



## Anne Arundel County Chapter

*Offering Support, Care and Compassion*

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Your connection to your loved one lives in your memories, in your love for them,  
and in the ways they live on through you.

--- Litsa Williams, What's Your Grief, [see page 5](#)

### *Jason Tyler Crawford*

*June 11, 1999-December 15, 2022*



December 15<sup>th</sup> marks one whole year without our Jason “Tyler”. Tyler was only 23, with still so much life to live. We will forever be sad that the story of his life ended so tragically and unexpectedly in a car accident and that all of his dreams will never come to be. This is not the way life is supposed to be. And it’s still unreal at times to say the least. In moments of overwhelming sadness, tears still fall when we start remembering all the things about our Jason Tyler. His smile, his laugh, his goofy sense of humor and annoying behaviors, his sweaty hugs, him singing and dancing on the ring videos we wish we had saved, his love for country music and all the redneck stuff he used to get himself into. Tyler’s absence has taught us the fragility of life and the importance of cherishing every moment with those we hold dear. He has taught us about unconditional love, resilience, and the strength to carry on even in the face of unimaginable sorrow. Though it is often difficult to continue to imagine our future without him, we will always take each step forward carrying his love with us.

We have learned the hard way that you never know what today may bring or take away. We will never know why life had to take Tyler away from us so soon, but we will never forget the 23 years we had together. His absence is deeply felt, but we take comfort in the knowledge that he is safe and his soul rests peacefully in the Heavens above.

We are all just stories in the end, remembered by the adventures we had and the people we loved. Always hug your loved ones every chance that you get as you never know when they might not make it home. In loving memory of our Jason Tyler -Forever 23- 6/11/99-12/15/22.

Love Mom, Dad, Kayla, Abby and Raelynn

***Sean Donald Long, Sr.***  
***August 25, 1984 - December 1, 2016***

A letter to my son,

Dear Sean, I can hardly believe it's coming up on 7 years since you passed away. Missing you has been rough at times and other times a smile comes to my face when I remember how goofy you were, how you loved playing soccer, basketball and football. You had the greatest smile – that I miss so much. I have kept your drawings (the ones that I was able to get) and can't decide on how I want to save them so for now that are in a special box preserving them. I miss your drawings – who knew you would be so talented? I spend a lot of time at the cabin, peaceful there and I often look to the sky wondering.....where you would be now, what you would be doing, what woman would be on your arm, if there would have been any more children, if you were happy, you know....all those questions that can never be answered – just dreamt about. How I miss your hugs. Sean Jr. visits me fairly often – scary that he is driving now and in my RAV 4 no less! So far so good – continue to watch over him from your cloud. I'm doing pretty good. I read to some children at school in West Virginia and love it.

I will always love you, Sean. Mom Dukes.



***Brittany Nicole Tyler***  
***October 12, 1986 - August 23, 1992***



Red on top and blonde underneath-the way **you** described your beauty. Everytime I think of those words, I miss you more. I know that Grandad and Uncle Fred are hugging and kissing you and love having you there with them, but after all these years, we still miss you so much. I bet that you are spreading your sunshine and smiles to everyone you meet.

Dad, Joey, Ally and I will continue to live our lives to the fullest and share your sunshine with as many people as we can, down here too. Your sister is so much like you...in looks and personality. You two would have been best friends.

Until we meet again...save a place for us in Heaven.  
We love you, Brittany.

## Please join us!

### November 2, 2023 Hybrid In-Person & Virtual meeting

**During 2023** we will continue to hold in-person monthly gatherings  
Combined with virtual gatherings at the same time.

The in-person gathering will be held in the **main floor PARLOR** at  
Calvary United Methodist Church,  
301 Rowe Blvd, Annapolis, MD 21401

At the same time, a **ZOOM virtual meeting** will be included as part of the in-person gathering. We are excited to be able to come together, to get those wonderful hugs, and heartfelt personal words of compassion. Yet also virtually include others who live in other states or are unable to attend in person.

**See page 18 for information on 2024 virtual meetings.**

**Sharing Groups** will always be part of our gatherings, both in-person and virtual. We offer sharing groups for those attending for the First Time, the Newly Bereaved, those Further Along, Siblings, and Infant Loss.

For more general information on our monthly gatherings and using ZOOM, **see page 15** or contact our ZOOM host, Chapter Leader Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, [aabereavedparents@gmail.com](mailto:aabereavedparents@gmail.com)

**November 2, 2023 Monthly Gathering:** Linda Triplett, author of "Healing Reflections for a Grieving Mom's Heart", will talk about the art of journaling and how it has helped her to heal and led to her authoring two books.

**December 7, 2023 Monthly Gathering:** Introducing and Remembering our children through the holidays. Bring a photo and share memories during the sharing groups. You may also bring a gift in memory of your child to donate to a local charity.

**January 4, 2024 Monthly Gathering:** Starting a new year by writing a letter to our children.

**January 2024 Virtual Meeting, schedule to be announced.**

**February 1, 2024 Monthly Gathering:** "Music and Grief" presented by Paul Balasic

**February 2024 Virtual Meeting, schedule to be announced.**

### Other important dates:

**December 3, 2023 Annual Service of Remembrance,** St Martins-in-the-Field Episcopal Church, Benfield Blvd, Severna Park, MD. **See page 19 - 20 for further information and RSVP form.**

**January 9, 2024 Core Group Meeting** via ZOOM. **See page 15.**



## Season's Greetings

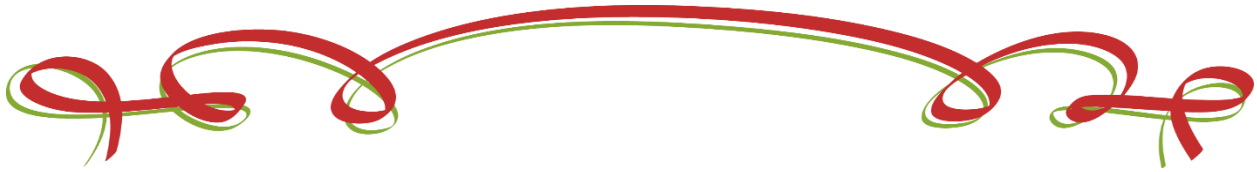
### Holiday Pointers

A few things I have learned over the years.

1. **The apprehension is often worse than the holiday.** The days leading up to the holiday are also stressful, and sometimes more so than the holiday itself. Know this and consider ways to alleviate the apprehension, because the holiday will come and you will be OK. Perhaps make time to spend in quiet reflection, just you and your child.
2. **Make a plan.** Having a plan will add some structure to follow for the day. Your plan can be simple. Like going away, lighting a candle for the day, doing nothing, reading, watching TV, going to a movie, spending time with family, etc. And your plan can always change even at the last minute.
3. **Take care of yourself.** Grief affects you not only emotionally, but physically as well. So listen to your body and if you are tired, then rest. Try to eat healthy. Let others do more, like cooking, shopping, decorating, etc.
4. **Adjust your traditions and celebrations.** Life will never be the same for you, so expect to change the way you celebrate the holidays. Do not let others tell you what to do, in terms of socializing and celebrating. Start new traditions, no matter how small, such as lighting a special candle, start a memory box, buy an ornament, donate gifts in your child's memory. Do things that soothe your soul.

And remember that our children are with us always. We can no longer reach out with a hug or a kiss, for now they reside in our heart, soul and mind. In some ways, they are closer than ever.

Carol Tomaszewski, Dave's Mom  
Anne Arundel County Chapter, BPUSA  
December 2015



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## 64 Reminders if You're Filled With Holiday Dread

<https://whatsyourgrief.com/holiday-dread/>

1. It's not just you dreading the holidays. The holidays after a loss are always hard. Holiday dread (or at least holiday ambivalence) is incredibly common.
2. You have survived other hard days.
3. You will survive this hard day.
4. It might be ugly. That's okay.
5. It might be a lot less ugly than you think. That's also okay.
6. Even though the holidays are always hard after a loss, they can simultaneously be filled with moments of comfort.
7. When it feels impossible to finish the sentence, "I'm grateful for . . ." this holiday season, try finishing the sentence "I have . . ." instead.
8. Remember, grief can create tunnel vision on almost exclusively what's been lost. You might have to work ten times as hard to also see what you still have. It's worth the extra work to mine the good stuff, no matter how deeply it is buried.
9. Holidays are the breeding ground of painful comparisons. This just makes holiday dread worse. Hard as it is, resist the urge to compare your holidays against the past or against anyone else's. You'll do the best you can with what you have, because that is the best you can do.
10. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to do a holiday. Together or alone, traditions or no traditions, try to let go of the shoulds and embrace what feels best for you.
11. You have permission to change your mind about plans, take breaks, leave early, and prioritize taking care of yourself.
12. Even though it feels like every holiday song is merry and bright, there are plenty of grievous holiday songs to make you feel a little less alone.
13. No one can tell how anyone else *actually* feels from their social media posts. More people are having a hard time than you think.
14. If social media is increasing your holiday dread, you can take a break.
15. You are not the person you used to be, and that's hard but okay.
16. Unfortunately, not everyone in your life will intuitively understand that you are not the person you used to be. That will be hard at first, but it will also be okay.
17. There is always an exit or a way to take a break, even when you don't think there is, even if you're hosting.
18. Take a walk.
19. Hide in the bathroom.
20. Drive separately.
21. Call an uber.
22. You can always skip traditions and revisit them next year.
23. You can also create new traditions (that last forever or for just this year).
24. You are not responsible for anyone else's holiday wants at the expense of your own mental health. You might disappoint people, but people will survive disappointment.


25. People might disappoint you, but you can also survive disappointment (let's be honest, you've survived worse).
26. Children can still have a magical holiday even when it isn't perfect.
27. Boundaries are self-care.
28. It's also okay to flex on your boundaries. That doesn't make you a boundary-failure.
29. You can be alone and not feel lonely.
30. And you can also be surrounded by people but feel painfully lonely.
31. There is nothing wrong with every last item on your holiday table being store-bought and not homemade if it helps cut down on that holiday dread.
32. Or just go out to eat - from Starbucks to Benihana to Del Taco to Chart House, there are plenty of options at all price points.
33. Found family (the family we choose) are just as important as blood family (sometimes more important), so make an effort to connect with the people who mean the most to you - whoever they are. Even if it is just a quick text.
34. A surprising number of movie theaters are open on holidays, so take advantage if you don't want to do traditional holiday things but still want to get out.
35. The holiday movie releases look \*pretty\* great this year.
36. Not a movie person? Don't worry, the 'best podcasts of 2022' lists are up in all the major outlets, so you can binge your day away. Spoiler alert: the What's Your Grief podcast didn't make any lists. Shocking, we know.
37. You can break a 'culture of silence' in your family. If your family hasn't done a good job of talking about the person or people who've died and that bothers you, let them know. It's easier than it sounds - promise. "Hey all. It makes me sad that we don't talk about John more. I know it's hard, but I propose we all share something that's made us think about him recently - big or small. I'll start".
38. New Year's resolutions are fully optional. Surviving and finding reasons to get up each morning is accomplishment enough in grief, so cut yourself some slack.
39. If you don't want to spend the holiday alone, don't assume you're the only one you know without holiday plans. Ask around, and post on social. You might find a pal to spend the day with.
40. If you're unapologetically spending the day alone, you can still plan for it to be exactly what you want it to be.
41. Just because people are traveling more for the holidays again doesn't mean that all those virtual holiday tips we all learned during COVID can't still come in handy.
42. If your drinking is getting a little carried away in grief, the non-alcoholic beer, non-alcoholic wine, and non-alcoholic spirits market has grown by leaps and bounds. There are plenty of options for sober holiday toasts!
43. People we don't know can still help us feel connected. It's worth chatting with the cashier at 7-11 while you check out and or stopping for a coffee at Starbucks just to be around other people if you're feeling isolated.
44. The story of a Hanukkah is one of finding oil that burned a light in wreckage, against all odds. If that isn't a holiday story for grievers, we don't know what is.
45. A full day of good books, good movies, and delicious snacks is a perfectly respectable way to spend the day.
46. Go outside. For 5 minutes, for 5 hours, whatever.
47. Winter solstice marks the shortest day of the year and the longest night in the Northern Hemisphere. As of December 22nd, if you're in the Northern Hemisphere the days are now getting longer.
48. Christmas decorations aren't all-or-nothing. If you didn't have it in you to pull them out because you were dreading the holidays, you can still pull out one or two items. Or buy yourself one decoration that you love.
49. If you want to include your loved one in the holidays there are plenty of ways, even at the last minute:
50. Make a donation in their memory.



51. Sign up to volunteer somewhere where they volunteered or that meant something to them.
52. Create a memorial ornament for your tree.
53. Set their photo out next to your menorah.
54. Ask people to share a favorite memory of the person with you, in person, on social, or by text/email.
55. Fill their stocking with gifts you would have bought for them, then donate them to a shelter.
56. Buy yourself a gift that you think they would have bought for you.
57. Ask everyone to share one gift the person gave them that they will always treasure, physical or otherwise!
58. Make a list of the things you loved about them that you want to do more to embody in yourself or to connect with in the new year.
59. The holidays will never be the same again, but that doesn't mean they can't be happy and meaningful.
60. If you haven't bought *yourself* a gift this year and you like this list, we have the perfect gift idea for you!
61. You're allowed to love and enjoy the day.
62. It is normal to feel a bit guilty about enjoying the holidays without them.
63. Remember that your ability to find gratitude and make space for joy in a world without your loved one is not a betrayal. And it really can ease some of the holiday dread.
64. Your pain is not your connection to your loved one. Your connection to your loved one lives in your memories, in your love for them, and in the ways they live on through you.

December 22, 2022

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Here are a few helpful "grief reminders" :

*Today will not work out the way you've planned, and that's okay.*

*Today will not be smooth or easy, and that's okay.*

*Today might be full of tears and grief triggers, and that's okay.*

*Today your emotions might feel overwhelming at times, and that's okay.*

You're grieving.

Be kind to yourself today.

Gary Roe - Amazon Bestselling Author, Speaker, Grief Specialist

Website: <https://www.garyroe.com/>

Books: <https://www.garyroe.com/books>

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## Our Children Remembered November 2023

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

Douglas Lee Baer III  
Grandson of Shirley Baer  
August 21, 1983 - November 14, 2006

Gabrielle Alexis Berryman  
Daughter of Patricia Rogers  
January 20, 2010 - November 26, 2017

Margaret Samantha Bohlman  
Daughter of Samantha and Cory Bohlman  
July 27, 2020 - November 4, 2020

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

Sophie Rose DiVincenzo  
Daughter of Tori and Anthony DiVincenzo  
November 20, 2021 - November 20, 2021

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

Genevieve Marie French  
Daughter of Tina French  
September 25, 1995 - November 7, 2017

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

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

Suzanne Boyer Hyatt  
Daughter of Jenni Lucke  
February 23, 1982 - November 6, 2017

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

Paul Robert Overton  
Son of Steve and Paula Overton  
November 19, 1988 - March 29, 2021

Jessica Price Parsons  
Daughter of Patricia and James Price  
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

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

Kurtis Joseph Sigler  
Son of Barbara and Rich Sigler  
March 24, 1996 - November 14, 2019

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-Lopez  
May 21, 1985 - November 26, 2012

Nicole L Tresize  
Daughter of Cathy Valentine  
November 2, 1975 - November 12, 1975

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

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

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



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## Our Children Remembered December 2023

Cito Ar n  
Son of Sandra Ar n  
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

Jason Tyler Crawford  
Son of Jennifer Michelle and Jason Crawford  
June 11, 1999 - December 15, 2022

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

Clay Edward Derderian  
Son of Mary Bannon and James Derderian  
December 14, 2005 - May 16, 2021

Thomas Dash Ertter  
Son of Helen Akerley  
December 25, 1985 - February 10, 2021

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

Abby Megan Hoyt  
Daughter of Barb and Andy Hoyt  
December 22, 1995 - September 1, 2022

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

Charlotte Belinda Lauren  
Daughter of Peter and Robin Lauren  
June 19, 1987 - December 19, 2021

Michael Robert Legér  
Son of Daryl and Elizabeth Legér  
July 11, 1986 - December 29, 2000

Stuart Livingstone, Jr  
Son of Lori Livingstone  
Son of Stuart Livingstone  
December 20, 1992 - January 25, 2018

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

Tyler John Orsulak  
Son of Richard and Sandra Orsulak  
December 19, 1989 - May 14, 2021

Christopher Gordon Pessano  
Son of Claire and Roger Cole  
December 18, 1971 - April 26, 2017

Joshua Aaron Prosper  
Son of Terre Prosper  
August 30, 1986 - December 16, 2011

Megan Frances Richardson  
Daughter of Karen Richardson  
July 24, 1983 - December 4, 2004

Katelynn Anne Sabo  
Daughter of Mary Ann and Steve Sabo  
December 28, 1989 - August 27, 2019

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

Dominique Ryan Shaw-Morton  
Son of Renita Shaw and Marcel Freeman  
December 1, 1997 - August 8, 2022

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

Matthew Albert Skube  
Son of Diana and Matthew Skube  
October 4, 2004 - December 9, 2021

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

Andrew Burton Smith  
Son of Sherris Smith  
December 1, 1985 - August 3, 2021

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

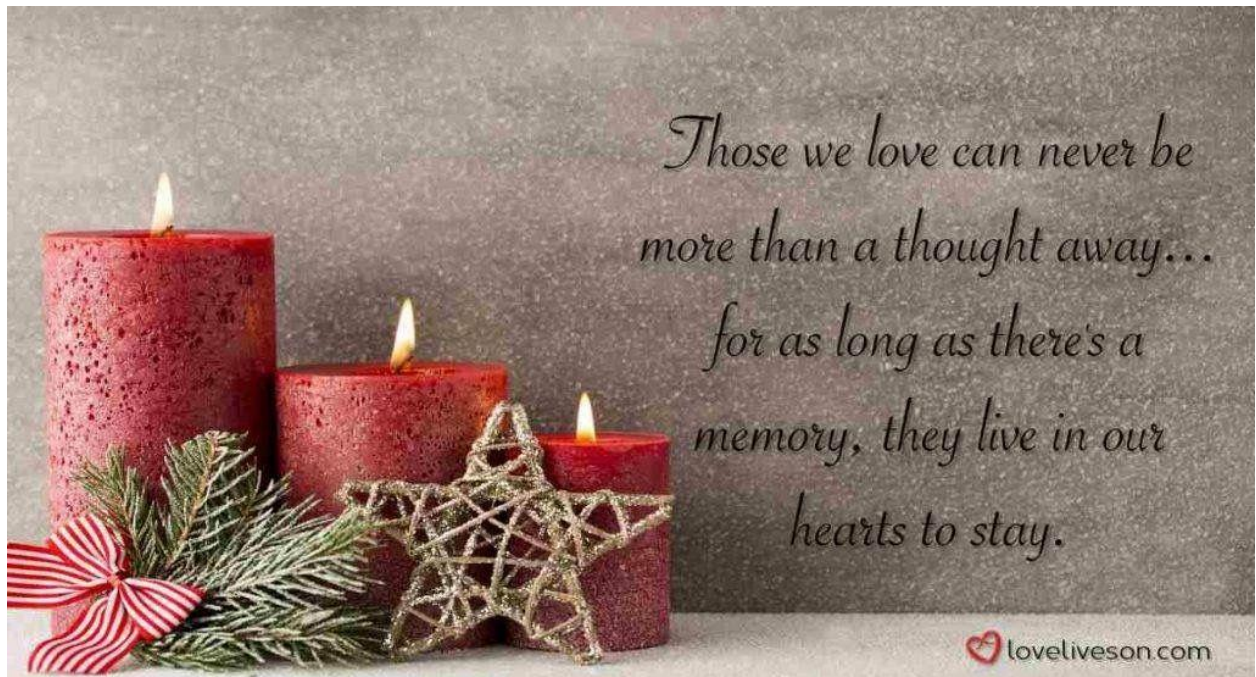
Daniel Alonso Vela  
Son of Marisol and Fausto Vela  
October 4, 2001 - December 2, 2022

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

Lauren Nicole Zaloudek  
Daughter of Mike and Becky Zaloudek  
August 15, 1993 - December 25, 2017



## 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 handprint 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**

***DONATIONS may be made in memory of your child***  
***to offset the costs of our local chapter's events and communications.***  
***Your donations provide the core resource, actually the only resource, for our Chapter.***  
***Without your donations, we could not continue to provide the support that is so important to***  
***all of us as we travel along our grief journey.***  
***Thank you for your thoughtful generosity.***

### General Donation

Horace Tsu in memory of Cathryn Tsu

### Newsletter & Website Sponsor Donations

Tom and Tina Delaney in memory of Nick Delaney

Mary and Joe Redmiles in memory of Tommy Redmiles

Janet and Danny Tyler in memory of Brittany Tyler

Joan and George Caperones in memory of Chris William Caperones

Jeffrey and Kimberly Ethridge in memory of Rowan Genevieve Ethridge

### Memory Walk Donations

Noel and Ann Castiglia in memory of Tria Castiglia

Joan Caperones in memory of Chris Caperones

Edana and Bernard Perry in memory of Kayla Perry

Elvira and John McCormick in memory of John "Tommy" McCormick III

Robert Ian Reilly in memory of Michael Reilly

Tyler and Beall families in memory of Brittany Tyler and Fred Carter

Judith and Louie Bolly in memory of Wendy Jean Bolly

Rosemary Mild in memory of Miriam Luby Wolfe

Brenda Gawthrop in memory of Andrew Thomas Gawthrop

Clare Sugrowe in memory of Eric Sugrowe

Wayne and Wanda Bessling in memory of Richard Bessling

Patricia Rogers in memory of Gabrielle Berryman

Judith Ann Schultz in memory of Terry James Schultz

Tina and Tom Delaney in memory of Nick Delaney

Jody Seyfferth in memory of Donald "Donny" Seyfferth

Morrow Family in memory of Matthew Morrow

Alexandra Griffin in memory of Abigail Hoyt

George Durr in memory of Christopher Lewis Durr

Mary Bannon in memory of Clay Derderian

Danielle Jones, Selene Sanders, Marcus Hammond in memory of Anaya Abdul

Amy Messina in memory of Andrew Thomas Gawthrop

Desirae, Gary, Jacob, Garrett Smith in memory of Joseph "Joe-Joe" Smith

Donation jar in memory of all children



## CHAPTER GATHERINGS and MEETINGS

**CHAPTER GATHERING SUMMARY:** In-person and ZOOM Virtual Gatherings are being scheduled at the same time, so our Chapter gatherings will be combined in-person and virtual gatherings. We serve many folks out-of-state, out-of-area, those who are no longer able to or comfortable driving at night or live too far away and for many other reasons.

So during 2023, we will continue to hold virtual meetings at the same time as the in-person meetings. This is doable, but requires a lot of work, more facilitators, and others getting smart on the ins-and-outs of running a virtual gathering and blending it with the in-person gathering.

**We need help running and blending the meetings. If you will be attending in-person, please volunteer.**

Contact Bob Burash, Chapter Leader, at [aabereavedparents@gmail.com](mailto:aabereavedparents@gmail.com) , 410-551-5774.

**WHAT TO EXPECT AT OUR CHAPTER GATHERINGS:** *Gatherings are open to anyone grieving the death of a child.* 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 are 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 along this grief journey.

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 GROUP INFORMATION:** Sharing groups are facilitated by fellow Chapter members and are completely confidential. We may offer the following sharing groups, depending on the number of attendees, facilitators and discussion requirements.

**First Time Attendees Sharing Group:** Coming to a Chapter Meeting for the first time can be daunting but listening and/or sharing will be helpful. This group is usually a smaller group to allow for more discussion of issues pertaining to very early grief and may include those attending for the first three times. We ask that you come to three meetings to truly grasp the benefit of learning, sharing and support from others.

**Newly Bereaved Sharing Group:** During the early years of grief, the issues that may be discussed will focus on the issues facing participants today. This group may include anyone who is feeling newly bereaved, regardless of the time on their grief journey.

**Sibling Sharing Group:** Parents, invite and encourage your children to join our monthly gathering and participate in the Sibling sharing group. Amanda Hughes, Sibling Support Coordinator, Anne Arundel County Chapter, BPUSA, will facilitate a Sibling Sharing Group during our monthly gatherings. Grieving siblings are encouraged to join and share with Amanda.

For more information, please contact Amanda at [alrhalbach@gmail.com](mailto:alrhalbach@gmail.com) .

**Spanish Speaking Support:** Contact Irene Belcher, 443-824-2638, [Belcherirene@yahoo.com](mailto:Belcherirene@yahoo.com) .

**For more information** on our Chapter Gatherings, and/or to participate via ZOOM, please contact our ZOOM host and Chapter Leader, Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, [aabereavedparents@gmail.com](mailto:aabereavedparents@gmail.com)

**Using ZOOM** is easier than you may think. You can use your smart phone, iPad, or PC. You will receive an email with the link to the meeting, and when it's time for the meeting just click on the link. You will be in a "waiting room" and the host will let you "in". **Our meetings are private so only those who receive the email with the link can participate.**

Here's a link for a tutorial on how to join a meeting:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-How-Do-I-Join-A-Meeting->

**CORE GROUP MEETINGS: WHAT IS THE CORE GROUP:** The Core Group consists of anyone who is interested in the ongoing administration of our Chapter. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend. We are always looking for new ideas and programs. A core group meeting typically meets from 7 pm until 9 pm, once a quarter. We discuss finances, upcoming activities, plan the annual walk, and service of remembrance, suggest programs for the monthly gatherings, and address any number of issues that may come before the group.

***Please join us. We welcome new Core Group Members.***

**January 9, 2024 Core Group:** Virtual ZOOM Meeting starting at 7:00 PM. Anyone interested in participating, contact Bob Burash at [aabereavedparents@gmail.com](mailto:aabereavedparents@gmail.com) to be included on the email invitation. ***Planning for 2024 monthly gathering topics, finances, and special events will be primary topics. So please join us.***

### **Newsletter and Website Information**

#### **NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:**

*I encourage you to become a contributor.* Writing, blogging, journaling has a way of cleansing your soul and helping you heal. Or when you come across a graphic, proverb or saying, that touches your heart, please forward them to me. Let me know what topics you would like to see addressed in our newsletter. *This newsletter is published for you, so I ask you to make it your own. Whatever you are feeling or thinking will be useful to someone else.* Please consider submitting an article, letter, poem or graphic for inclusion in the newsletter. *Words that are meaningful to you will also be meaningful to others.* Provide this to Carol at [ctomaszewski74@gmail.com](mailto:ctomaszewski74@gmail.com) .... by **December 15 for the January/February 2024 newsletter.**

**SPONSORSHIP of newsletter and website:** *This is a wonderful way to honor your child's memory and share them with all of us, and at the same time contribute to our Chapter.* The donation for sponsoring the newsletter is \$75.00 and the website is \$25.00. Either sign up at a meeting or contact Mary Redmiles, Sponsorship Coordinator, at 301-704-8086 or [mary.redmiles@gmail.com](mailto:mary.redmiles@gmail.com)

- For the newsletter, submit a photograph and a short memorial to [ctomaszewski74@gmail.com](mailto:ctomaszewski74@gmail.com) ... by **December 15 for the January/February 2024 newsletter**
- For the website, a sponsor's link will be put on the home page that will open your child's photo from the Our Children section of the website, if you have given permission to include a photo on our website. If no photo is available, your child's name will still be included on the website home page.
- **Make check payable to Anne Arundel County Chapter, BPUSA.**  
**And mail to PO Box 6280, Annapolis MD 21401.**

**COPYRIGHT:** We reserve the right to limit distribution of the newsletter and/or specific articles. Distribution to family and friends is permitted and encouraged. Please contact our Editor, Carol at [ctomaszewski74@gmail.com](mailto:ctomaszewski74@gmail.com) or Chapter Leader, Bob at [aabereavedparents@gmail.com](mailto:aabereavedparents@gmail.com) before widely distributing the newsletter or using any content in any manner. ***See page 18 about copyright issues.***

## CHAPTER CONTACTS:

**Chapter leader:** Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, [aabereavedparents@gmail.com](mailto:aabereavedparents@gmail.com)  
**Treasurer:** Joe Belcher  
**Refreshments:** Sandi Burash, 410-551-5774  
**Librarian:** Bob and Sandi Burash  
**Programs/Sponsorships:** Mary Redmiles 301-704-8086, [mary.redmiles@gmail.com](mailto:mary.redmiles@gmail.com)  
**Newsletter:** Carol and Rick Tomaszewski, 410-519-8448, [ctomaszewski74@gmail.com](mailto:ctomaszewski74@gmail.com)  
**Sibling Coordinator:** Amanda Halbach Hughes, 443-994-3855, [alrhalbach@gmail.com](mailto:alrhalbach@gmail.com)  
**Facebook Administrators:** June Erickson [juneerickson@aol.com](mailto:juneerickson@aol.com),  
 Tawny Lopez [torismom444@gmail.com](mailto:torismom444@gmail.com)  
**Spanish Speaking Support:** Irene Belcher, 443-824-2638, [Belcherirene@yahoo.com](mailto:Belcherirene@yahoo.com) .  
**Special Greeting Cards:** Linda Khadem, [lindakhadem@icloud.com](mailto:lindakhadem@icloud.com)

Our Anne Arundel County Chapter, Bereaved Parents USA, is always here for you. Do not hesitate to call one of our phone friends, email someone, or go on Facebook.

*Phone friends to call if you need to talk:*

Barbara Bessling (410) 761-9017, [bebessling@aol.com](mailto:bebessling@aol.com),

Mary Redmiles (301) 704-8086

Noel Castiglia (410) 974 1626

Ann Castiglia (410) 757-5129

Paul Balasic (443) 566 0193

**Email:** [aabereavedparents@gmail.com](mailto:aabereavedparents@gmail.com)

On **Facebook:** search for “Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA”

## CHAPTER RESOURCES:

**OUR WEBSITE:** <http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org/HTML/Home.htm>

Visit our website for information about our Chapter, Our Children, the Newsletter, upcoming events, and many other resources. ***We need a Web Master, someone to update the website monthly.***

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

**LIBRARY: BOOK DONATIONS** are a wonderful way to support other bereaved parents and can be made in memory of your child. A book that was helpful to you will be helpful to another bereaved parent. And if you borrow books, there is no time constraint on how long you keep a borrowed book. However, please look at the books on your shelves and if any belong to the chapter, consider returning them. You can mail them to Anne Arundel County Chapter BP/USA, P.O. Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21041. Contact Sandi and Bob at [aabereavedparents@gmail.com](mailto:aabereavedparents@gmail.com) to return books or to arrange to donate a book.

***We need a librarian to assume oversight of our library***

**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 **Bob Burash, 410-551-5774, aabereavedparents@gmail.com**, use subject: Privacy

**ACCURACY:** We make every effort to ensure the accurate spelling of your child's name and his/her date of birth and date of death. If any of this information is incorrect or your child's name does not appear in the newsletter, let us know.

**RESOURCE INFORMATION:** Any and all resource information provided in our Newsletter, Website or Emails, is for your information and reference. Our Chapter does not necessarily endorse the views, recommendations, guidance, or advertising associated with these resources.

Anne Arundel County Chapter, BPUSA resources:

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

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

<http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org/PDFPages/BPUSACHAPTERBROCHURE.pdf>

National **BPUSA** also provides a list of resources on their website: <https://www.bereavedparentsusa.org/>



“ Allow yourself to  
lean into the grief,  
the missing and the  
longing for your  
child. ”

[Funeralguide.net](http://Funeralguide.net)

**BITS AND PIECES OF INFORMATION**

\*\*\*\*\*

**Going Forward: Monthly Gatherings in 2024**

The virtual gatherings started because of COVID and they worked extremely well for us under those circumstances. Once we were able to meet in-person, we continued to hold the virtual gatherings at the same time, and that has worked to a degree. However, lately, concern has been expressed about the benefit of hybrid gatherings (in-person and virtual at the same time). The number of attendees has been slowly dropping for both venues and a concern is that trying to balance the two gatherings at the same time can be distracting and disruptive at best.

*Neither group receives the full benefit of the gathering.*

After lengthy discussion, the core group has decided to hold separate gatherings - different day/night and time for the virtual group. We will continue to host the Hybrid gatherings through 2023. Initially, in 2024 we will host separate ZOOM gatherings for the first three months. After that, we will assess the success of separate meetings. In addition, the hope is that one or more of the folks who participate in the virtual group would agree to facilitate the virtual group. The chapter will provide the ZOOM link and guidance as needed.

This was not an easy decision, but the consensus is that we are not serving our members in the best way. It is hoped that by splitting the groups, relationships will be formed and strengthened and that the chapter will grow.

We welcome and encourage your suggestions. Please share your concerns, we need your input. You can contact Bob Burash at [abereavedparents@gmail.com](mailto:abereavedparents@gmail.com)

**Chapter Newsletter and Copyright Issues**

Copyright infringement using the internet is becoming more defined and therefore more prevalent legally. As a result, web articles that were published in our newsletter a year ago, even though giving the website and author credit, are no longer available to publish without specific organization or author approval. This has severely limited the content that can be put in our newsletters. And requires significantly more time and effort on the editor's part. The result is that future newsletters may not be as robust or meaningful.

On the other hand, any articles, poems, songs, thoughts that are written by Chapter Members can be readily published with credit given. So please consider contributing to our newsletter.



## 2023 Memory Walk – always something special

In October we held our 21st Annual Memory Walk at Quiet Water Park. We had a good turnout this year and we were glad to share our children with others that were there to honor their children. After sharing some refreshments, there were walk rules and instructions by Paul Balasic, followed by a couple readings and music by Tom Delaney.

During the walk members were able to see pictures of all of our precious children posted along a 2-mile path. The rain held out until the last half hour or so, yet everyone seemed to find the walk a beneficial way to spend some time in memory of our beautiful children.

Thanks to all of the volunteers who help to plan and organize this event, special thanks to Paul Balasic, who every year puts his heart and soul into the Memory Walk. Thanks to Grauls Market for their generous donation.

*And thanks to all who show up to the Walk, rain or shine. Your participation and enthusiasm lets us know that this event means something special to all of you!*

Barbara Bessling, Memory Walk Coordinator

## WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING DAY [December 10, 2023](#)

*Light a candle for your child.*



For hundreds of years, lighting a candle has been a way to show respect for those that have died. This beautiful gesture shows that although someone may be gone from this world, their memory will endure, and the light of their flame will continue to inspire and guide others.

Worldwide Candle Lighting Day is a celebration of solidarity and memory. It's a day on which people around the world gather to light candles for children who have

died and to show that they will always be loved and never forgotten.

Every second Sunday in December on Worldwide Candle Lighting Day, family and friends gather to remember the children who left this earth too soon. Each year hundreds of thousands of people around the world gather to light candles. The candle lighting begins at 7 p.m., local time. The worldwide candle lighting vigil creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves through the time zones.



## ***Anne Arundel County Chapter 39th Annual Service of Remembrance***

**Sunday, December 3, 2023, at 3 PM**

**St. Martin's in-the-Field Episcopal Church**

**375 Benfield Road, Severna Park, MD 21146**

*Since its beginning in 1985, the Annual Service of Remembrance has provided an opportunity for parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and friends to remember our precious children. Please join us in this celebration of our children's lives, as we face this Holiday Season with Love, Hope, and Peace in our hearts.*

**RSVP Annual Service of Remembrance RSVP**  
**RETURN THIS RSVP BY MAIL NO LATER THAN SATURDAY,**  
**NOVEMBER 4, 2023.**

**Printed Program** – To ensure that your child’s name is included in the printed program, please provide the information requested below, and mail back by the deadline, Saturday, November 4, 2023.

**Slide Show Presentation** – During the Service, we project a picture/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, and if you also want to include a photo of your child.

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

YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER ATTENDING: \_\_\_\_\_  NOT ATTENDING but please include my child

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

CHILD’S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of DEATH: \_\_\_\_\_

First Middle Last \_\_\_\_\_

First Middle Last \_\_\_\_\_

I would like my child’s NAME and dates to appear in the SLIDE SHOW PRESENTATION  
 I will send an electronic file with a photo. Send an electronic photo to [Srvcofrem19@gmail.com](mailto:Srvcofrem19@gmail.com).  
Include the name of your child, his/her dates of birth and death, and your name and telephone number.

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

COST = \$0. DONATIONS are truly appreciated. Donations are important to the continued success of our Chapter, are tax-deductible, and may be included with your response at this time. Thank you for your consideration and generosity.

Donation included \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check payable to: BPUSA Anne Arundel County Chapter