



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

November 2006

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

SURVIVING SPECIAL DAYS

By Rabbi Earl Grollman

For you, the bereaved, there are significant events that are especially difficult: birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chanukah, New Year's Eve, Passover, Easter, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, weddings and confirmations. You remember when they were such joyful, sharing spiritual times. Now they are days of wrenching memories, lost hopes and dreams. How to survive when you experience such anguish and feel so empty, depressed, abandoned, angry at life and even at God?

It is not a choice of pain or no pain, but how you manage the pain on this special day.

Planning ahead may lessen some of the despair. You need to feel less like a victim and more like a survivor. You may decide to do things differently; like changing old routines or starting new customs. Just don't escape into loneliness. Choose the right people to be with, those friends or relatives who allow you to share your innermost feelings. You should be allowed to mention your loved one's name, tell favorite stories, cry or laugh at past events.

Remember your loved one in a way that is meaningful to you. Light a memorial candle, peruse a photo album, watch home videos, write a letter or poem to your beloved, visit someone else who may be alone and suffering.

Especially you may need interludes of emotional and spiritual respite – a quiet walk, meditation, prayer. Perhaps, more than any other of lifecycle events, the death of a loved one raises the most profound issues about good and evil, reward and punishment and a concept of an afterlife.

You may find consolation and hope in meaningful rituals and the Holy Scriptures. Theology might aid in releasing those aching feelings of helplessness and guilt.

Painful losses often shake up spiritual beliefs. You may be surprised to find yourself furious at God for allowing this tragedy to occur. But great religious leaders in the Bible have asked the same question: "My God, why have you forsaken me?" The questioning of faith is a normal expression of loss and consistent with later spiritual growth.

As time goes along, you may eventually draw strength from your religious heritage. Faith may not immediately take away your heartache, but faith may help you ultimately to accept the unacceptable.

Take consolation in knowing that other people have survived what you now feel. They often remark that the anticipation was frequently worse than the special day itself.

With the holidays coming, this piece seems especially appropriate. Rick Tomaszewski

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 November issue of the newsletter has been donated
By Veronica and Bob Blake in memory of their son

Alex Blake



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

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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.

December submissions are due by November 13.

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: November 2, 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, Severna Park (410-987-2129).



CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

HELP WANTED/ OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Opportunities are available for you to help others while helping yourself. Perhaps you can now reach beyond your initial grief and help yourself heal by doing something to help our Chapter continue to reach out to others. Don't think you have to make a major commitment. There are many small services you can provide that will help ease the burden on others. Please consider the following needs, and call to chat with one of us to discuss these and other possibilities that may "fit" you.

Our Chapter needs:

Core Group Members – attend bi-monthly meetings where Chapter business and plans are discussed.

Recording Secretary – take minutes of Core Group meetings and distribute to Core Group members.

Webmaster – maintain & update our website with provided information.

Special Event Helpers – help with the December Service of Remembrance, or May Hope & Healing Conference.

Call POCs: Carol Tomaszewski 410 519-8448
Sandi Burash 410 551-5774
Dave Alexander 410 544-3634

MEETING TOPICS NOTE:

Each of our monthly meetings follow the same basic format. We first have a general session attended by everyone. During this first one-half hour we usually have a speaker or panel addressing a topic of interest and value to families mourning the death of a child. Following the general session, we break up into sharing groups. We always have the sharing groups, and the topics they discuss -- particularly for the newly bereaved groups -- do not necessarily focus on the program topic unless it is relevant to the members in the sharing group. We try to cover a range of topics in the programs we schedule, so that over the year we will have covered many topics which are of value to a broad range of members.

MEETING TOPICS

November 2: Where Was God When My Child Died?!!

For some grieving parents, their faith helps them through the grief process. Others experience great anger with their god or religion. Rabbi Steve Weisman will explore these issues with us.

December 7: Introducing Our Children

The focus of this evening will be on our deceased children, and giving us a better sense of who these children were. There will not be a "Presenter"; the sharing groups are the focus. For the non-newly bereaved sharing group, each person brings a picture or some memento of his/her lost child; each person holds the picture or memento facing the rest of the group and "introduces" his/her child, describing what the child was like, etc.

We also invite you to bring a gift in memory of your child to be distributed to a needy child

DO YOU USE AMAZON.COM?

If you use Amazon.com, perhaps you could use the Chapter's website to make the connection and purchase. We have a link to Amazon.com on the home page of our website. Amazon.com gives our chapter a commission of 5% of any purchases which are made *through* that link. Using the link does not increase the cost to the purchaser. Alert your friends, relatives, and colleagues to the link and suggest they use it as well.

You can access the site at:

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

click on the butterflies on the welcome page to enter our site, and then scroll down the first page to the bottom. On the bottom left corner is the Amazon.com graphic. Clicking on the graphic takes you to Amazon.com's site. When it does so, it links information relevant to our chapter to the visit to the site. If a purchase is made, it will be credited to our site. Purchases made without going through that link do not get credited.

Since our chapter is a not-for-profit organization and has no dues or fees, we are dependent on donations and fund raisers. These commissions help fund some of our community outreach activities.

Donations: THANK YOU!

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:

Memory Walk: note: Others will be included in December Issue

Michael and Elizabeth Anderson in memory of Stephen Kilian
Nikkole Blaylock in memory of Stephen Kilian
Susan Bowles in memory of Stephen Kilian
Ann and Noel Castiglia in memory of their daughter Tria Castiglia
Sandra Friers in memory of Stephen Kilian
Amy Hyman in memory of Stephen Kilian
Jodie Martenis in memory of Stephen Kilian
Donna Mengele in memory of her son Ray Day
Fatima Moghis in memory of Stephen Kilian
Nancy Said in memory of Stephen Kilian
Joyce and Tom Schall in memory of their son Tommy Schall
Erik and Carolyn Schwenke in memory of Stephen Kilian
Jennifer Sirak in memory of Stephen Kilian

General:

Carol Fritz in memory of her daughter Katie Fritz
Norm Heincelman in memory of his wife Dorothy Heincelman and their granddaughters
Cortney Belt and Traci Heincelman
Ken Smith in memory of his niece Tracy Ann Fotino
Janet and Dan Tyler in memory of their daughter Brittany Nicole Tyler

The Colors of Autumn



Scarlet leaves
Golden mums
Orange pumpkins



A blue Mom and Dad

Watching a yellow school bus pulling away
Without that special little one.



Barbara April, Louisville KY

Grief is like weeding a flower garden
in the summer, you have to do it over
and over again until the sea-
son changes.



Fay Harden



SIBLING PAGE



Grieving the Death of a Brother or Sister

Somehow we take for granted that our brothers and sisters will always be there as companions and friends. When a sibling dies, it feels wrong, out of sync, confusing. This may help you to begin to explore and resolve some of the unique aspects of your grief.

- Honor your own grief. Grief is different for each person, depending on past experiences and loss coping skills, age and sex, mental and physical health, the circumstances of the death, and perhaps most significantly, the nature of the relationship with the deceased person. Only you truly know how deeply you feel the loss of this person who shared your history and knew you so well.
- Respect your feelings. You might have to resume your normal daily routine soon after the funeral. But inside you may be feeling anything but normal, with many of the mixed emotions that grief can bring. Talk about such feelings to a grief support group or write a letter to the deceased person or to God so that you can express your feelings safely.
- Find healthy ways to keep your sibling's memory alive. One of the most important steps in the healing process is to find ways to memorialize the person who has died. Sometimes passing on special mementos, such as a piece of jewelry or other personal belongings, can help people feel connected to the deceased person.
- Acknowledge your own mortality. Coping with the death of a beloved sibling startles us with a reminder of our own mortality and often stirs up unfinished spiritual business. You may feel a need to assess what your life has been about, evaluate your life goals, and prioritize your commitments and relationships in a new way.

Saying goodbye to a loved one is never easy. But these thoughts from playwright Robert Andersen may help: "Death ends a life, not a relationship. Let go of the pain and allow the memories to remain."

Excerpted from CARE NOTES by Kathlyn Miller

SIBLING GRIEF: INSIDE

My son inadvertently gave me a rare glimpse recently into the depth of sibling grief. Both of my sons, now in their 20s; rarely talk about how the death of their little sister two years ago really impacted them --- despite our efforts to draw them out on the subject.

This is a common reaction in sibling grief. Siblings often keep their grief inside, not wanting to add any more grief to their parents. However, sibling grief can often surface at odd and unusual times, and even many years after the loss.

One of my sons dropped by for a visit, and I noticed the lining of his coat was falling out. Since he had the coat for quite a while, I suggested that it was time for a new one. I willingly agreed to buy it for him, and he reluctantly agreed to go shopping with me.

With every coat that he tried on, he said it just didn't feel right. It didn't feel like his old coat. Nevertheless, he finally settled on a handsome black wool coat. As he put his old coat back on,

I noticed the lining was actually in shreds. I commented that he should have gotten rid of the coat a long time ago, or at least replace the lining.

Then he made a startling comment. He said, "You see, Mom, I actually am very attached to my old coat because it has been symbolic of my life....It looks great on the outside, but it is all torn up and a mess on the inside."

We continued to talk about going through daily life creating "normal" appearances to the outside world, while suffering inside the effects of sudden and devastating grief. Parents who have lost a child believe you can't really understand it unless you have been through it. So, too, do siblings believe that unless you have experienced that kind of loss, you can't fully understand it either.

But one clear comment can often give great insight into just how profoundly it has affected them. It is good to talk about it, share feelings, and try to understand the enormity of it all.

Carol Marino, BPUSA, Anne Arundel County, MD

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

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

Joseph Benjamin Antonelli
Son of Carole Antonelli
November 6, 1961 - September 9, 2003

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

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

Linda Lou Boyce
Daughter of Cori Boyce
Sister of Lisa Shell
March 29, 1967 - November 30, 2004

Eric Reynolds Burns
Son of Beth Burns
October 20, 2000 - November 7, 2002

Maranda Machele Callender
Daughter of Dean and Christina Callender
Daughter of Dawn and Ralph Johnson
Granddaughter of Olive Hubbard
November 11, 1988 - June 2, 2006

Kevin Machado Da Silva
Son of Susan Da Silva
November 18, 1995 - November 20, 2003

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

Christopher Joseph Galdi
Son of Kathy Galdi
November 14, 1985 - February 20, 2003

Jennifer Marie Garvey
Daughter of Mark and Cheryl Sylce
November 4, 1983 - October 18, 1999

Lauryn Beth Grapski
Daughter of Kathleen Grapski
September 17, 1980 - November 17, 2000

Sarah McSweeney Gray
Daughter of Kathy and Bob Gray
November 12, 1983 - September 21, 2003

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

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

James Michael Hall
Son of Pat and George Hall
November 4, 1965 - March 28, 1992

Lee Robert Hayden
Son of Terri Hayden-Molton
Grandson of Mary M. Senier
November 12, 1979 - February 19, 1990

Doray Delente Jones
Son of Margie Johnson
November 13, 1985 - August 20, 2004

Chloe Victoria Kimbrell
Daughter of Stephanie and Ben Kimbrell
August 18, 2004 - November 7, 2004

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

Paul Brian Michael
Son of Deborah Michael
November 23, 1971 - July 19, 1991

Julia Milesky
Daughter of Stanley Milesky
October 26, 1986 - November 22, 2003

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

David Joseph Novak
Son of Arleen and Rudy Novak
December 29, 1960 - November 14, 1988

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

Arthur Gordon Phillips
Son of Cheryl Alderdice
August 24, 1983 - November 26, 1999



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

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

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

Christopher J. Rogers
Son of Louise G. Rogers
February 21, 1990 - November 4, 2003

Karen Ann Scully
Daughter of Ann Boteler
June 30, 1970 - November 14, 2004

Phillip David Sharrow
Son of Sandra Sharrow
December 8, 1976 - November 17, 1995

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

Luther "Scamp" Stowe II
Son of Agnes and Luther Stowe
August 27, 1963 - November 12, 2001

Shonto Taylor
Grandson of Stephen and Carolyn Tew
September 7, 1979 - November 7, 1994

Michelle Marie Tewey
Daughter of Michael and Marie Tewey
August 26, 1980 - November 15, 1998

Catie Lynne Thrift
Daughter of Sheila and John Thrift
July 24, 1995 - November 27, 2004

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

Marshall Maurice Tullier
Son of Martin and Kathryn Tullier
October 29, 1986 - November 10, 1986

Wayne Wilson Jr.
Son of Needra Gorman
November 22, 1968 - June 24, 2003

Ron Zselvay Jr.
Son of Ron and Jeanie Zselvay
August 24, 1979 - November 16, 1999

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.

The Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA
Invites you to the Annual Service of Remembrance
3:00 PM Sunday, December 3, 2006
St. Martins-in-the-Field Episcopal Church
375 Benfield Road
Severna Park, Maryland



For additional information, please visit www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

The Bereaved - The Largest Company In The World

We bereaved are not alone. We belong to the largest company in the world - the company of those who have known suffering. When it seems that our sorrow is too great to be borne, let us think of the great family of the heavy-hearted into which our grief has given us entrance and, inevitably, we will feel about us their arms, their sympathy, their understanding.

Believe, when you are most unhappy, that there is something for you in the world.
So long as you can sweeten another's pain, life is not in vain...

Robbed of joy, of courage, of the very desire to live, the newly bereaved frequently avoids companionship, feeling himself so limp with misery and so empty of vitality that he is ill-suited for human contacts. And yet no one is so bereaved, so miserable, that he cannot find someone else to succor, someone who needs friendship, understanding more than he. The unselfish effort to bring cheer to others will be the beginning of a happier life for ourselves.



Helen Keller

HOW DO I KNOW WHEN I'M GETTING BETTER?

1. I don't have to turn off the radio when my child's song comes on.
2. Thoughts that used to bring tears now bring smiles.
3. I realize that painful comments others make are well meaning but made in ignorance.
4. I can go back to the place where my child died without feeling overwhelmed.
5. I am not afraid of losing the memories of my child. I know my child will always be with me.
6. I no longer feel that I have to go to the cemetery every day or every week.
7. I don't find myself waiting for my child to come home.



By Bob Baugher, Ph.D.

We are not permitted to choose the frame of our destiny, but what we put into it is ours.

Dag Hammarskjold

"I have a wonderful relationship with my mother. I bless her and thank her for nurturing me as I grew from childhood to adulthood"... Fran Cease from Severna Park, MD found this on a paper in her son Richard's wallet after he had passed away.

In The Silence

In the silence Mom you hear me,
In the silence I am here.
In the silence you can feel me,
In the silence it is clear...
That my spirit hasn't left you,
I am just a thought away,
You can see me in the shadows,
Anytime you look my way.
Look for me in the sunshine,
And in the stars at night,
In the wind, trees, and flowers,
Everything that is in sight.
Talk to me, say my name,
Know that I'm still here.
In my death I have a new life,
And one day it will be clear.
So talk to me and look for me
In everything you do.
For I haven't gone so far away,
I'm really right next to you.

Charlene Paradise

My Life

This is my life. This is not the life I envisioned nor the life I wanted, but none the less, it is my life and I am living it. Does living it mean I love you any less or have somehow forgotten? No, living it means I have made the choice to come out of the darkness. I knew I couldn't stay in the darkness forever and I knew you would not want me there. So whenever I find myself in the light, living my life, I am reminded of you and all that you would want for me.

Jane Schindler
Anne Arundel County Chapter/BPUSA
In Memory of Emily Schindler
July 27, 1985 – January 27, 2004

(The following was found saved on Emily Schindler's computer under her "sad away messages")

There is a place in me where your fingerprint still rests.... It is the place where a part of you will forever be a part of me.

– Gretchen Kemp



Walking in the Shadow of my Child

Wherever I go, I walk with his shadow on my being. I am clothed in coloration not visible to the naked eye. It casts an unexpected influence on how I carry myself as I journey through life.

It clouds my way of looking at things; forces perspectives which I didn't know were a part of my psyche. The shade of grayness through which I now view things absorbs some of the radiance which I experience.

Yet the shadow comes not from the valley of death, but from my child being closer to the light.

Ed Kuzela, TCF, Atlanta GA

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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.