



# Bereaved Parents of the USA

## Anne Arundel County Chapter

May, 2006

[www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org)

An important reminder: On Saturday, May 20, 2006 the Anne Arundel County Chapter will hold its eighth Annual Conference of Hope and Healing. Please visit our website to find out more details.

With Mother's Day coming in May and Father's Day in June I would like to point out these days may be very difficult for not only newly bereaved parents but also for those much further along in the grief process.

For these particularly meaningful days, along with other relevant days, such as birthdays or the anniversary date of our child's death, it important to

plan ahead as to how you are going to cope with stress or anxiety of these days. One bit of advice that we have learned at our monthly meetings is that it's most important to have a *plan* for that day. Whether you do something special that day, or even elect to do nothing at all, by planning ahead, you will help alleviate the anxiety level you may feel as that day approaches.

Our wish is that on this coming Mother's day, you are able to do what you need to lessen your pain, and find some happiness from the good memories of your child.

Rick Tomaszewski  
Anne Arundel Co. MD Chapter BPUSA

### GOALS OF BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA

- to educate families about the grief process and all its complexities as it applies to the death of a child at any age and from any cause.
- to aid and support those who are suffering such a loss, regardless of race, creed or financial situation.
- to provide a library at each meeting place where members may borrow books with up-to-date information about the grief process.
- to supply the telephone numbers of other bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents who are able to offer support to other more newly bereaved families.
- to inform and educate members of the helping professions who interact with bereaved parents as to the nature and duration of parent/sibling/grandparent bereavement.
- to provide monthly meetings with sharing groups and occasional informative programs.

The printing of this newsletter has been donated by Ken Smith  
"in memory of my beautiful niece, **Tracy Ann Fotino**  
Her mother and I miss her, and **Tracy** is in my thoughts every day."



The mailing of this newsletter has been donated  
by Sandra Arán  
In memory of her son **Cito Arán** and daughter **Glori Arán**



**Bereaved Parents of the USA**  
**Anne Arundel County Chapter**  
**P.O. Box 6280**  
**Annapolis, Maryland 21401-0280**

This newsletter is published monthly  
Copyright 2006 All Rights Reserved

<b>Editor</b>	<b>Chapter Leader</b>
Rick Tomaszewski	Dave Alexander
410-519-8448	410-544-3634
akuahi@aol.com	dralex@sdalex.com

**Mailing and Thank you notes:** Barbara Bessling  
**Treasurer:** Fran Palmer - **Hospitality:** Carol Tomaszewski  
**Mailing List:** Dave Alexander - **Programs:** VACANT  
**\*note - as you can see we have several vacancies... we hope someone will consider helping!**

It is our sincere hope that you will find comfort somewhere in this newsletter. It is our intention to offer you hope in knowing that you are not alone. We encourage you to write about your feelings and to share your feelings with others who understand.

Material to be printed "in memory of" must be sent to the editor 6-8 weeks in advance of the newsletter in which you wish the item to be printed.

**June submissions are due by May 16.**

#### **Library:**

Our lending library is available to help you understand and deal with your grief. Most of our materials have been donated in memory of a child. When you have finished with them, please return them at our monthly meeting or mail them to the  post office box listed above. Thank you.

#### **Refreshments at our monthly meetings:**

A sign-up sheet is on the refreshment table at the meeting. Drinks, ice, and paper products are provided by the chapter. For information, contact Carol Tomaszewski at 410 519-8448.



#### **MEETING INFORMATION**

**Next meeting: May 4, 2006**

Doors open at 7:15 p.m.

Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

(Meetings usually held on first Thursday of month)

Calvary United Methodist Church

301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis

Please park in the lot behind the church

#### **TELEPHONE FRIENDS:**



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

**Marie Dyke**, single parent, daughter, 17, only child, car accident.

**Janet Tyler**, daughter, 5 and brother, 33, car accident. 410-969-7597

**Tia Stinnett**, miscarriages and infant death. 410-360-1341

**Sandy Platts**, infant death. 410-721-6457

#### **OTHER RESOURCES:**

- \* **Bereaved Parents of the USA, (BPUSA)**  
National contact number (708-748-7866)
- \* **Stephanie Roper Committee**, for victims of violent crime, Anne Arundel County chapter representative is James Donnelly (410-544-1473).
- \* **Survivors of Suicide Group (SOS)**  
meets the 1st Tuesday of each month from 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., at Severna Park United Methodist Church, 731 Benfield Road,

#### **Conference of Hope and Healing**

Saturday, May 20, 2006

For information: Pat Schultz, Chair

410-255-7760

jim.n.pat4@juno.com

Debi Wilson-Smith, Co-Chair

410-757-8280

dwsmith@pgcps.org

## CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

### HELP!! ZIP CODE CHANGES

If you are one of the ones in the Annapolis and Arnold areas whose zip code is changing, please call Dave Alexander at 410-544-3634 or send him an email at [dralex@sdalex.com](mailto:dralex@sdalex.com) with your new zip code so we can update our mailing list.

### PLEASE! PLEASE! PLEASE HELP US SAVE ON PRINTING AND POSTAGE

If you *move*, please let us know your new address. If you *don't want* to receive our newsletter any more, please let us know. If you would rather read the newsletter on our website, please let us know, and send us your email address, and we will send you a reminder each month when the newsletter is put on the website. (The newsletter is loaded on the website as soon as it has been produced — about 10 days before it is delivered in the mail.)

You can contact us by mail at our address at PO Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401-0280 or by sending us an email at [ChapterLeader@sdalex.org](mailto:ChapterLeader@sdalex.org).

### MEETING TOPICS—ANNAPOLIS

#### May 4: Memorializing Our Children: Creating Garden Memorial Stones

Many bereaved parents seek ways to memorialize their deceased children and to keep their memories fresh in the minds of family, friends, and the community. Fran Palmer will discuss the making of garden memorial stones and, during the sharing group period of the evening, will lead a workshop for those interested in making the stones.

#### June 1: Remembering Our Children Through Writing

For many members writing has proven to be helpful in dealing with the death of the children. This writing takes many forms from journaling to writing letters to writing articles for the newsletter. As part of the program, members will be given an opportunity to write a “time-letter” to their child, which will be held and then mailed to the member in June 2007.

Many of you who receive our **newsletter** were referred by a friend, physician, or clergy. You may have never attended a meeting. In this case, it is likely that your child's name does not appear in our **monthly list of “Our Children Remembered”**. This is because we require your permission to do so. If you would like your child's name added, please send a note to our post office box. List your child's name, your name(s), and the dates of your child's birth and death. Please allow 6 weeks to be sure it arrives in time for the appropriate month.

### EASTERN SHORE BEREAVED PARENTS GROUP CEASES MONTHLY MEETINGS

We regret to announce that the Queen Anne's County Bereaved Parents Group, which has been meeting in Queenstown, will no longer hold monthly meetings. Attendance has been sporadic and does not justify the effort it takes to organize and hold the meetings each month. Perhaps in the future there will be renewed interest and we can resume the meetings.

For more information, contact Joan Gray at 410-827-7471 or Dave Alexander at 410-544-3634 or send an email message to [QueenstownGroup@sdalex.org](mailto:QueenstownGroup@sdalex.org)



*Life's  
not ended,  
just changed*

I can complain because  
rose bushes have thorns  
or rejoice because  
thorn bushes have roses



### **Donations:**

Donations may be made to offset the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, the chapter website, the annual Remembrance Service, the annual Conference of Hope and Healing, and books and other materials for the Chapter Library. *We gratefully acknowledge the following donations made in the last month:*

#### ***Thank You***

Eryn Belt in memory of her sister **Courtney Belt** and her cousin **Traci Heincelman**  
Dorothy and Norm Heincelman in memory of their granddaughters **Cortney Belt** and **Traci Heincelman**  
Charlotte and Don Scott in memory of their daughter **Michelle Inez Scott**  
Daynie Showacre in memory of her daughter **Rachel Beth Showacre**  
Maren Sheidy in memory of her son **Travis Brandon Beyerle**  
Ken Smith in memory of his niece **Tracy Ann Fotino**

### ***Understanding Your Grief – A Discussion with Dr. Alan Wolfelt***

On the evening of May 9<sup>th</sup>, Alan Wolfelt, Ph.D., who is the Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, CO, and an internationally noted author, educator and counselor, will hold a discussion for bereaved parents, "Understanding Your Grief." Based on three decades working with the bereaved and on his popular book *Understanding Your Grief- Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart*, Dr. Wolfelt will outline what he has learned to be the physical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual trail markers for mourners to look for as they journey through grief.

"Grief is not a disease," says Dr. Wolfelt. "Instead, it is the normal healthy process of coping with the death of someone loved. If mourners see themselves as active participants in their healing, they will experience a renewed sense of meaning and purpose in life."

Copies of Dr. Wolfelt's book will be available at Middleton Hall Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, but it is suggested that you read it before the discussion, so you will be more prepared to participate. The Anne Arundel County Library has copies of *Understanding Your Grief*, or it can be ordered from Amazon.com.

This evening with Dr. Wolfelt, will be held Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 - 9:00 pm, at Middleton Hall in Waldorf, MD and promises to be a night of hope and healing. For more information on Dr. Wolfelt's talk, which is being provided free of charge by the Compassionate Friends of Southern Maryland, call Russ Horton at 301-580-1756 or email Cathy Bowie at [cbbowie@comcast.net](mailto:cbbowie@comcast.net). This free event is expected to fill up quickly so please RSVP to ensure seating.

In addition, on Wednesday May 10<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Wolfelt will be presenting a full day seminar on "Death, Grief and Mourning- Wisdom Teaching for Caregivers". This conference is directed toward professionals and caregivers. Fee is \$100 for the day and includes lunch. Please contact (301) 580-1756 to register.

### ***Preparing for the May Meeting***

The May meeting topic deals with creating memorial garden stones as a way to memorialize our children. Fran Palmer will discuss the making of such stones and, during the sharing group period of the evening, will lead a workshop for those interested in making the stones. If you plan to participate in the workshop, you might want to begin to gather some small items to bring to the May meeting to personalize your stone. These items should be mementos which remind you of your child. E.g., Fran's stone has a small plastic baseball from one of Scott's birthday cakes. It has a small rubber turtle, that looks like his pet. It has small shells he had in his room from their many trips to the beach, which she used to make the shape of a butterfly. Be sure the objects are waterproof if you are going to use the stone outside. Fran will bring some things with her (e.g., cement, round and square pans, little objects).



# SIBLING PAGE



## *From A Sister To Her Brother*

It seems like yesterday when I saw your face  
But I know it's true that here on earth there's a vacant place.

My heart is sore and each day hurts more and more.

Gary, I hope you feel us with you every day  
Because we feel you with us in every way.

My children will grow up learning about you, their uncle  
From your glory times and time of trouble  
How you were caring, hard working, loving & daring.

We can not see you or touch you we know  
Please know that in our hearts our love for you will  
continue to grow.

Many may think I now have three brothers not four  
But it will always be four, one just knocked on heaven's door.

My family is broken and part of my soul is missing  
You were more to us than a Son, Brother & Uncle –  
You were a blessing.

Just know one thing Gary –  
Day by day we're on our way...

Written by Melissa Barnhart  
Anne Arundel County Chapter  
In Loving Memory of Gary Lee Downey, Jr.  
October 30, 1980 – December 24, 2005



Tis said memories  
are golden and maybe  
that is true.  
But we never wanted  
memories, we only  
wanted you.

unknown

Life is not supposed to be easy  
but it is not devastating either.  
There are so many wonderful  
things that happen and I have to  
have the courage to realize it.  
Life is not just a long line of  
problems. It is also a long line of  
answers. I have to trust myself  
and my future and everything  
will work out. It always does.  
The answer to life's problems  
can only be found through hard  
work and belief in yourself. My  
belief in myself comes from a  
big brother who always had  
faith in me.

Patricia Kelley  
TCF, Richmond, VA  
In loving memory of my brother  
Sean, 8/24/76–8/28/93

## OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

Jordan Edward Ambrozewicz  
Son of Steven and Beverly Ambrozewicz  
May 27, 1993 - May 10, 1995

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

George Alfred Bold IV  
Son of Brenda and George Bold  
May 23, 1969 - May 17, 2005

Christopher Lewis Borngesser  
Son of Diane Borngesser  
December 21, 1961 - May 28, 2001

Paul Shane Brough  
Son of Theresa and Steve Bleemke  
Friend of Helen Connors  
May 18, 1982 - April 4, 2003

Darius JoVan Brown  
Son of Victoria and Robert Brown  
February 1, 1992 - May 30, 2004

Brenda Leeann Costello  
Daughter of Tana and David Duley  
August 29, 1983 - May 28, 2002

Kathleen "Tink" Yvette Denevan  
Daughter of Gregory J. Denevan  
August 10, 1970 - May 13, 1971

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

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

Joseph Fredrick Errichiello Jr.  
Son of Susan and Joe Errichiello  
April 6, 1979 - May 29, 2004

R. Daniel Ferrer  
Son of Anna Ferrer Severn  
May 25, 1972 - August 26, 1986

Tracy Ann Fotino  
Daughter of Martha Murphy  
Niece of Kenneth Smith  
May 14, 1971 - August 25, 2000

Andrew Thomas "Drew" Gawthrop  
Son of Brenda Gawthrop

May 25, 1990 - August 12, 2002

John Joseph Goetz Sr.  
Son of John and Mary Goetz  
May 6, 1958 - July 21, 1996

Matthew Gordon Haines  
Son of Gordon and Peggy Haines  
May 3, 1977 - July 4, 1996

Devin Arthur Hall  
Son of Cyndia Hall  
November 10, 1985 - May 17, 1990

Ronald Michael Hall III  
Son of Mike and Julie Hall  
May 17, 1980 - September 20, 2003

Sidney Mark Hardesty Jr.  
Son of Dawn Watkinson  
March 10, 1979 - May 17, 2003

Todd Stafford Henschen  
Son of Linda Stafford  
May 16, 1970 - August 31, 1988

Thomas "Tommy" Michael Howard  
Son of Thomas and Donna Howard  
May 27, 1984 - February 10, 2000

Steven Michael Hrin  
Son of Steven and Dolores Hrin  
November 19, 1969 - May 4, 1999

Brian Keith Jones  
Son of LeRoy and Jeanne Jones  
May 22, 1974 - May 22, 1974

Brice Charles Kelley  
Son of Hannah and Chris Kelley  
September 24, 2002 - May 31, 2004

Joseph M. Liberto  
Son of Colleen Haislip  
May 20, 1956 - September 5, 2004

Stephen Aaron Luck  
Son of Paul and Charlette Koehler  
August 2, 1966 - May 27, 1985

John F. Marinelli  
Son of William and Annette Marinelli  
May 30, 1964 - December 19, 1986

Kyle Patrick McDonough  
Son of Judy McDonough  
February 25, 1982 - May 15, 2005



## OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

Joseph A. Miller  
Son of Mary J. Miller  
Brother of Marlene Miller  
December 13, 1956 - May 12, 1977

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

Daniel "Dan" Michael Milord  
Son of Mike Milord  
July 15, 1982 - May 5, 2004

Emily Marie Parker  
Daughter of Valerie Nowak and Brian Parker  
May 9, 2002 - July 18, 2002

Sydney Elaine Patronik  
Daughter of Holly and Michael Patronik  
March 26, 2002 - May 11, 2002

Wendy Dawn Saunders  
Daughter of Ronald and Aljuana Saunders  
May 20, 1972 - May 14, 1998

Stanley "Jerry" Schisler  
Son of Stan and Pam Schisler  
May 31, 1980 - May 9, 2001

Donald "Donny" Lee Seyfferth Jr.  
Son of Jody Seyfferth  
December 16, 1977 - May 8, 2000

Ryan Michael Sheahy  
Son of Deborah Sheahy  
May 4, 1977 - March 16, 2001

Rachel Beth Showacre  
Daughter of Daynie Showacre  
May 7, 1980 - October 30, 2002

Donna Jean Shrodes  
Daughter of Lydia Shrodes  
February 5, 1974 - May 23, 2002

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

Russell "Rusty" J. Tarr  
Son of Lorraine A. Tarr  
December 22, 1963 - May 12, 1994

John Leroy Waters Jr.  
Son of Stella and Roy Waters  
September 19, 1970 - May 23, 2000

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

*Note: If your child's name appears in the printed version of our newsletter but does not appear in this online version, it is because we have not received explicit permission from you to list it online. If you would like your child's name to also appear in future online editions of the newsletter, please send an email to [dralex@sdalex.com](mailto:dralex@sdalex.com)*



## *A Mother's Heart*

I'm stuck, yes I feel completely stuck, as any mother would be. I am stuck between this life and the next. I was supposed to precede you, not you, me. There is so much I wish for. I wish to hear your voice again, stroke your cheek, gaze at your beautiful face, enjoy your dynamic personality, laugh hard like you used to make me do. I wish for just 5 more minutes with you, to tell you how much I loved you, how better my life was for having you in it. To tell you how cherished you are by me. To tell you how much I learned about life from knowing you. If you had to go, I so much wished I could have held you in my arms, one final time, that I could have said goodbye to you until I met you on the other side. I am your mother. When you left this life, you took a huge piece of me with you.

That's why I'm stuck. Everyone speaks words to me like closure, move on, you must go on with your life. Only someone who has not lost a significant other, can naively speak such ridiculous terms.

It will be five years this March 2006, and I feel as if I live in a constant cloud. I feel numb for the most part; unable it seems, to easily partake in life's constant activities. Every once in awhile, I feel myself come back and experience this life. For example, when I attended the Annual Service of Remembrance located in Anne Arundel County, a service which is held every year at Christmas for families who have lost a beloved child. At the service I felt myself come back. I am quite shocked when this occurs, because I am not consciously aware that I am living half here, and half there, where you are.

I wanted and hoped so very much for you my first-born son. Predominantly a Future, a full life, possibly a wife, children, a home and a rewarding career. Your deepest desires to have been accomplished. I hoped you would be happy, joyful, and content. That you would possess self confidence and to like who you were, to never be hurt or feel pain, (yes I am aware this is a ridiculous statement) but at the same time it is a mother's heart. She cherishes her children, she becomes like a savage mother lion when it comes to her cubs. She wants only the best, the very, very best, and no harm, absolutely no harm. However, you experienced much harm, did you not my dear beloved?

If I could have but one more moment with you my son, I would ever so softly permit the sound of your name, to escape my lips, your chosen with much passion name, the name of Ryan. I would gaze at your face and your dazzling hazel green eyes, now wishing that I had never once taken my eyes away from you. I wish for just one more earthly moment my son to lay my ear across your chest and listen to your heartbeat and to love you again, as only a mother can.

I wish for you to know you were and are and will forever remain my cherished gift. My son I will forever love you.



Happy Birthday to you dear Ryan!!!

— Written by Deborah Sheahy December 5, 2005  
Anne Arundel County Chapter  
To her son Ryan Michael Sheahy  
May 4, 1997 – March 16, 2001

## Conversation With God

When I asked, "Why did You make her have abnormalities?"  
He answered, "Not abnormalities, uniqueness."

When I said, "Why are you doing this to us?"  
He answered, "Not doing, but allowing."

When I screamed, "I can't live if You take her."  
He answered, "I AM Who sustains you."

When I prayed, "Let this cup pass from my lips."  
He said, "All works for My Will to be done."

"When I cried, "She needs her mother."  
He whispered, "Only I love her more than you."

When I held her still body and sobbed, "It's over."  
He said, "It's only begun."

When I shook my fist at Heaven and yelled,  
"I am angry at You."  
He said, "I know."

When I said, "You don't understand this pain,  
this loss."  
He reminded me, "I too, lost My Child,  
My Only Child."

When I asked, "How? How can I help anyone  
when I'm in this pit?"  
He said, "Slowly, you will heal,  
And comfort others."

Lisa Davenport,  
In *Bereaved Magazine*



## It Doesn't Get Easier?

Each month, for the last five years. I've driven from Palmyra to Leesburg to attend the Compassionate Friends' meeting. It's a 2 1/2 hour drive one way which allows for plenty of thinking time.

I heard it said this past meeting, and I often agree, "It doesn't get any easier." Probably a scary thought for those newly bereaved. March 11 marks six years for us. While the roller coaster of emotions we experienced the first day throughout the first year has all but disappeared, it doesn't mean they can't surface any time, any place.

One of the first things we *learn* is that anything can trigger an emotion, a feeling or a memory—and there is not much we can do about it. I decided early on to "just go with it." It might last an hour or a day, but that's ok—I have the rest of my life!

I'm reading the book, *Beyond Tears*, by a host of bereaved Moms in collaboration with Ellen Mitchell. They say, "There is no clear road map for passing through parental bereavement. However, there is a path that takes us from relentless grief to what we now call 'shadow grief.' 'Shadow grief' is always with us, but it is bearable."

The words "time heals" may be true to some extent, but there is no healing the *missing* of your child, which to me is "why it doesn't get any easier."

Anne Shattuck, TCF Leesburg,  
In loving memory of her son,  
David Hobson . 7/31/1974—3/11/2000

# Bereaved Parents of the USA

## Anne Arundel County Chapter

P.O. Box 6280

Annapolis, MD 21401-0280

[www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org)

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

DATED MATERIAL



## **Bereaved Parents of the USA CREDO**

We are the parents whose children have died. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life. We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a haven where all bereaved families can meet and share our long and arduous grief journeys. We attend monthly gatherings whenever we can and for as long as we believe necessary. We share our fears, confusion, anger, guilt, frustrations, emptiness and feelings of hopelessness so that hope can be found anew. As we accept, support, comfort, and encourage each other, we demonstrate to each other that survival is possible. Together we celebrate the lives of our children, share the joys and triumphs as well as the love that will never fade. Together we learn how little it matters where we live, what our color or our affluence is or what faith we uphold as we confront the tragedies of our children's deaths. Together, strengthened by the bonds we forge at our gatherings, we offer what we have learned to each other and to every more recently bereaved family. We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA.

**We welcome you.**