



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

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"May love be what you remember most." Darcie Sims



Matthew Joseph Morrow
November 13, 1990 - October 13, 2012
Love Mom, Dad, Josh, Cody, Jeremy, Carly, Lily,
Family and Friends

Tori Daniel Stitely
5.21.85 - 11.26.12
You are my Sun and my Stars,
but most of all you are my Moon.
I will love you forever.
~Mommy~



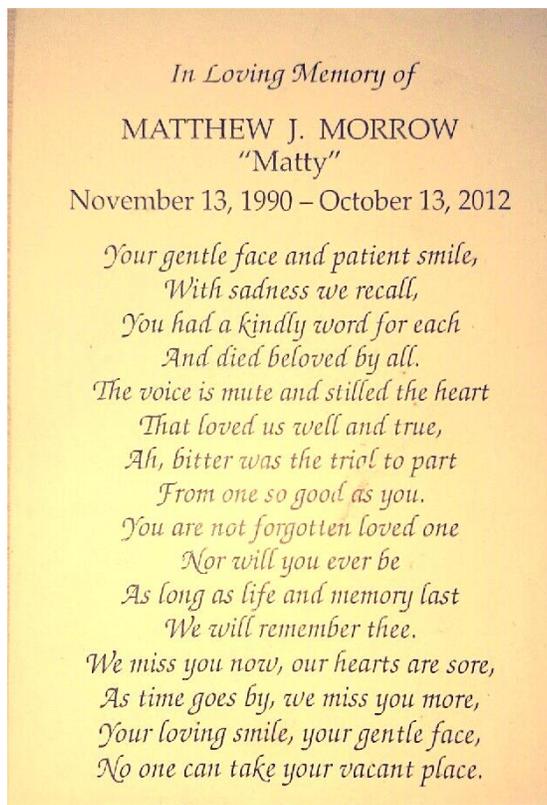
Joey Edward Belcher
April 21, 1975 - December 17, 2012
LIVING YOUR UN-LIVED LIFE WITH YOU AND FOR YOU.
UNTIL WE SEE YOU AGAIN,
PAPA, MIMI, RILEY AND MOM

Our Chapter Column

Our Chapter Column is where you will find articles....poems...lyrics...thoughts, submitted by our Chapter members, in memory of their loved ones.

Please consider submitting something to be printed in this column to:

chapterleaderaacountymd@gmail.com, or mail to PO Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401.



By Tawny Stitely, in memory of Tori
Anne Arundel County Chapter, BPUSA

**Grief, I've learned, is really just love.
It's all the love you want to give,
but cannot. All of that unspent love
gathers in the corners of your eyes,
the lump in your throat, and in the
hallow part of your chest. Grief is
just love with no place to go.**

Submitted by Bill Regan in memory of his son Kyle.

Our Chapter Column

To Joey, my dearly beloved son.

The letter I would write if you were in a distant, far away place from me.

December 17th will mark five years that life imposed on me the cruelest trial a parent could or should undergo. I was separated from you in a final, irretrievable swoop of destiny's caprice and part of me died with you. I felt pain so intense I could not breathe, my legs felt like rubber, I felt mutilated somehow; I screamed your name and cried and cried and cried.

I started looking for answers (To which there are none); incessantly reading literature on grief; after life communications; near-death experiences; started attending grief counseling sessions and praying like I'd never prayed before.

I was trying to move as if I was whole, but my "self" was not complete anymore. I did not know how, but I knew I'd morphed. I was incomplete and destined to live the rest of my life being a semblance half of who I'd been before.

Slowly I turned to the rituals of my childhood and found some solace. There is a candle burning in your memory every single day. Fresh white flowers sit next to you and I dress in black bespeaking of my emptiness and sorrow. (Black is not a color. Black is the absence of color.)

I've renounced every worldly endeavor which held an important place in my life before you left. I have morphed.

Sometimes I wonder what you would think if you saw who I was today. My hair turned white in a few, short weeks and even when I smile there seems to be a profound, deep-seated melancholy as indelible as the color of my eyes. Elizabeth Mehren writes of the change experienced by parents who've lost children as a "Tectonic shift" and that's exactly what I've felt. As if my lungs, my heart, all of who I am are now located in different places and I a completely different individual.

She also underlines a psychological theory; that you are part of my internal psychological structure. So that when you died, part of me died too. Also that experts' opinion is that the two most devastating trials a person can experience are; loss and helplessness. And so, the loss of a child is off the charts in both categories.

Twice a day, on my knees Joey, I thank God for the gift of your life; for the undeserved privilege of making me your mom; for the magic of your love in all our lives; for the people you left behind for me to love through you and the lessons you are still teaching me.

All my love forever.

Mom

Written by Irene Belcher, Anne Arundel County Chapter, BPUSA, in memory of her beloved son Joey.

Grieving During the Holidays

Grieving during the Holidays is difficult.
Especially the first Holiday cycle after the passing of a loved one.

Whatever your age, whatever the cause of death, holidays lived in the absence of a Loved One can be a very difficult time. Customary routines are ended, never to be repeated in quite the same way. Easy-going laughter, once flowing so naturally, may become awkward or even altogether missing. Gift-giving, once so filled with fun, may seem somehow empty and sad. Familiar songs, once so comforting, may catch in your throat or bring tears to your eyes.

All this happens against a backdrop of significant questions you may find yourself asking: What exactly is happening to me? Can I possibly survive this, and do I even want to? How long will this turmoil last? Is what I am feeling normal? Am I losing touch with my sanity?

The holiday period itself adds its own share of questions: How can I make it through all the events of the holidays while missing so desperately the one I love? Would I be better off to ignore the holidays this year? Should I act as if everything were normal? Should I make major changes in my holiday rituals?

If you're like most people in grief, you will have many questions. It's important for you to know at the outset that there are few universal "right" and "wrong" answers. There may be various answers, depending upon the unique factors of your situation: who you are as a person, what your family is like, who it was who died, when and how they died, what your relationship with the departed was, and the role that person played in your holiday rituals, to name only a few. It's also important to remember that not all your questions will have ready answers. Sometimes you must learn by doing, and then learn even better by trying it another way.

Keeping in mind there has never been a loss precisely like yours, there are still some general guidelines you will hear that bereaved people have found helpful through the years. Treat them as suggestions rather than as prescriptions. Use them as ideas you can expand upon. Shape them to fit your distinct circumstances and to serve your personal needs. Above all else, remember that others, *many* others, have faced something similar to what you're facing right now. They have learned what it is like to endure and to survive and often even to grow through their experience. What they have learned is what you can learn, too. The ways they have persevered are ways you can adopt as well.

Most of all, believe this: your holidays can still be a significant time for you. They will be different, but they can still be meaningful. They may hurt, but they can also hold hope -- even great hope.



Adapted from the writings of Jim Miller,
author of *What Will Help Me:
12 Things to Remember
When You Have Suffered a Loss.*



First Thanksgiving.....

If you are about to face the first Thanksgiving without your child, please do what is best for you — even if that means staying home and crying tears of sorrow. Allow your heart to guide you. You'll know

when the time is right to re-enter life again, and you'll know how to do it. Give yourself the precious gift of time to grieve. Maybe McDonald's will be your Thanksgiving dinner this year, and that's okay. Always do what is best for you!

Holidays are always difficult, painful and dreaded for those who have experienced child loss. And, the grief can sneak up and hit you hard when you least expect it — even fifty years later in the doll aisle of Walmart!

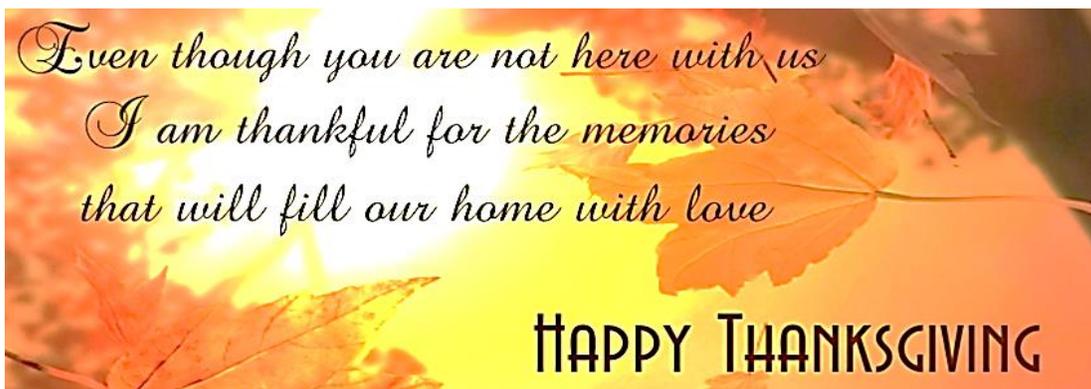
When siblings are grieving, it really complicates the dynamics in a household. My mom was in no condition to help me with my grief, and I sure didn't know how to help her! What we needed were some friends to come up alongside of us and say, "Hey, I'm here. I'm going to help you get through this first Thanksgiving." But, I think people often get busy with their own lives and forget that the holidays are terribly painful for those who are alone in their grief.

Grief is so hard and so scary when you're doing it alone!

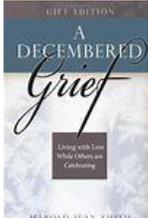
It is my hope and prayer that as Thanksgiving approaches, you have a plan in place for how you'll spend the day. Prepare for it. Do something different. Don't try to keep the same family traditions that you had before the death of your child because that won't work. And, don't be afraid to call on others for help! Facing the holidays alone can be terrifying! Lean on others for help and support. And, remember that often the anticipation of the holiday is far worse than the holiday.

Clara

Silent Grief Support



A Decembered Grief – living with loss while others are celebrating.



Excerpts quoted in this newsletter with the permission from its author, Harold Ivan Smith; educator and grief counselor. You will find this book in our Chapter Grief Library.

You have had a deep scratch – no, a gash – inflicted on you. While you weep, while you wrestle with the realities of life without the one or ones you love, the world goes right on with the joys, the exuberance, the excitement, the frantic panic of the season.

Alter, rather than abandon traditions. You may have a signature tradition in your family, something that your loved one dearly loved or perhaps even started. Should you go through with it? Perhaps you've always had a big home-cooked family dinner on Christmas Eve. This year the family could still gather, but maybe go to a restaurant. Or do a light meal, eaten on laps in the den or living room rather than at that memory-soaked dining room table. – The essence of the tradition—the family together on Christmas Eve – will be honored, but the setting altered this year.

Next year you can re-decide.

Cry if you want to. What soap is for the body, tears are for the soul. (Jewish proverb – Leo Rosten's Treasury of Jewish Quotations, 449)

Give your grief its voice. You could give your grief its voice by taking a moment around the table or the tree, to speak a word about your loved one.

It could be a funny story, a memory of a moment known only to you two -- anything, so long as it is about your child.

Say your loved one's name. Deliberately say the name – “David loved Christmas,” or “Oh, how Mary enjoyed the bowl games!” Your *intentionality* will make it easier for others to say the names as well.

Toast your loved one. I would love to propose a toast to the memory of _____, who this year spends Christmas in the real world. Let those around the table add, “May his or her memory to us be a blessing.”

You only compound your grief by deciding not to mention the deceased, not recalling his or her contributions to the family's memories and traditions.

Above all: Do what you can do and what feels right.



Holidays in General

Written by Alice Wisler on Saturday, November 21, 2009

Some of you have your child's birthday and/or anniversary day within the November through January season. These days, in addition to the holidays everyone else is celebrating, make the season even more complicated and painful, I'm sure. I offer eleven tips I've used to survive the holidays. Some are my own suggestions and some are borrowed from the many who walk the path of grief.

1. Know you will survive. Others have done it and you will, too. Keep in mind that your first Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day will not be easy.
2. Find at least one person you can talk to or meet with during the holiday season. Perhaps this person has gone through a few Thanksgivings and Christmases before and can give you some helpful ideas that have worked for her.
3. Things will be different this holiday season and perhaps for all the rest to come. Don't think you have to do the "traditional" activities of years past when your child was alive. Your energy level is low. If no one in your household minds, skip putting up the tree. Forget spending hours making your holiday cookies.
4. Spend the holidays with those who will let you talk about your child. You will need to have the freedom to say your child's name and recall memories, if you choose to do so. Your stories about your child are wonderful legacies. Tell them boldly again and again.
5. If going into the mall or stores brings too much pain, shop for gifts online or through mail-order catalogs. Thinking everyone is happily shopping at the malls with intact lives while your heart is crushed is terribly tough. Go easy on yourself.
6. Getting away from the house is an idea that worked for my family. The first Christmas without Daniel we went to a nearby town and lived in the Embassy Suites. The kids enjoyed the indoor pool and breakfast buffets. Christmases that followed were spent at a rented cottage on the shore and the Christmas we rented the beach house, we were able to invite extended family to join us. We all shared in the cooking.
7. Create something to give to those who have helped you throughout the year. I made some very simple tree ornaments with "In Memory of Daniel" stamped on them and gave them to friends that first Christmas.
8. Decorate the grave. Put up a plastic Christmas tree with lights. Sometimes being busy with decorating the grave gives a feeling of doing something for a child we can no longer hold.
9. Do something in memory of your child. Donate to a charity or fund in his memory. Volunteer. My oldest daughter Rachel and I volunteer at the Hospice Tree of Remembrance each December and share memories of Daniel as we spend this time together.
10. If your bereavement support group has a special candle-lighting service to remember the children in your area who have died, attend it. Doing something in memory of your child with others who understand the pain these holidays hold can be therapeutic.
11. Spend time reflecting on what the season is about. Everyone around you may be frantic with attending parties, services, shopping and visiting relatives. Perhaps you used to be the same way. Now you may want to avoid some of the festivities. Give yourself permission to excuse yourself from them. Light a candle in your favorite scent. Record some thoughts in a journal. This is great therapy, too.

One day you will wake up and it will be January 2. The holidays will have ended. You will have made it. If you are like me, you will find that surviving the tinsel has made you stronger and although you may cry, somewhere within you, you will feel that core of new steel.

Book Reviews

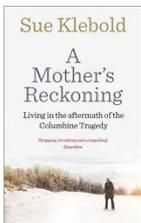


The Empty Jacket by Vicky Bates

In her inspirational new memoir, author Vicky Bates reflects on her journey of love and joy and encourages readers to remember their loved one—all while moving forward and living the life their child would want them to live. Vicky and her husband, Steve, decide to adopt two children while in their forties. Neither had any experience with taking care of a baby. Vicky adds a welcome infusion of humor to her memoir as she relays how she stumbled through the early days and months of caring for a small child. They then become immersed in the mysteries of the illnesses and allergies of their first child, Rocky. Sadly, multiple physicians over many years, are never able to identify what is going on with their son and how to effectively treat him.

When he dies suddenly their world is rocked to the core and they are understandably devastated. Over time, Vicky and Steve manage to find hope in each other and find strength with the power of love and laughter. The death of their child proved to be a great loss, but not the end.

Empty Jacket helps other grieving parents move through the rough days and nights that follow the loss of a child. It will help them find the purpose in their child's short life while acting as a true and positive account of the healing that can come after death. This book is currently available on Kindle for \$2.99.



A Mother's Reckoning: Living in the Aftermath of Tragedy by Sue Klebold

On April 20, 1999, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold walked into Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. Over the course of minutes, they would kill twelve students, a teacher and wound twenty-four others before taking their own lives.

For the last sixteen years, Sue Klebold, Dylan's mother, has lived with the indescribable grief and shame of that day. How could her child, the promising young man she had loved and raised, be responsible for such horror? And how, as his mother, had she not known something was wrong? Were there subtle signs she had missed? What, if anything, could she have done differently?

Sue Klebold's raw, painful honesty shows us how the horrific actions of her son changed the trajectory of her life, led to a divorce and an altered purpose to her life. Sue's pain is palpable as she continues to come to terms with her son's actions. Throughout this time she is left to grieve for the loss of her son on her own, with nowhere to turn for help. Filled with hard-won wisdom and compassion, *A Mother's Reckoning* is a powerful and haunting book that sheds light on one of the most pressing issues of our time. And with fresh wounds from the Newtown and Charleston shootings, never has the need for understanding been more urgent.

Merry Christmas To My Sisters

I am with you every day though you cannot see.

I wonder do you notice me?

I am...

The warmth of the sun upon your face,

The gentle breeze that ruffles your hair,

The soft flit of a dragonfly's wings,

The gentle beauty of a butterfly in flight,

The softness of flower petals kissed by morning dew,

The song of the birds in the trees,

The lazy flight of a bumblebee,

The soft mist of an April shower,

The beauty of a rainbow at the end of a storm,

The soothing sound of water in a brook,

The glitter of moonlight on new fallen snow,

The beauty of the sunrise on the mountains,

The warmth you feel as you watch puppies play,

The love of your children to make your day,

I am the soft kiss of a gentle breeze upon your cheek.

I send you these things so that I can be...

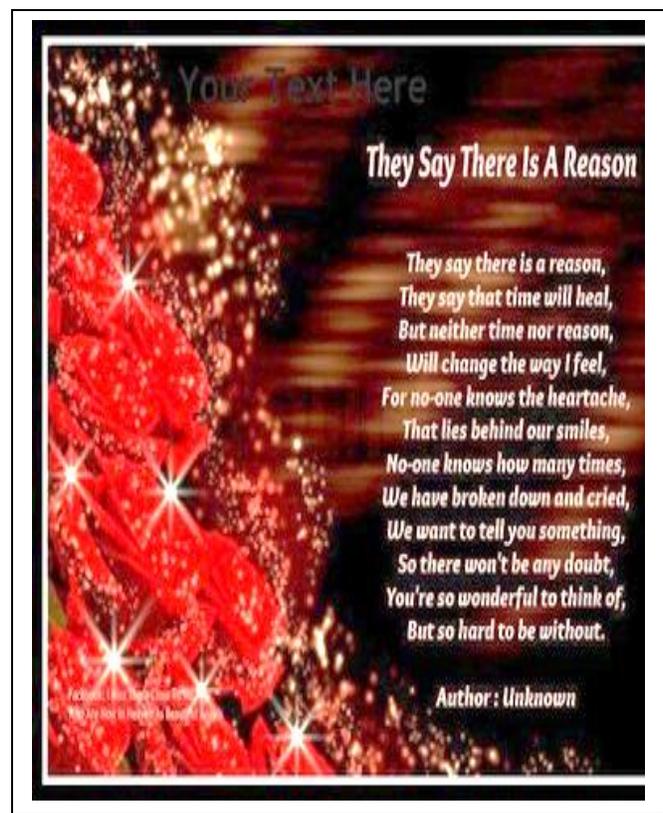
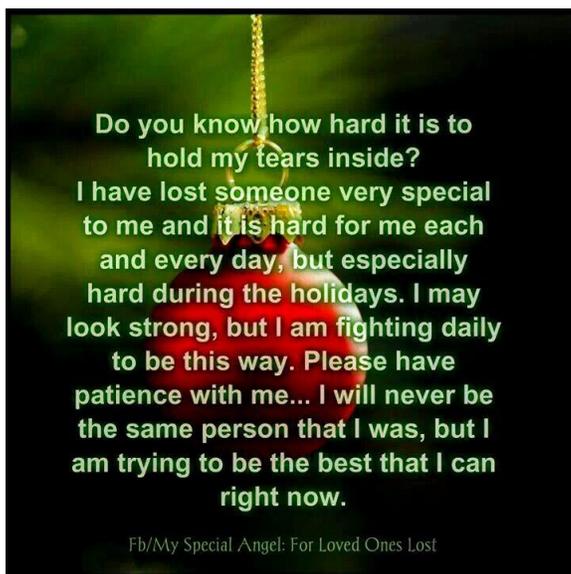
With you every day - though you cannot see.

~ Believe ~

~ Kellie ~

© Sherril Scott Published: March 2012

Source: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com>



CREDO

OF THE ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA

We are not alone.

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 are the aunts and uncles whose cherished nieces and nephews are gone.

We are here to support and care for each other.

We are united by the love we share for our children.

We have learned that children die at any age and from many causes.

Just as our children died at all ages, we too are all ages.

We share our pain, our lost dreams and our hopes for the future.

We are a diverse family.

We realize death does not discriminate against race, creed, color, income or social standing

We are at many stages of recovery, and sometimes fluctuate among them.

Some of us have a deep religious faith, some of us have lost our faith, while some of us are still adrift.

The emotions we share are anger, guilt and a deep abiding sadness.

But regardless of the emotions we bring to our meetings,

it is the sharing of grief and love for our children

that helps us to be better today than we were yesterday.

We reach for that inner peace as we touch each other's lives

and place our hand print on each other's hearts.

Our hope for today is to survive the day;

Our dream for tomorrow is gentle memories and perhaps to smile.

We are not alone

We walk together with hope in our hearts

World-Wide Candle Lighting Ceremony December 10, 2017

Every year, at 7:00 pm on the second Sunday in December, group candle lightings are held around the globe. Intense darkness of grief gives way to light as hundreds of thousands of candles spread their flickering flames to light the night in unison as all of the children who died are remembered and honored. The first candles are lit in New Zealand, and for the next 24 hours a virtual wave of light spreads around the world.

This event binds all bereaved families everywhere in a show of support and compassion, one for the other. Candles are a natural way to express our devotion; their symbolism is unmistakable. The love that we have for our children and siblings continues to burn in our hearts, long after that love is gone from our sight and touch, and despite the fact that it is no longer reciprocated. We burn candles to declare the ongoing presence of our children and siblings in our lives, so that they may not be forgotten. Watching the flicker of the candlelight offers some comfort and peace to a tormented heart; at times you might stare so deeply into the flame that you are able to remove yourself from the present and spend a few blessed moments in harmony with your child or sibling.

ONE LITTLE CANDLE

I lit a candle tonight, in honor of you
Remembering your life, and all the times we'd been through.

Such a small little light the candle made
until I realized how much in darkness it lit the way.

All the tears I've cried in all my grief and pain
what a garden they grew, watered with human rain

I sometimes can't see beyond the moment, in hopeless despair
But then your memory sustains me, in heartaches repair.

I can wait for the tomorrow, when my sorrows ease
Until then, I'll light this candle, and let my memories run free

~written by Sheila Simmons, Dallas, GA
In Memory of Steven Simmons
3-24-70 - 10-19-99



Annual Service of Remembrance, Dec 3, 3 PM, St Martins-in-the-Field

Printed Program - To ensure that your child's name is included in the printed program, please provide the information requested in the RSVP portion of this invitation below, detach, and mail back.

RETURN THIS RSVP BY MAIL NO LATER THAN MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2017.

Slide presentation – During the Service, we project a slide for each of our children. The slide will give the child's name and the dates of his/her life. Please indicate below if you wish to have your child's name included in the slide presentation. A photo of your child can be included on the slide as well.

Donations –Your tax-deductible donations are important to the continued success of our Chapter in helping all of us face the loss of our precious children, rebuild our lives, and find hope for the future.

Please mail your RSVP early to: Attention: Service of Remembrance
BP/USA Anne Arundel County Chapter
PO Box 6280
Annapolis, MD 21401-0280

✂️ *****detach here***** ✂️

Annual Service of Remembrance RSVP

Will ATTEND _____ Number who plan to attend Can NOT ATTEND

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ EMAIL: _____

Please PRINT the name(s) of your deceased child(ren) as you would like it to appear in the PRINTED PROGRAM and SLIDE PRESENTATION, and provide the dates of birth and death.

CHILD'S NAME:	Date of BIRTH:	Date of DEATH:
_____ First Middle Last	_____	_____
_____ First Middle Last	_____	_____
_____ First Middle Last	_____	_____

- I would like my child's NAME to appear in the SLIDE PRESENTATION.
 - I will send an electronic file with a photo. Send an electronic photo to bebessling@aol.com. Include the name of your child, his/her dates of birth and death, and your name and telephone number in the email.
 - I am enclosing a COPY of a photo of my child. Print the name of your child, his/her dates of birth and death, and your name and telephone number on the back. Please leave it loose in the envelope.
 - Use the photo which is on the website. Use the photo from last years' Service of Remembrance.
- Donation included \$ _____

Our Children Remembered – November

Jon Russell Aikin
Grandson of Elizabeth and Barry Aikin
September 4, 1983 - November 19, 2001

Mariah Nicole Albee
Daughter of Valerie and Richard Albee
November 27, 1982 - September 7, 2012

Glorimar Arán
Daughter of Sandra Arán
July 26, 1989 - November 11, 2001

Makayla Gabrielle Carpenter
Daughter of Tarica Carpenter
November 10, 2008 - July 30, 2010

Aris T. Carpenter
Son of Kim Carpenter
November 20, 1985 - December 4, 2013

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

Alice Engleman
Daughter of Elizabeth Engleman
November 20, 1997 - June 21, 2011

Thomas James Geoghegan
Son of Maureen Geoghegan
November 13, 1969 - June 30, 2013

Jeffrey Andrew Grimm
Son of John and Linda Grimm
November 25, 1973 - September 28, 1989

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

Galen Andrew Harig-Blaine
Son of Clare and Stephen Blaine
November 14, 1989 - April 22, 2007

Daniel Ryan Mayes

Son of Dale Mayes
December 5, 1984 - November 27, 2015

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

Matthew Joseph Morrow
Son of Carla and Ed Morrow
November 13, 1990 - October 13, 2012

Michael Dwayne Nokes
Son of Ellen Foxwell
November 9, 1963 - March 15, 1988

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

Jessica Price Parsons
Daughter of Patricia and James Price
Daughter-in-law of Mary Parsons
November 24, 1984 - April 8, 2016

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

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

Samantha Ann Rankin
Daughter of Vickie and Bart Rankin
November 19, 1988 - May 31, 2010

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

André Marc Sanders
Son of Karen Sanders
April 8, 1968 - November 27, 2002

Our Children Remembered - November

Erin Michelle Shannon
Daughter of Karen Shannon
November 21, 1979 - March 18, 2009

Michael Elliott Simms
Son of Molly Simms
November 12, 1996 - March 29, 2016

Gary "Jake" David Spirt
Son of Dee Spirt-Rayment
November 19, 1962 - November 21, 2002

Karen Leese Stevens
Daughter of Judith and John Leese
July 19, 1962 - November 17, 2009

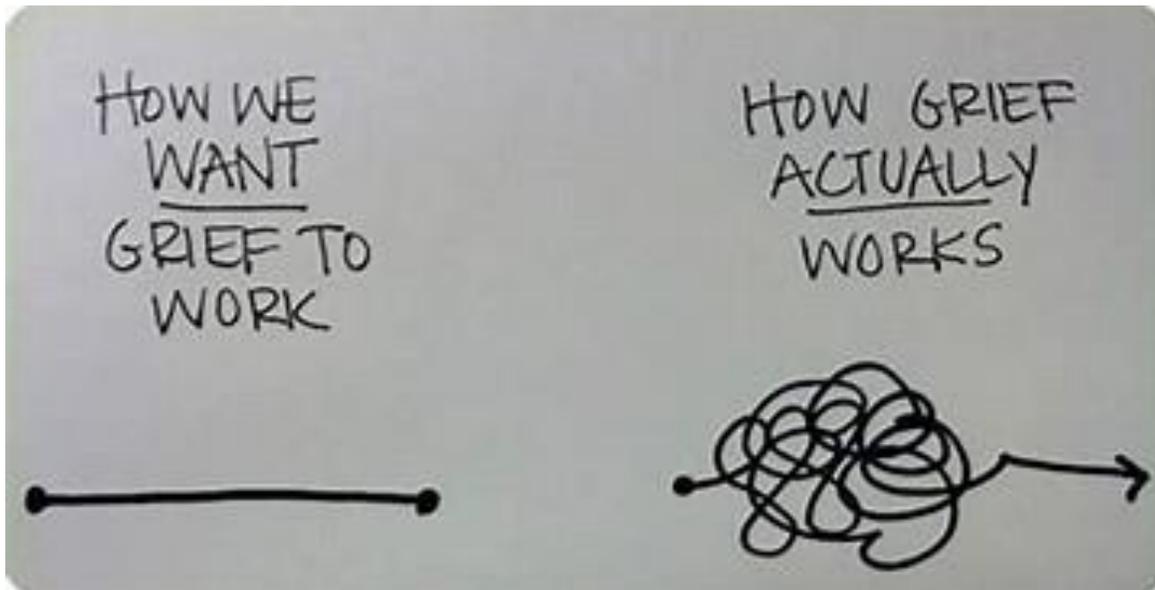
Tori Danielle Stitely
Daughter of Tawny Stitely
May 21, 1985 - November 26, 2012

Nicole L Tresize
Daughter of Cathy Valentine
November 2, 1975 - November 11, 1975

Charles E Valentine, III
Son of Cathy Valentine
November 29, 1974 - October 21, 2011

Tracy Woodfork, Jr.
Son of Jennifer Woodfork
Grandchild of Julie Bergmeier
November 28, 1989 - October 8, 2012

Alex Paul Yokanovich
Son of Delight (Nick) Yokanovich
November 22, 1979 - October 30, 2013



Our Children Remembered - December

December 23, 2007 - March 7, 2010

Cito Arán

Son of Sandra Arán

December 2, 1978 - July 11, 2000

Dora Baldwin

Daughter of Aurelia Ferraro

December 11, 1964 - May 2, 2012

Stephanie Noell Banchemo

Daughter of Bill Banchemo

December 16, 1985 - April 9, 2012

Joey E Belcher

Son of Joseph and Irene Belcher

April 21, 1975 - December 17, 2012

Aris T. Carpenter

Son of Kim Carpenter

November 20, 1985 - December 4, 2013

David Brian Clutter, Sr

Son of Barbara Orndorf

July 23, 1968 - December 25, 2000

Mark Joseph Curtis

Son of Sylvia Curtis

August 20, 1986 - December 20, 2006

Nicholas Delaney

Son of Tina and Tom Delaney

December 29, 1981 - January 19, 2016

Jackie Cheyenne Foy

Daughter of Mike and Cat Foy

January 21, 1999 - December 24, 2008

Melissa Ireland Frainie

Daughter of Kathy and George Ireland

December 12, 1971 - February 12, 2007

Henry Ku'ualoha Giugni Halbach

Son of Gina Giugni and Dan Halbach

December 9, 1991 - September 25, 2016

Kole William Hoffman

Son of Erin and Jim McKinney McDonald

Kurt Willard Johnson

Son of Willard and Marian Johnson

December 9, 1963 - August 11, 2003

Carlester Wilmore Kane

Son of Grace Marie Watkins

February 22, 1964 - December 18, 1998

Michael Robert Legér

Son of Daryl and Elizabeth Legér

July 11, 1986 - December 29, 2000

Daniel Ryan Mayes

Son of Dale Mayes

December 5, 1984 - November 27, 2015

David M Murnane

Son of Jennifer Murnane

March 7, 1987 - December 9, 2008

Kevin Alan O'Brien

Son of Lorrie and Keith O'Brien

December 24, 1986 - June 29, 2012

Michael Henry O'Malley

Son of Margie and John O'Malley

August 25, 1971 - December 7, 1991

Joshua Aaron Prosper

Son of Terre Prosper

August 30, 1986 - December 16, 2011

Lynda Jo Quigley

Daughter of Betty Quigley

April 2, 1967 - December 13, 2011

Megan Frances Richardson

Daughter of Karen Richardson

July 24, 1983 - December 4, 2004

Our Children Remembered – December

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

Owen Robert Sinex
Son of Phyllis and Bob Sinex
September 2, 1993 - December 20, 2012

Jason Edward Skarzynski
Son of Benjamin and Sharon Skarzynski
December 19, 1977 - December 14, 1995

Mark Edward Smeltzer
Son of Peggy Smeltzer
December 11, 1969 - March 15, 1997

Joseph (Joey) Scott Sudo
Son of Joe and Suzanne Sudo
December 3, 1999 - April 23, 2012

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

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

Miriam Luby Wolfe
Daughter of Larry and Rosemary Mild
September 26, 1968 - December 21, 1988



VOLUNTEERS REQUESTED

Service of Remembrance – Planning has started for our annual Service of Remembrance, to be held on December 3, 3 PM, at St Martins-in-the-Field Episcopal Church, Benfield Blvd, Severna Park. If you are interested in helping in any way, please contact Carol Tomaszewski, chapterleaderaacountymd@gmail.com, 410-519-8448. There are things to be done ahead of time and things to do at the Service.

And as always, DESSERTS for the reception following the Service are requested.

Newsletter Publisher -- Our Chapter needs a volunteer, or two, to be our Newsletter Publisher. Please seriously consider taking on this invaluable effort. The Newsletter is a very important resource to all our Chapter families, as it provides a forum for honoring our children, finding learning and solace in poems and articles, and providing Chapter information. This effort takes about 12-15 hours every other month, and is currently being done using Microsoft Word.

General Volunteering with our Chapter -- Giving of yourself is always healing, and being instrumental in providing resources to other Bereaved Parents can only be a positive step in your journey as you extend a helping hand to so many others. If you feel you would like to do something, but don't know what you can possibly do, please talk to me. We can work together to find an opportunity that fits for you.

Contact me if you have questions or will volunteer in any capacity. Thank you.

Carol Tomaszewski, 410-519-8448, chapterleaderaacountymd@gmail.com

CHAPTER 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 7:00) 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.

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.

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 2-3 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.

NOVEMBER MEETING: November 2, we will host a panel of our members to discuss “Coping with Holidays”.

NOVEMBER CORE GROUP MEETING: Tuesday, November 14, 7-9 PM, room 119. The Core Group meets quarterly to discuss the administrative and planning aspects of our Chapter. At the November meeting we will be planning the monthly meeting programs for 2018, so if you have any suggestions or requests please let us know. Everyone is welcome to come to our Core Group meetings.

DECEMBER MEETING: December 7, join us and introduce your child with photos and stories, and a meaningful gift, if you would like. Since we no longer have our loved one to give gifts to, many of us bring a gift in their memory. These gifts will be donated to a local charity for children in need.

JANUARY MEETING: January 4, 2018. If you attended the January 2017 meeting and wrote a letter, it will be mailed to you prior to this meeting. We will discuss your letters and have a program based on writing and journaling.

OUR WEBSITE: www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org Visit our website for information about our Chapter, Our Children, the Newsletter, upcoming events, and many other resources.

FACEBOOK: Join our private, members only, Chapter forum. In Facebook, search for “Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA”. Our moderator will respond to requests to be included as a friend.

PRIVACY POLICY: Our Chapter is cognizant of privacy concerns related to our children. We ask that each family provide written consent to include your child's name, photo, birth date and death date in our newsletter, on our website and other published listings of Our Children, such as for the Service of Remembrance. If you don't see your child's name included in our publications, and would like them to be included, please contact me.

Carol Tomaszewski, 410-519-8448, email chapterleaderaacountymd@gmail.com, use subject: Privacy

ANGEL GOWN PROJECT: We are able to continue our Angel Gown Project thanks to the volunteers who are sewing the gowns and distributing them to the hospitals. We also continue to have wedding gowns donated. If you know of anyone who would like to contribute to this very healing, worthwhile project, either through sewing or donating gowns or trims or ribbon, please let us know.

CHILDRENS BLANKETS: We have started donating tied fleece blankets to the NICU and PICU units at Johns Hopkins Hospital and the National Military Medical Center at Bethesda. They are very appreciative of these blankets and will take any size or type of blanket we can give. We will continue to have the materials available at some of our meetings so you can make the blankets at home. If anyone would like to oversee this project, please let us know.