



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

August 2007

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

For more than three years I've had the pleasure of editing this newsletter. It was supposed to be a three month break for a wonderful person, Lisa Beall, who spent 7 years as editor and who graciously mentored me. I soon realized that it was a very rewarding opportunity that was not easy to let go of. Rewards of the job include hearing from readers that are touched by an article or poem that they've read...or reading for the first time an article that is sent to me by a caring contributor. The love, compassion, thoughtfulness, tears and joy that are part of these contributions has also touched me. Those same feelings and emotions are evident in the many articles I read from other newsletters and publications.

When I began, we were mailing nearly 300 copies of the newsletter. That number has now grown to over 420. I point that number out just to put things in perspective... there will always be, unfortunately, newly bereaved parents added to our mailing list.

I hope that the comfort and insight provided by our newsletter will encourage an occasional e-mail or note to our incoming editor (Carole Gilmour) with a poem, note, or just thoughts that you would like to share in the newsletter.

I also want to encourage those of you who have never attended our monthly meeting, or those who have not attended for a while, to please come by. Those of you who are newly bereaved may find comfort...those who have been away for some time may also find comfort, but more important, may provide support to those who need it so very much.

My thanks to everyone ...

Rick Tomaszewski
Email: akuahi@aol.com

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 and mailing of this newsletter has been donated

By Margie and John O'Malley in loving memory of their son

Michael Henry O'Malley



**Anne Arundel County Chapter
Bereaved Parents of the USA
P.O. Box 6280
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Programs: Paul Balasic and Jane Schindler

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.

September submissions are due by August 18.

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: August 2, 2007

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).
- ◆ **MADD Maryland "Family Forever"**
Weekly support group for family and friends of homicide victims and victims of drunk driving crashes
meets every Monday at 7:30 p.m.
Contact Jan Withers at 301-627-1743



CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

Sponsor Our Monthly Newsletter or Website

You can help underwrite the costs of our newsletter or our website by sponsoring a monthly issue of the newsletter or by sponsoring a month of the website. To sponsor either one, contact Dave (dralex@sdalex.com). **For the Newsletter**, in 2007 full sponsorship of an issue of the newsletter is \$200.00. Up to two people or families can sponsor an issue, and the cost will be divided equally – \$100 each. If someone has already signed up for full sponsorship of a month, and another member would like to share in that month, they will be allowed to do so. When there are more than two members or families wishing to sponsor an issue, preference will be given to members who did not sponsor an issue the previous year, otherwise it will be on a “first-come-first-serve” basis. **For the Website**, sponsorship is \$25.00 each month.

DO YOU USE AMAZON.COM?

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

Anne Arundel Co. Chapter Answer Line:

443-57-BPUSA or 443-572-7872

Our chapter has a telephone message line to provide Information about Chapter activities such as meeting time and locations, our website, monthly meeting topics, upcoming special activities and meeting cancellation announcements. You can also leave a message and someone from the Chapter will get back to you to discuss any issues or concerns you may have. Hopefully you will find this an easy way to keep in touch with “What’s Happening” with the Chapter.

Upcoming Meeting Topics

August 2: No Program Scheduled

September 6: Making It Through Holidays and Special Days

The holidays, particularly those in November and December, can be very difficult for bereaved parents. A panel of our members will discuss these issues and offer suggestions on preparing for and dealing with holidays and significant dates such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chanukah, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Valentines Day, the birthdate of the child, the deathdate of the child, the day the child would have first gone to school, etc.

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.

We Can Always Use the Help!

There are dozens of tasks that go into running our chapter and our special events, from helping set up the chairs...to greeting new members when they first come in the door...to facilitating sharing groups...to identifying potential articles and poems for the newsletter...to mailing out invitations to one of our events...to working on public relations.... We can always use the help. If you feel you are now in a place in your grief journey where you can help and give back to the chapter in little or large ways, please contact Dave at 410-544-3634. Most of us find that when we reach a point of giving back to those who come after us, we gain far more than we give.



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, books and other materials for the Chapter Library.

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations made in the last month:

Willard and Marian Johnson in memory of their son **Kurt W. Johnson**

Margie and John O'Malley in memory of their son **Michael Henry O'Malley**

Ken Smith in memory of his niece **Tracy Ann Fotino**

Rita Whitby in memory of her sons **Wallace Jr., David, and Danny Whitby**

Thank You

I just want everyone who contributes to the newsletter (me included) to know how much all your articles mean to me. In the past 15 years, I've lost my dear son, my mother, and my brother to suicide. And since we moved from Maryland two years ago, I no longer have my support groups to help me along. But I always look forward to getting your newsletter, since there's always something in it to help me. Thanks again!



– Margie O'Malley
Haymarket, Virginia
Anne Arundel County Chapter/BPUSA

ANNUAL CHAPTER PICNIC

You, your family and friends are invited to our Annual Chapter Picnic on Sunday, August 19, at 2:00 at the Beall home, (105 Dales Way Dr, Pasadena 21122).

The Chapter will provide crabs, chicken, hotdogs, hamburgers, rolls, sodas and ice tea. Please bring a side dish or dessert. There will be swimming, volleyball, badminton etc.

We hope many of you will be able to join us. Even if you haven't been to a meeting for a very long time, we would love to see you. We've been through the bad times together, now let's enjoy some good times.

To RSVP: Call 410-969-7597





SIBLING PAGE



A Sibling's Thoughts

When my brother died in a car accident seven years ago, I was reminded of a 17 year old boy I knew in high school who had lost his father suddenly. I hadn't known anyone who'd lost a parent before then, and I was curious about how he had acted at the funeral. It made quite an impression on me when I heard that he was calmly speaking with his friends and thanking them for their support. I told myself then, that if I were ever in that situation, I would also be strong.

As I stood in the kitchen seven years ago with, "He didn't make it" echoing in my head, I remembered the boy whose father had died. I wanted to be brave like him to be strong for those around me. I wanted to show everyone that I was resilient, and I wanted to deliver what everyone was telling me to deliver. All the calls and visits began or ended with someone saying, "Be strong for your parents. They need you to be strong for them now." There was also a popular song playing on every station with the lyrics "You got to be cool. You got to be calm. You got to stay together... you got to be strong. You got to be wiser." I made it my mantra. I couldn't sleep, so I'd silently chant to myself. You've got to be strong. You've got to be strong.

At first my parents thanked me for showing strength. They were amazed that I was able to walk around and shake hands and thank people for coming to the wake. I tried to reassure everyone while my parents struggled to respond to the sympathy of friends and family members. They didn't feel capable of much conversation. I spoke at the funeral while they listened, teary-eyed, in the front pew. I thought I was reaching deep, pulling out powers of resilience that had been dormant in me. I was proud of myself for putting others at ease.

At the same time, there were questions slowly rising to the surface of my consciousness. What about you, Scott?

When do you take care of yourself? What do you need? I felt guilty worrying about myself when according to everyone around me, my parents were depending on me. Not that I ever took the time to actually discuss it with them. I just assumed I was supposed to be the unbending oak. I cried every day, but I made sure I didn't cry in front of them. I left the room if I felt tears building. I tried to push the questions into a dark distant corner of my mind. I'd answer the phone and hear. It must be hard for them. Please tell your parents that our prayers are with them. When I hung up I couldn't help wondering why the callers didn't say, "It must be hard on the three of you. Our prayers are with you."

Then my parents began expressing their concern for me. Sensing my isolation, they began to realize that my grief was being overlooked. They realized that they were getting the support while I was being overlooked. They said they worried about me. They asked who was supporting me. Their empathy helped me accept and admit to my private concerns. I could only be strong for so long. I didn't want to be selfish, but I knew that my brother's death was an extraordinary circumstance. I missed him terribly, and each day I felt more exhausted. Nature was telling me something. I had to stop moving, stop reassuring, stop acting for the sake of others. I had to admit that I didn't know how to handle grief. I had to cry and find some time to be alone. I didn't have to learn to live with the full reality of my loss overnight, but I had to let the grief take me and begin to learn. That's when my journey, as a surviving sibling began.

by Scott Mastley TCF – Atlanta Georgia

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

Elizabeth Sinton Archard
Daughter of Barbara Hale
September 25, 1964 - August 27, 1978

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

Deneen Leigh Bagby-Lins
Daughter of Jack and Audrey Bagby
June 21, 1957 - August 6, 1987

Cortney Michele Belt
Daughter of Terre and John Belt
Granddaughter of Dorothy and Norm Heincelman
Sister of Eryn Belt
August 26, 1979 - July 9, 1996

Traci Lynn Boone
Daughter of Bonita Boone-Adamecz
September 17, 1964 - August 17, 1986

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

David Norton Cann
Son of Ruth Cann
August 21, 1956 - February 4, 2004

Mary Kathleen Carmody
Daughter of Mary Carmody
August 24, 1958 - September 17, 1998

William Frederick Carter Jr.
Son of Dot Carter
April 24, 1959 - August 16, 1992

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

Robert Michael Davidson
Son of Donna and Kevin Davidson
August 17, 1981 - February 21, 2004

Alexandra "Allie" Ann Denevan
Daughter of Gregory J. Denevan
September 18, 1985 - August 21, 2002

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

Isaac Paul Elliott
Son of Debbie and Paul Elliott
August 24, 1979 - April 27, 2003

Andrew George Eser
Son of Karl and Linda Eser
August 12, 1982 - October 10, 2000

Barbara Jean Fennessey
Daughter of Ray and Kay Fennessey
August 30, 1960 - August 4, 1989

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

Donald Richard Forbes III
Son of Janet Lynn Hall
August 3, 1975 - April 12, 2002

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

Craig Robert Galyon
Son of Susan Galyon-Pyle
August 23, 1979 - October 11, 2001

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

Andrew Thomas "Drew" Gawthrop
Son of Brenda Gawthrop
May 25, 1990 - August 12, 2002

Michael G. Hartline
Son of Kathleen Hartline
August 27, 1975 - August 16, 2001

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

Colin David Humphrey
Son of Robert and Julie Humphrey
August 23, 1998 - June 16, 2001

Allison Carol Jimenez
Daughter of Carol and Russell Fritz
June 29, 1973 - August 2, 2005

Kurt Willard Johnson
Son of Willard and Marian Johnson
December 9, 1963 - August 11, 2003

Roger Wallace Johnson
Son of Walter and Shirley Johnson
Brother of Jeanne Jones
July 10, 1947 - August 23, 1986

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

Jeremy Scott Jones
Son of LeRoy and Jeanne Jones
August 4, 1976 - August 21, 1986



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

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

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

Eric Eugene Maier
Son of Gene and Marlen Maier
August 8, 1961 - July 5, 1984

James Allen McGrady
Son of David and Shirley McGrady
January 15, 1968 - August 10, 1987

Michele Noble McKinley
Daughter of Louisa and Sheldon Noble
August 25, 1956 - January 29, 2005

Brian Richard Melcher
Son of Norma and Donald Melcher
Brother of Cheryl Lewis
August 30, 1960 - June 14, 2002

Julia Lyn Moore
Daughter of Dorothy Becker
August 22, 1973 - June 19, 2002

Ryan John Mulloy
Son of John and Suzanne Mulloy
August 19, 1975 - August 12, 1993

Eric Richard Munz
Son of Barbara and Richard Munz
September 21, 1963 - August 14, 2002

Michael Henry O'Malley
Son of Margie and John O'Malley
August 25, 1971 - December 7, 1991

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

Scott Thomas Palmer
Son of Frances Palmer
Grandson of Thomas and Ethel Cleary
August 3, 1983 - September 1, 1996

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

James Ryan Rohrbaugh
Son of Doug and Donna Rohrbaugh
August 30, 1983 - September 5, 1983

Justin Michael Romberger
Son of Karen and Steven Facemire
July 29, 1985 - August 12, 2006

Gary Lee Ryon Jr.
Son of Betty Ryon
August 24, 1989 - December 1, 2002

Donald "Donnie" L. Severe Jr.
Son of Chuck and Issy Mattis
August 23, 1956 - December 13, 1984

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

Scott Talbott
Son of Deb and Stan Talbott
July 19, 1989 - August 3, 2003

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

Brittany Nicole Tyler
Daughter of Janet and Danny Tyler
October 12, 1986 - August 23, 1992

Daniel "Danny" A.S. Whitby
Son of Rita and Albert Whitby Sr.
January 10, 1959 - August 15, 1974

Andrew Wilcox
Son of Peter and Margaret Wilcox
August 30, 1985 - August 30, 1985

Roy James "Jay" Wyrick
Son of Patricia Wyrick
August 8, 1962 - January 10, 2002

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



TO ONE IN SORROW

Let me come in where you are weeping friend, and let me take your hand.
I, who have known a sorrow such as yours, can understand.
Let me come in -- I would be very still beside you in your grief.
I would not bid you cease your weeping, friend, Tears bring relief.
Let me come in -- I would only breathe a prayer, and hold your hand,
for I have known a sorrow such as yours, and understand.

- by Grace Noll Crowell

Twelve Birthdays Without You

Twelve birthdays without you. How can that be? I so want to sing Happy Birthday to you and really mean it. It's easy to be incredibly thankful on this day each year, but it's a little harder to be truly happy.

I see your first birthday – high fever, red spots everywhere – slowly opening your new toys with sheer delight. I see birthdays filled with family and a little girl with blond curls, the cutest smile, the biggest eyes and the loudest squeal when she heard her name right in the middle of that song everyone was singing. I see the shy three-year-old peeking around the corner, curious about all the people gathered in her kitchen shouting “surprise.” I see birthdays with little girls in party dresses running everywhere, and games and prizes laid out all over the yard. I see Raggedy Ann, Strawberry Shortcake and Starbrite cakes and matching cupcakes. I see birthdays when we bravely took a van load of screaming girls up and down the roller coasters at Kings Dominion. I see birthdays with room after room of sprawling teenagers and soda cans and Dorito bags, and the bleary-eyed birthday girl wrapped in crepe paper who promised to help me clean up later.

I remember the last birthday...when the house was overtaken by the girls' soccer team – the team that went on to win the school's first state championship...for you...without you...because there would be no more birthdays for Cortney. Sweet sixteen was to be the last.

I see the first birthday after your death...a mother, a father and a sister crying softly and non-stop on a cold, dark beach – gazing at the sky and just knowing that the lone star up there was somehow linked to you – so desperately did we want to connect with you in our special place next to the ocean on such a special day. I will never forget the intensity of the pain that morning, nor the feeling of utter hopelessness.

Thankfully, life is brighter now, but as always, Cortney Michele – I'll be out looking for your star in the early morning hours of August 26th to commemorate and celebrate the day of your birth 28 years ago. It was really special that Grams came to join you last year on this very day – but it definitely stirs and confuses the day's emotions even more. I hope there are group hugs on the Other Side, and that on your birthday, you are in the middle of one with Grams and Traci. Happy Birthday, my beloved daughter.

You loved the poem below – it describes you for so many.

SOME PEOPLE *(by Flavia)*

Some people come into our lives and quickly go.

Some people move our souls to dance.

They awaken us to a new understanding with the passing whisper of their wisdom.

Some people make the sky more beautiful to gaze upon.

They stay in our lives for a while, leave footprints on our hearts, and we are never, ever the same.

You do all of those things, and your footprints will never fade.

—Terre Belt

Anne Arundel County Chapter/BPUSA

In loving memory of Cortney Michele Belt

August 26, 1979 - July 9, 1996



The mention of my child's name may
bring tears to my eyes,
but it never fails to bring music to my ears.
If you are really my friend, let me hear
the music of her name!!!
It soothes my broken heart and sings to my soul.

Author Unknown



To our Dear Paul,

Fifteen years have gone by since you left this world of ours and there is not a single day that goes by that we don't think of you. We miss you and love you so much and when we saw this poem, it so reminded us of you.

We have no regrets except that you were not given enough years on this earth, but then it doesn't matter how many years you should have had, for us there would never have been enough.

Dear Son

*As I watched the children swinging
At the playground in the park,
I couldn't help but think of you.
Their laughs had touched my heart.*



*The first time I looked into your eyes,
And you gazed up at me
I was content to hold you through the night,
You had won my heart, you see.*

*I thought about the days
of trucks and ball and bats.
I turned around, you were grown,
It happened much too fast.*



*The years of school and dating girls
are only a blur, it's true.
I can still see you in your cap and gown
Did I say I was proud of you?*



*As my mind drifted back to the present
I tried to remember regrets.
There were none, not even a few,
God had given me the best.*

---Kathryn D. Hayes
Author

We love you and miss you Paul J. Burash

Your Mom and Dad

—Sandi and Bob Burash
Anne Arundel County Chapter/BPUSA
In loving memory of Paul John Burash
January 18, 1972 - August 8, 1992

IF I KNEW

If I knew it would be the last time That I'd see you fall asleep,
I would tuck you in more tightly and pray the Lord, your soul to
keep.

If I knew it would be the last time that I see you walk out the door,
I would give you a hug and kiss and call you back for one more.

If I knew it would be the last time I'd hear your voice lifted up in
praise,
I would video tape each action and word, so I could play them back
day after day.

If I knew it would be the last time, I could spare an extra minute
to stop and say "I love you," instead of assuming you would KNOW
I do.

If I knew it would be the last time I would be there to share your
day,
Well I'm sure you'll have so many more, so I can let just this one slip
away.

For surely there's always tomorrow to make up for an oversight,
and we always get a second chance to make everything just right.

There will always be another day to say "I love you,"
And certainly there's another chance to say our "Anything I can do?"

But just in case I might be wrong, and today is all I get,
I'd like to say how much I love you and I hope we never forget.

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone, young or old alike,
And today may be the last chance you get to hold your loved one
tight.

So if you're waiting for tomorrow, why not do it today?
For if tomorrow never comes, you'll surely regret the day,

That you didn't take that extra time for a smile, a hug, or a kiss
and you were too busy to grant someone, what turned out to be their
one last wish.

So hold your loved ones close today, and whisper in their ear,
Tell them how much you love them and that you'll always hold them
dear

Take time to say "I'm sorry," "Please forgive me," "Thank you," or
"It's okay."

And if tomorrow never comes, you'll have no regrets about today.

Author Unknown



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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.