



JAN/FEB 2015

# Bereaved Parents of the USA

## Anne Arundel County Chapter

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### Our Children Remembered

There isn't a day that goes by where I don't, at some point, think of you 



*Dave, you touch our lives every day.*

*We miss you.*

*Love always,*

*Mom, Dad, Beth, Lara and Josh.*

*David W. Tomaszewski,*

*9/4/1974 - 2/6/2001*



*Bend with the wind like a bamboo tree,  
and above all keep smiling.*

*(From Jenna's Memorial Bench, Steamboat Springs, CO)*

*Hard to believe it's been 5 years,  
miss you always and everywhere.*

*Love Mommy and Dad*

*Happy 31st Birthday Tommy. Our 5th year for Katie and all of us to "celebrate" without you here. It is not the same and never will be. We will do our best to stay strong while missing our goofy, hilarious and sweet Tom-Tom.  
Love from all of us. Until we see you again.*





## Letter to My Son

by Carol Tomaszewski, BP/USA, Anne Arundel County

*To My Dearest Son, Dave,*

*September 4, 1974 and February, 2001 - The day you were born and the day you died. These dates are engraved in stone in my life. Days and events that I will never forget. Just like I will never forget you and how you changed my life in so many ways. In ways I could not have imagined in a million years. Being your mother filled my life with joy beyond words, and later with regrets and wishes that things could be different. That you had made better choices along the way; that we had talked more when you were a teenager; that your future would have turned around and not ended so soon.*

*It's been 15 years since I saw you and hugged you, since I was able to tell you face-to-face that I LOVE YOU. It seems like I was numb for years, just going through life a day at a time, taking care of our family. We had some hard times trying to assimilate all the emotional chaos each of us felt and finding a sort of even keel to our lives. And it's very easy to hark back to those early years and the struggle to cope. But years later I can say that I have many happy, peaceful times in my life.*

*Your son is now a grown man who has graduated from college. He is a compassionate, caring person and I see much of your personality in him. He started playing guitar and writing music when in high school and continues to write and play in a band. You were always proud of him but you would be bursting with pride now.*

*Your little sister is getting married soon to a wonderful man. She asks me how to have you be part of her ceremony, because you are part of her life. We are waiting for an answer.*

*I really don't need to tell you all this, because I know that you are watching over us and know everything that is going on in our lives. And you probably are guiding us along the way. I hope so.*

*You are in my heart and soul, and I see you in my mind's eye everyday. I smile when I think of you. You are a wonderful son.*

*Missing you everyday,*

*Love forever,*

*Mom*





## Facing the New Year When You are Bereaved



When we are grieving, it is hard enough to live each day as it comes. It can be daunting to face a whole new year stretching out in front of us. We may be afraid of what the new year might bring. We may worry whether or not we can handle any more challenges. Our current experience of emptiness and loneliness may make us reluctant to face a new year.



We might say to ourselves, “I used to be so busy. I used to feel so needed, so useful. Now it seems there’s nothing but empty space and empty time.” It’s bad enough to wake in the morning not sure what we’ll do with the day; what will we do with a whole year?

Longing to recover the past can sometimes make us resistant to accepting the new year. The past was where we

were comfortable, where we felt safe, felt good. Grief burdens us today and we fear the new year won’t hold anything different for us. We pine for the person we miss and the precious past we shared. We think about how it was, and wish we were back there.

Approach of a new year may mean different things for different mourners. Whether we welcome, dread or ignore a new year probably depends on where we are in our grief process. The question is not whether, but how grief will show up, how we’ll work with it.

If our loss was recent, sudden or unexpected, we will most likely still feel in shock. We may feel like we’re living a bad dream or living another person’s life and be trying desperately to get back to our “old” life. The new year matters little. We get up in the morning, put one foot in front of the other, breathe and tell our story of what happened. Writing and talking about different aspects of what happened over and over may help, until we find we don’t need to tell the story in such detail anymore. Feeling a little numb or detached keeps us safe while we wake gradually to the reality that life and our world is not how we knew it or thought it would be.

Therese Rando, a noted grief therapist and author, describes grieving as a learning process. Each minute lived with our loved one taught our brain how to operate and what to expect. Each new challenge, like doing the taxes, fixing things, and going into a new year, becomes a fresh occasion to learn that our loved one isn’t here and discover what that means for us. New challenges continue, bringing fresh pain even well into the grieving process.

If we have courageously worked with our grief over time, we may look to this new year with interest and wonder what it will hold for us. We might even feel eager to throw open our door and welcome this new year. The swelling around the wound of our loss has gone down some. We find comfort and joy in knowing we did all we could and that we loved well. We were enriched by our love and now know deeper compassion for all who suffer. We recognize life is a gift to enjoy with whoever crosses our path. We want to go and do and see for both of us what we’d hoped to do together. We don’t know details, have no assurance about what’s coming, but we hope for good.

~VITAS Healthcare



## 2016 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS



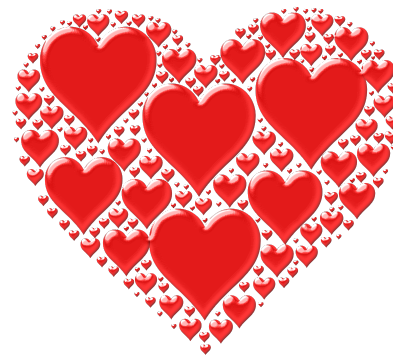
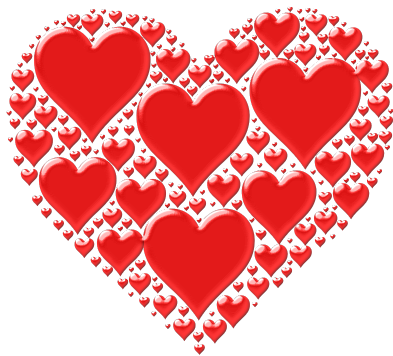
~TCF, Mobile, AL

1. I will try not to expect so much understanding from others who have not walked the same path.
2. I will be kind to myself - health, appearance and time to be alone.
3. I will remember that I owe it to myself to try to enjoy life.
4. I will try to be more considerate of my spouse, children and parents. They, too, are coping and deserve my help.
5. I resolve in memory of my child to do something to help someone else. For I know that in doing this, my child will live on through me.

### February is American Heart Month

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States; one in every three deaths is from heart disease and stroke, equal to 2,200 deaths per day. This month is highlighted with a Million Hearts™, an initiative dedicated to preventing the nation's leading killers and empowering everyone to make heart-healthy choices.

Let's all remember those parents that have lost their children from a heart related incident. #heartmonth  
[~http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsr/american\\_heart\\_month.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsr/american_heart_month.htm)



## Book Review - Nurturing Healing Love: A Mother's Journey of Hope and Forgiveness, Scarlett Lewis

Scarlett Lewis is a mother, an artist, an avid horsewoman, and a new activist for peace. She is the founder of the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Foundation, created in honor of her son who was killed in the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre in December 2012. Scarlett lives with her family on a farm in Newtown, Connecticut. Natasha Stoyneoff is a New York Times best-selling author and former staff writer for People and freelancer for Time magazines. She lives in Manhattan, where she is currently working on books, screenplays, and her first off-Broadway play.

On December 14, 2012, Scarlett Lewis experienced something that no parent should ever have to endure: she lost her son Jesse in an act of unimaginable violence. The day started just like any other, but when a gunman opened fire at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Scarlett's life changed forever. However, this isn't a story about a massacre. It's a story about love and survival. It's about how to face the impossible, how to find courage when you think you have none, and how to choose love instead of anger, fear, or hatred. Following Jesse's death, Scarlett went on an unexpected journey, inspired by a simple three-word message he had scrawled on their kitchen chalkboard shortly before he died: Nurturing Helin Love (Nurturing Healing Love). It was as if he knew just what his family would need in order to go on after this horrible tragedy. Bolstered by his words, Scarlett took her first step toward a new life. And with each step, it became clearer how true Jesse's message

was. She learned that love was indeed the essential element necessary to move forward and that taking the path of love is a choice. We can live in anger and resentment, or we can choose love and forgiveness. With her decision made, she found some peace and began to believe that choosing love was the key to creating a healthy, safe, and happy world. She began the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Foundation to develop programs to teach children about the power each of us has to change our thoughts and choose a life without fear and hate. Nurturing Healing Love is Scarlett's story of how choosing love is changing her life—and how it could change our world. A portion of the proceeds from sales of this book will be donated to the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Foundation. To learn more about the foundation or to make a donation, go to [www.jesselewischooselove.org](http://www.jesselewischooselove.org).







## Grieving the Loss of a Child: The Five Stage Myth

When we think of death, dying, and grief, no one therapist has had the impact and staying power as that of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. Her five stage model, presented in her classic, *On Death and Dying*, has been an influential voice on the topic for decades.

But in the last few years, work in the field has put the universality of that model in question. Some, such as Russell Friedman, therapist and director of the Grief Recovery Institute argue that with many kinds of loss people don't grieve in five stages at all.

Originally intended to describe experiential stages of people facing their own impending death, mental health providers as well as school counselors and educators seem to have generalized the Kübler-Ross model to a multitude of situations, some applicable, some not so much.

In a recent interview, *The Trauma & Mental Health Report* spoke with Katherine, who described her personal reactions throughout the first year after the loss of her son, Ben, who was killed in a car accident ten days shy of his twenty-first birthday. Like many coping with loss, her grief did not follow the patterns described by Kübler-Ross, it was much less predictable.

Katherine: I decided to see a social worker a few months after Ben died. We talked about grief after loss and the counselor recited Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's five stage grief model: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. This didn't describe how I was feeling at all...

During the first few months after the accident, the only way I can describe how I was feeling is that there was no 'feeling.' It was as if my heart was ripped out and stomped on. There was nothing left, but a complete numbness.

According to clinical psychologists Jennifer Buckle and Stephen Fleming, co-authors of *Parenting after the Death of a Child: A Practitioner's Guide*, this feeling of numbness described by Katherine, is often the first grieving experience reported by bereaved parents. Coupled with this sense of numbness, bereaved parents, especially mothers, feel vulnerable and unprotected in what is now considered to be an unfair world.

Eventually the numbness subsides and the unsettling and preoccupying images of the child's death take over. Almost all bereaved parents make reference to traumatic memories. Even parents not present when their child died describe the trauma experienced as if they were physically there and directly involved.

Katherine: The nightmares just didn't want to go away. I would have the same reoccurring dream. I would see a red traffic light and hear cars crashing, and then I would wake up in panic. It came to the



point where I was anxious every night before bed; I knew what was coming, another nightmare or barely any sleep. I can't recall having a peaceful sleep the first few months.

Katherine's nightmares became less frequent over time, but still crept up on occasion. In Buckle and Fleming's view, the impact of trauma can lessen for some over time; but for others, the images and violent memories may vividly persist.

Grieving parents also fight with recurring flashes of past memories they shared with their deceased child. After a child's death, most parents feel as if a part of their life has been erased, this is a very frightening feeling. To cope, some parents will resort to avoiding places they associate with the deceased child.

Katherine: It took me over a year to set foot in another hockey arena. Ben was coming home from hockey the night of the accident... just the idea of going into an arena was painful. All the memories... watching him learn how to skate, going to hockey practices, and going with the family to hockey tournaments. I was trying to avoid that pain.

Bereaved parents put a lot of energy into avoiding feelings, memories and places that remind them of the child. At times they also ruminate, thinking about what could or should have been.

Katherine: Sometimes I can't help it, something will remind me of Ben, and I immediately think about what things would be like now if he was still around. It gets really hard at family get-togethers and around birthdays and holidays. Not having him there... a parent can never get used to that.

Psychology professor Susan Nolen-Hoeksema, on faculty at Yale University, reports that women tend to ruminate more if they were battling depression before their child's death, in comparison to women who were not. Elderly bereaved parents also tend to ruminate more than younger bereaved parents. With more free time on their hands, there is occasion to think about what might have been.

So why do some parents have an easier time adjusting after the loss of a child, compared to others?

To move forward, grief counsellors tend to agree that parents need to experience their own pain, keep the deceased child's memory alive, and accept the loss, a notion that aligns well with the Kübler-Ross "acceptance" stage. Parents who continue to avoid don't adjust so well.

The ability to learn from bereavement helps parents take responsibility for creating a new purposeful life. Irvin Yalom, author of Existential Psychotherapy posits that when parents find it too painful to learn from their bereavement experience, they are unwilling to "feel true feelings guiltlessly." For parents to adjust well, realizing that it's okay to be happy again is crucial.

The loss of a child is likely the most difficult thing a parent can endure. Perhaps it is fitting that a life experience so profound would turn out to be complex and hard to fit into predictable stages.



7 Things I've Learned Since the Loss of My Child



*by Angela Miller*

*1). Love never dies.*

There will never come a day, hour, minute or second I stop loving or thinking about my son. Just as parents of living children unconditionally love their children always and forever, so do bereaved parents. I want to say and hear his name just the same as non-bereaved parents do. I want to speak about my deceased children as normally and naturally as you speak of your living ones.

I love my child just as much as you love yours— the only difference is mine lives in heaven and talking about him is unfortunately quite taboo in our culture. I hope to change that. Our culture isn't so great about hearing about children gone too soon, but that doesn't stop me from saying my son's name and sharing his love and light everywhere I go. Just because it might make you uncomfortable, doesn't make him matter any less. My son's life was cut irreversibly short, but his love lives on forever. And ever.

*2). Bereaved parents share an unspeakable bond.*

In my seven years navigating the world as a bereaved parent, I am continually struck by the power of the bond between bereaved parents. Strangers become kindreds in mere seconds— a look, a glance, a knowing of the heart connects us, even if we've never met before. No matter our circumstances, who we are, or how different we are, there is no greater bond than the connection between parents who understand the agony of enduring the death of a child. It's a pain we suffer for a lifetime, and unfortunately only those who have walked the path of child loss understand the depth and breadth of both the pain and the love we carry.

*3). I will grieve for a lifetime.*

Period. The end. There is no "moving on," or "getting over it." There is no bow, no fix, no solution to my heartache. There is no end to the ways I will grieve and for how long I will grieve. There is no glue for my broken heart, no elixir for my pain, no going back in time. For as long as I breathe, I will grieve and ache and love my son with all my heart and soul. There will never come a time when I won't think about who my son would be, what he would look like, and how he would be woven





perfectly into the tapestry of my family. I wish people could understand that grief lasts forever because love lasts forever; that the loss of a child is not one finite event, it is a continuous loss that unfolds minute by minute over the course of a lifetime. Every missed birthday, holiday, milestone—should-be back-to-school school years and graduations; weddings that will never be; grandchildren that should have been but will never be born— an entire generation of people are irrevocably altered *forever*. This is why grief lasts forever. The ripple effect lasts forever. The bleeding never stops.

4). *It's a club I can never leave, but is filled with the most shining souls I've ever known.*

This crappy club called child loss is a club I never wanted to join, and one I can never leave, yet is filled with some of the best people I've ever known. And yet we all wish we could jump ship— that we could have met another way— *any* other way but *this*. Alas, these shining souls are the most beautiful, compassionate, grounded, loving, movers, shakers and healers I have ever had the honor of knowing. They are life-changers, game-changers, relentless survivors and thrivers. Warrior moms and dads who redefine the word brave. Every day loss parents move mountains in honor of their children gone too soon. They start movements, change laws, spearhead crusades of tireless activism. Why? In the hope that even just one parent could be spared from joining *the club*. If you've ever wondered who some of the greatest world changers are, hang out with a few bereaved parents and watch how they live, see what they do in a day, a week, a lifetime. Watch how they alchemize their grief into a force to be reckoned with, watch how they turn tragedy into transformation, loss into legacy. Love is the most powerful force on earth, and the love between a bereaved parent and his/her child is a lifeforce to behold. Get to know a bereaved parent. You'll be thankful you did.

5). *The empty chair/room/space never becomes less empty.*

Empty chair, empty room, empty space in every family picture. Empty, vacant, forever gone for this lifetime. Empty spaces that should be full, everywhere we go. There is and will always be a missing space in our lives, our families, a forever-hole-in-our-hearts. Time does not make the space less empty. Neither do platitudes, clichés or well-wishes for us to “move on,” or “stop dwelling,” from well intentioned friends or family. Nothing does. No matter how you look at it, empty is still empty. Missing is still missing. Gone is still gone. The problem is nothing can fill it. Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, month after month, year after heartbreaking year the empty space remains. The empty space of our missing child(ren) lasts a lifetime. And so we rightfully miss them forever. Help us by holding the space of that truth for us.

6). *No matter how long it's been, holidays never become easier without my son.*

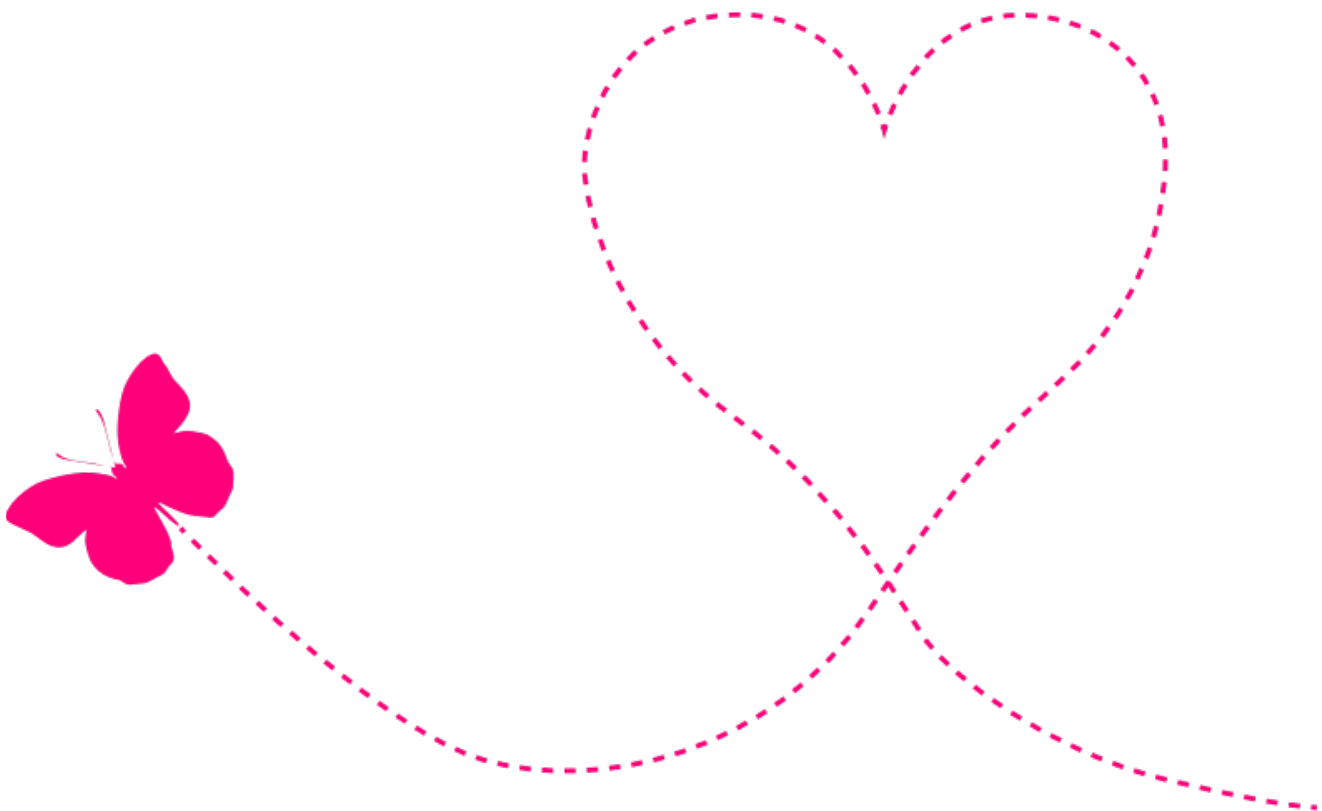
Never, ever. Have you ever wondered why *every* holiday season is like torture for a bereaved parent? Even if it's been 5, 10, or 25 years later? It's because they really, truly are. Imagine if you had to live every holiday without one or more of your precious children. Imagine how that might feel for you. It would be easier to lose an arm, a leg or two— *anything*— than to live without your flesh and blood, without the beat of your heart. Almost anything would be easier than living without one or more of your precious children. That is why holidays are *always and forever* hard for bereaved parents. Don't wonder why or even try to understand. Know you don't have to understand in order to be a supportive presence. Consider supporting and loving some bereaved parents this holiday season. It will be the best gift you could ever give them.



7). *Because I know deep sorrow, I also know unspeakable joy.*

Though I will grieve the death of my son forever and then some, it does not mean my life is lacking happiness and joy. Quite the contrary, in fact, though it took awhile to get there. It is not either/or, it's both/and. My life is more rich now. I live from a deeper place. I love deeper still. Because I grieve I also know a joy like no other. The joy I experience now is far deeper and more intense than the joy I experienced before my loss. Such is the alchemy of grief. Because I've clawed my way from the depth of unimaginable pain, suffering and sorrow, again and again— when the joy comes, however and whenever it does— it is a joy that reverberates through every pore of my skin and every bone in my body. I feel all of it, deeply: the love, the grief, the joy, the pain. I embrace and thank every morsel of it. My life now is more rich and vibrant and full, not despite my loss, but *because* of it. In grief there are gifts, sometimes many. These gifts don't in any way make it all “worth” it, but I am grateful beyond words for each and every gift that comes my way. I bow my head to each one and say *thank you, thank you, thank you*. Because there is nothing— and I mean absolutely *nothing*— I take for granted. Living life in this way gives me greater joy than I've ever known possible. I have my son to thank for that.

Being his mom is the best gift I've ever been given. Even death can't take that away.





## The Grief Journey

You will find that grief comes in waves. When the ship is first wrecked, you are drowning, with wreckage all around you. And all you can do is float. you will find some piece of the wreckage and hang on for a while. Maybe it's some physical thing. Maybe it's a happy memory. Maybe it's a person who is floating. For a while, all you can do is float. Stay alive.

In the beginning, the waves are 100 feet tall and crash over you without mercy. They come 10 seconds apart and don't even give you time to catch your breath. All you can do is hang on and float. After a while, maybe weeks, maybe months, maybe longer, you will find the waves are still 100 feet tall, but they come further apart. When they come, they still crash all over you and wipe you out. But in between, you can breathe, you can function but you never know what's going to trigger the grief. It might be a song, a picture, a toy or that wonderful baby smell. It can be just about anything...and the waves come crashing.  
But in between waves, there is life.

Somewhere down the line, and it's different for everyone, you find that the waves are only 80 feet tall. Or 50 feet tall, And while they still come, they come further apart. You see them coming. The date of your last doctor's appointment, the day you gave birth, a holiday. You can see it coming. for the most part, and prepare yourself. And when it washes over you, you know that somehow you will, again, come out on the other side. Soaking wet, sputtering, still hanging on to some tiny piece of the wreckage, but you'll come out.

The waves never stop coming, and somehow you don't really want them to. But you learn that you'll survive them. And other waves will come.  
And you'll survive them too.



Our Children Remembered Pages

*This is for all the caterpillars that never became butterflies. All the butterflies that never caught the wind in their wings. And all the hearts that had hopes and dreams of a wondrous flight together.*

January

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

Melanie Suzanne Berkow  
Daughter of Sandra Winans  
January 2, 1956 - March 23, 2012

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

Wes Paul Boone  
Son of Eve Boone  
October 9, 2008 - January 19, 2015

Charlotte O'Brien Boone  
Daughter of Eve Boone  
July 23, 2006 - January 19, 2015

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

Allison (Alli) Leigh Cantrell  
Daughter of Kristy Cantrell  
January 19, 1982 - September 5, 2014

Emily Christina Davidson  
Daughter of Fran Smith  
July 24, 1972 - January 13, 2011

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

Jackie Cheyenne Foy  
Daughter of Mike and Cat Foy  
January 21, 1999 - December 24, 2008

Melissa Fernanda Garcia  
Daughter of Claudia Hnatiw  
January 25, 1993 - July 30, 1994

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

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

Sarah Anne McMahon  
Daughter of Deborah and Daniel McMahon  
January 24, 1995 - July 13, 2012

Craig Steven Nelson  
Son of Karen Coulson  
April 2, 1974 - January 31, 1994

Robert Adam "Robby" Ostrowski  
Son of Denise Crouse  
January 30, 1995 - September 11, 2010

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

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

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

Gregory Robert Sears  
Son of Rob and Marilyn Sears  
December 11, 1975 - January 6, 2012

Daniel John Sohovich II  
Son of Vera Sohovich  
January 26, 1988 - June 9, 2011

Nariyah Gabrielle Wheeler  
Daughter of Tarica Carpenter  
December 26, 2006 - January 2, 2007

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

Daniel Alfred Whitby  
Son of Rita and Albert Whitby Sr.  
Brother of Susan Lovett  
January 10, 1959 - August 15, 1974

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

Matthew Tyler Williams  
Son of Marta and Chuck Williams  
May 8, 1986 - January 13, 2011





## February

Bethany Anne Balasic  
Daughter of Paul and Claudia Balasic  
February 13, 1981 - April 5, 1996

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

Amber Marie Calistro  
Daughter of Patti and John DiMiceli  
February 28, 1976 - October 30, 1980

Chrystal Marie Clifford  
Fiance of son of of Marilyn Mabe  
July 16, 1978 - February 17, 2001

John Mario DeMichiei Jr.  
Son of John and Linda DeMichiei  
February 24, 1979 - October 23, 2008

Zachary Lee Dukes  
Son of Cindy Dukes  
February 12, 1989 - March 31, 2010

Jenna Leigh Erickson  
Daughter of June and Jed Erickson  
February 12, 1988 - February 5, 2011

Manuel Junior Esparza  
Son of Dianna McKinnon  
March 20, 1987 - February 14, 2012

Melissa Ireland Frainie  
Daughter of Kathy and George Ireland  
December 12, 1971 - February 12, 2007

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

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

Carolyn A Griffin  
Daughter of Rick and Jan Griffin  
February 15, 1983 - June 1, 2011

Richard Arland Jackson  
Son of Margaret Jackson  
February 9, 1990 - October 22, 2010

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

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

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

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

Adrian Bernard Andrew Ortega  
Son of Rachael Hand  
August 28, 1964 - February 17, 2005

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

Marco Pena  
Nephew of Dianna McKinnon  
November 28, 1989 - February 14, 2012

Thomas H Redmiles  
Son of Mary and Joe Redmiles  
February 22, 1985 - March 14, 2011

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

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

Patrick F. Smith  
Son of Fran Smith  
February 20, 1978 - June 23, 2000



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

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

Evyn Bryce Wygal  
Son of Pam and Bill Wygal  
February 15, 1991 - February 24, 1994



**2015 Service of Remembrance Donations - Thank you**

Douglas & Shirley Baer in memory of Douglas Lee Bear III  
Doug Blazejewski in memory of Emily Ann Blazejewski  
Judy & Louie Bolly in memory of Wendy Jean Bolly  
Bonita Boon-Adamecz in memory of Traci Lynn Boone  
Bob & Sandi Burash in memory of Paul John Burash  
John & Cathi Campbell in memory of Hannah Lindley & Faith Campbell  
Noel & Ann Castiglia in memory of Tria Marie Castiglia  
Mary Louise & Alain deSarran in memory of Elizabeth deSarran  
Marie Dyke in memory of Michelle Marie Dyke  
Cindy & Stephen Earp in memory of Devin A. Hall  
Joseph & Susan Errichiello in memory of Joseph Frederick Errichiello  
Ray & Kathleen Fennessey in memory of Barbara Jean Fennessey  
Aurelia Ferraro in memory of Jeff and Dora Baldwin  
Rhonda & Norman French in memory of Brandon Robert French  
John & Linda Grimm in memory of Jeffrey Andrew Grimm  
Peggy & Gordon Haines in memory of Matthew Gordon Haines  
Betty & John Hodges in memory of Charles "Chip" Marshall Hodges  
Leroy & Jeanne Jones in memory of Brian Keith Jones  
William & Deborah Kissinger in memory of Paul John Burash  
Joseph & Marcia Matera in memory of Courtney Belt & Traci Heincelman  
Kathleen & Don McGlew in memory of Jennifer L. Hamilton  
Rosemary & Larry Mild in memory of Mirian Luby Wolfe  
Mike Milord in memory of Dan Milord  
Paula & Bill Muehlhauser in memory of Chad William Muehlhauser  
Barbara Orndorf in memory of David Brian Clutter Sr.  
Sharon Poe in memory of John Christopher Poe  
Linda & Bob Rasmussen in memory of Steven Craig Rasmussen  
Mary & Joe Redmiles in memory of Thomas H. Redmiles  
Bobby Remines in memory of Joseph William Remines & Romana Alice Hale  
Juliet & Leonard Rothman in memory of Daniel Maurice Rothman  
Lydia Sanders in memory of Andre Marc Sanders  
Kathleen Savage in memory of Robert M. White  
Tom & Joyce Schall in memory of Thomas Jeffrey Schall  
Margie Schwartz in memory of Zachary B. Schwartz  
Benjamin & Sharon Skarzynski in memory of Jason Edward Skarzynski  
John & Glenda Skuletich in memory of Abigail Helen Skuletich  
Peggy & Lewis Strader in memory of Christopher Lewis Strader  
Karen & Michael Willey in memory of Nicholas Grant Poe  
Randy & Mark Williams in memory of Grant Alan & Samuel Mark Williams

In addition, thank you to all who made cash donations and donated baked goods.



**Meeting Summary:** Calvary United Methodist Church • 301 Rowe Boulevard • Annapolis, MD 21401. Sharing groups, a key part of each Chapter meeting, will be held as desired for first-time attendees, and the newly and non-newly bereaved. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month beginning at 7:30 p.m. (Doors open at 7:15) and are open to anyone grieving the death of a child. Come around to the back of the church -- there is parking and an entrance directly into our meeting room. Doors open at 7:15 p.m.

We are a **self-help support organization** dedicated to assisting parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child. We provide information and education to extended family and friends. Our greatest strength as bereaved families is the unity we find in shared experiences which can lead us out of isolation, give us a place to “belong,” and offer us hope that together – we can make it.

**Next Meetings: Jan 7th & Feb 4th at 7:30 p.m.**

\*January Monthly Meeting: Longtime member and previous Chapter Leader, Janet Tyler, will discuss reasons and methods for writing letters to our children. The letters written at the meeting will be sealed in an envelope, addressed, and mailed to you next year.

\*February Monthly Meeting: Paul Balasic will speak on “The Grief Equation”.

\*February Core Group Meeting: Tuesday, February 9, 2016, 7:00 – 9:00 PM, at Calvary United Methodist Church. Use the front entrance and check the room location on the board. Everyone is invited to attend and participate in the planning and administrative discussions for our Chapter. Participating in this group is a way of paying it forward to others, and often results in helping yourself.

\*March Monthly Meeting: Thursday, March 3, 2016. Vickie Rankin will present “Project Linus” which is an organization that donates handmade blankets to children, ages 0-18 who have experienced trauma or are seriously ill. The blankets are donated to hospitals, homeless shelters and churches. Whomever would like to make a blanket should bring 1 1/2 yards of a colored fleece material and 1 1/2 yards of fleece material with a pattern that match each other. Scissors would also be helpful.

\*March Facilitator, Helper and Greeter Training: Tentatively scheduled for Saturday, March 19, 11:00 – 3:00. This training is open to anyone who would like to assist in greeting newly bereaved parents, or help with the sharing groups. If interested in attending, or for questions, please contact Carol Tomaszewski, Chapter Leader, 410-519-8448. [chapterleaderaacountynd@gmail.com](mailto:chapterleaderaacountynd@gmail.com).

**WHAT TO EXPECT AT OUR CHAPTER MEETINGS:** Our Chapter gathers one evening a month to address topics and offer support to those who are mourning the death of a child. Our meetings last for approximately 2 hours. Sometimes we schedule a 30-minute presentation at the beginning of our meeting. When the speaker or panel has concluded the presentation, we introduce ourselves and say our child’s name. We then take a short break before dividing into sharing groups. Sharing groups are facilitated by fellow Chapter members and are completely confidential. During this time, the issues that are discussed—particularly for the newly bereaved—focus on the issues facing participants today.



**Newsletter Submissions** – If anyone has a story to tell, a poem to share, a bereavement book they read, an upcoming grief conference, a photo they took of an event, or an article they thought was particularly helpful in their grief journey, please pass them on to others through our Newsletter. These personal submissions will make the newsletter more interesting for everyone. *NOTE:* Newsletters have changed to bi-monthly and all submissions should be submitted no later than the 15th of the month prior to newsletter publication (i.e. submit by Feb 15th for the Mar/Apr Newsletter). That includes those sponsoring the newsletter in memory of their child. Sponsorship submissions should include a photo, poem/saying, parents' name, child's full name, birthday and angel date. It's a wonderful way to honor your child's memory – to say his or her name for all the world to hear -- while providing financial support to the Chapter and its many activities offered to all those mourning the loss of a child. Newsletter sponsorship is \$75 and website sponsorship (([www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org)) ) is \$25. Just send an email to Mary Redmiles (Say Their Names!!! And help the Chapter, too! Please email all of these directly to [mary.redmiles@gmail.com](mailto:mary.redmiles@gmail.com) or call her at 410-721-6671 or sign up at a monthly meeting. Submissions for the MONTH newsletter are due to Tawny Stitely. Send an email to: [TWSbpaac@gmail.com](mailto:TWSbpaac@gmail.com)

**Do You Use Amazon.com?** If you enter Amazon through our Chapter's website ([www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org)), the Chapter will earn a commission of 5% on your purchases. Using the link does not increase your cost (and information about your purchase is not shared with the Chapter). It's an easy way to support our Chapter's activities. Go to the Chapter's home page, click on the butterflies on the welcome page, and scroll down the first page to the bottom where there is an Amazon.com graphic that takes you to Amazon's site. Entering Amazon's site through the Chapter's website credits the Chapter with the 5% commission on any purchases that follow. Thanks in advance for your help!

**Reprint Policy:** Material in this newsletter of the Anne Arundel County Chapter/ BPUSA may be copied only: 1) if the article is copied in its entirety; 2) if the person writing the article is identified as noted in the newsletter; 3) if it is clearly stated that it was taken from the newsletter of the Anne Arundel County Chapter/ BPUSA; 4) if our website is cited in the credits. This material is to be used and given to help persons with the grieving process and may not be sold or become a part of something being sold for profit, unless first obtaining the permission of the author of the article and/or the current Editor or Chapter leader as noted in this newsletter.





**Chapter Points of Contact:**

Chapter Leader: Carol Tomaszewski, [chapterleaderaacountymd@gmail.com](mailto:chapterleaderaacountymd@gmail.com)

Newsletter POC: Tawny Stitely, [TWSbpaac@gmail.com](mailto:TWSbpaac@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Fran Palmer

Hospitality: Sandra Winans

Angel Gowns: Carol Tomaszewski

Librarian: Bob and Sandi Burash

Programs: Mary Redmiles, [mary.redmiles@gmail.com](mailto:mary.redmiles@gmail.com)

**Chapter Address:**

BPUSA/AA County Chapter

P.O. Box 6280

Annapolis, MD 21401-0280

**Winter Months:** Inclement weather on a meeting night\*\* - Meeting cancelled if Phase 1 of the Snow Emergency Plan is in effect at 5:00 p.m.

**Donations:** Donations may be made to offset the costs of our local Chapter's events and communications. We gratefully acknowledge the following donations made recently.

**Connect With Us on Facebook:** We are on Facebook. It is a closed group where we can continue our discussions in private. Your other Facebook friends will not be able to see what you post there, and you will not be able to share postings by others. You have to join Facebook first before you can become a member. Please go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BPUSAAAC/> and ask to join. You will be approved within 24 hours. If you have any questions or problems, please contact June Erickson at [JuneErickson@aol.com](mailto:JuneErickson@aol.com).



**In Loving Memory Conference – April 7 to April 10, 2016**

“Finding your Lifeline”, Hyatt Fairfax Hotel, Fairfax, Virginia

This four-day conference is for bereaved parents who have lost their only child or all their children. Grandparents, bereaved parent support group chapter leaders, friends and the professionals, who assist parents in walking through their grief, are also encouraged to attend. Mark your calendars now as this is the only Conference that focuses **entirely** on the needs of parents who have no surviving children. Kay Bevington, from Alive Alone will be participating, as will many other speakers and workshops to be announced. Register at <http://www.inlovingmemoryconference.org/>

**Bereaved Parents of the USA 2016 National Gathering**

**June 29 – July 3, 2016**

*“Crossroads of Your Heart”*

Wyndham Indianapolis West, 2544 Executive Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46241

**39<sup>th</sup> TCF National Conference**

**July 8 – 10, 2016**

*“Hope Rises on the Wings of Love”*

The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Scottsdale, Arizona, will be the ssite of the 39th TCF National Conference on July 8-10, 2016. "Hope Rises on the Wings of Love" is the theme of next year's event, which promises more of this year's great national Conference experience. The 2016 Conference will be held at the The Fairmont Scottsdale Princess. We'll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#) and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

**GRIEF RESOURCES:**

For Grief Resources, please visit our Chapter website at:

<http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org/HTML/Resources.htm>

Also try this useful website at <http://grievingparents.net>

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