our meeting is cancelled if Phase 1 of the Snow Emergency Plan is in effect that same day at 5:00pm. You can also check our chapter website for last minute information on possible cancellations.



UPCOMING MEETING TOPICS:

Facing the New Year -

Revisiting the Grief Process Again

Thursday, January 3, 2008

The January program will focus on looking ahead to the new year as we continue to deal with the loss of our children.

Using Music in Dealing with Grief

Thursday, February 7, 2008

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 some of our sharing groups.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT OUR MEETINGS:

Each of our monthly meetings follows the same basic format. We open with a general session attended by all for the first half hour of the evening. We usually schedule a program with a speaker or panel to address a topic that may be of interest and value to families mourning the death of a child. After this talk, everyone in attendance is invited to introduce themselves and say their child's name if they are able. Then, after a short break, we divide into sharing groups.

We always have these sharing groups and - particularly for the newly bereaved - the issues that are discussed do not necessarily have to focus on a program's topic, unless it is relevant to the members in the sharing group. We try to cover a range of topics in our scheduled programs that we hope are of value to a broad range of our Chapter members. We appreciate your feedback and suggestions for future program topics. Please contact our Chapter's Program coordinators Paul Balasic or Jane Schindler.