



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

October 2007

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

Halloween used to be one of my favorite holidays. I enjoyed creating for costumes for my family so much that as we went out to trick or treat I was already coming up with ideas for the following year! My photo albums show happy pictures of my sons over the years that they dressed up together - the American Indian and the court jester; the army soldier and the air force captain, the wolf-man and the Telletubby. From sorting (and tasting) the candy to putting up the decorations, I always had as much fun as my children did. But after my youngest son died, I felt very differently.

Decorations that used to seem clever and even comical at times now made me look away. The coffins, the R.I.P tombstones, skeletons, ghosts - the morbid images suddenly seemed too dark and ghastly. We had already experienced true horror when we lost our cherished son and brother. In our first year I think I stayed in bed that night (I can't even remember), leaving candy out in a bowl to avoid hearing the doorbell ring and then seeing the faces of children who would be happily asking for some treats. Now, a few years down the road, I am comforted to see our eldest son having a laugh as he dresses up with his buddies. I am ready to hear the bell ring and see the little children in their precious costumes. But while I've learned to accept Halloween again and what it means to the rest of the neighborhood, for me October 31st has lost its magic.

As a bereaved parent, I've learned that masks are not exclusively reserved for Halloween. When the initial shock of my son's death abated and I felt ready to go out and face the world again, I learned to put on the mask of the functioning adult and parent of my surviving son. The passing stranger asks, "How are you?" and I wonder if they would *really* want to know? Well, I've learned to live with giving the socially graceful response, "I'm fine" and continue on my way. Facing new situations and unknowing people, I'm faced with the inevitable question, "How many children do you have?" Are they prepared to hear what I want to say? "I have two sons - my oldest son turned 14 and started high school this year and my youngest would be turning 10 this month, but he died in 2003."

Sometimes I can say it. Sometimes I need my mask.

Carole Gilmour
Anne Arundel 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 and mailing of this newsletter has been donated
by Judy and Ed Bessling in memory of their son
Jamie Bessling
and by Carol Fritz in memory of her daughter
Katie Fritz*

**Anne Arundel County Chapter
Bereaved Parents of the USA
P.O. Box 6280
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-0280
443-572-7872**

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Editor

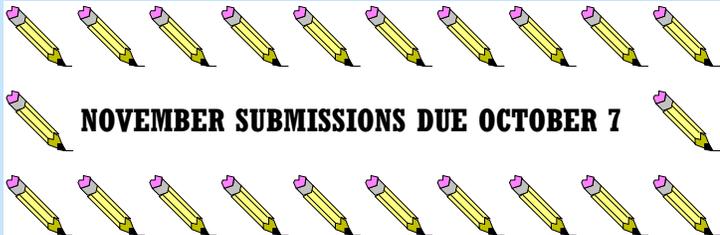
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Programs: Paul Balasic
Jane Schindler

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.



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.

Refreshments at our 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: OCTOBER 4, 2007

Doors open at 7:15 p.m; meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.
(Meetings usually held on 1st Thursday of each month)

Calvary United Methodist Church
301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis, Maryland
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. When you feel the need to talk, have questions to ask, or have just had a difficult day, these people welcome your call and are willing to listen to you.

Marie Dyke Single parent, daughter, 17, only child, car accident.

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

Tia Stinnett 410-360-1341. Miscarriages and infant death.

Sandy Platts 410-721-6457. Infant death.

Other Resources:

Bereaved Parents of the USA (BPUSA)
National number (708) 748-7866

**Stephanie Roper Committee
Anne Arundel County Chapter**
For victims of violent crime
contact representative James Donnelly
410-544-1473

Survivors of Suicide Group (SOS)
Meets 1st Tuesday of every month
7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Severna Park United Methodist Church
731 Benfield Road, Severna Park, Maryland
410-987-2129

M.A.D.D. Maryland — "Family Forever"
Weekly support group
For family and friends of homicide victims;
victims of drunk driving accidents
Meets every Monday at 7:30 p.m
Contact Jan Withers at 301-627-1743

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CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

Sponsor our Newsletter or Website

A wonderful way to remember your child and help our Chapter defray costs is to sponsor our monthly newsletter or website (or both). **For the newsletter**, full sponsorship for a monthly issue is **\$200.00**, which includes printing and postage expenses. Up to two people or groups can sponsor an issue and the cost will be divided equally between the sponsors (**\$100.00** each). If someone has already signed up for full sponsorship of a month and another member would like to share in that month, this is allowable. However, preference will be given to new sponsors when there are more than two members or families wishing to sponsor an issue. Sponsorships are welcomed on a "first-come, first-served" basis. **For the website**, the cost is **\$25.00** for the entire month. Please contact Dave Alexander at 410-544-3634 with any questions or requests.

Upcoming Meeting Topics & Events

October 4: No program scheduled
(Sharing Groups)

October 6: Memory Walk
Quiet Waters Park
(see page 4)

November 1: Monthly meeting

December 2: Annual Memorial Service
(see note below)

December 9: Worldwide Candle Lighting
7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

AMAZON.COM gives back!

Did you know you can go through our Chapter's website when you want to shop at **Amazon.com**? By using their link found on our homepage, we receive a 5% commission on any purchases that are made without increasing the cost to the purchaser. Go to our site, www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org, and click on the butterflies found on the Welcome page. Then scroll down to the bottom of the following page, click on the **Amazon.com** icon (bottom left corner of your screen) and you will be linked to their site. Please pass this information along to your family, friends and colleagues to give them an easy way to help our Chapter when shopping on the Internet.

MEETING TOPICS NOTE:

Basic format: In the first half-hour we begin with a general group session (attended by all) usually for a scheduled speaker or panel. We always try to address a topic of interest and value to families mourning the death of a child. Following the talk, we break up into sharing groups. We always have sharing groups, and the topics discussed — particularly for the newly bereaved groups — do not necessarily focus on the night's program (unless it is relevant to the members in the sharing group). We appreciate your feedback and suggestions for future topics. Please contact Paul Balasic or Jane Schindler.

MEMORIALIZE YOUR CHILD WITH U.S.P.S. APPROVED POSTAGE STAMPS

If you have access to the internet all you need do is go to any of the three websites noted below, upload your own photo, customize it and place your order. These stamps are available in different postage denominations ranging from 26 cent postcards to 41 cent regular first class to \$4.60 for packages to meet all your mailing needs. There is an additional fee for this service as well as shipping and handling.

www.photo.stamps.com
www.PictureItPostage.com
www.zazzle.com *

*Editor's preference; postmark does not strike through photograph - CG



Save the date -

*Annual Memorial Service
Sunday, December 2, 2007*

3:00 p.m.

Mailed invitations to follow

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations



Janice and Chris Kunkel in memory of their son **Jason T. Easter**

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

Gloria McDonald in memory of her grandson **Christopher George Gilmour**

Donations are gratefully accepted to offset the cost of: printing and mailing our Chapter's monthly newsletter; maintenance of our website; our annual events - Memory Walk, Remembrance Service, Conference of Hope and Healing; as well as books and other materials for our Chapter's library.



FIFTH ANNUAL
ANNE ARUNDEL CHAPTER
BEREAVED PARENTS of the USA



MEMORY WALK



Saturday, October 6, 2007
8:30 a.m. Rain or Shine
Quiet Waters Park
600 Quiet Waters Park Road
Annapolis, MD 21403



Please join your fellow bereaved families and friends as we gather to walk and remember our children who died too soon, but who live on in our hearts. Whether you walk a hundred feet or the whole two miles, what matters the most is that you join us as we all travel the same difficult life journey together. We will meet in the Dogwood Pavilion covered picnic area for: registration; creation of butterfly tags to be displayed with your child's name; submission of optional donations; light refreshments; and a few moments of fellowship before we proceed onto our walk. There will be a brief closing ceremony and we ask that you join us for a final group photo and dedication.



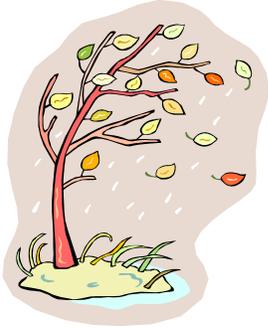
In your grief, you need not walk alone.



For more information or to offer last minute help contact Memory Walk organizers Barbara Bessling at 410-761-9017 or Aimée Kilian at 301-674-7872. To see more photos of previous walks, go to our website and click on Memory Walk tab.



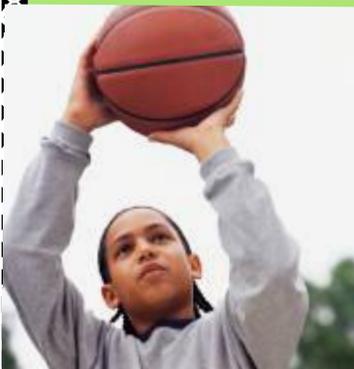
SIBLING PAGE



autumn leaves under frozen souls
hungry hands turning soft and old
my hero cried as we stood out there in the cold
like these autumn leaves
i don't have nothing to hold...

from the song, "autumn"
by Paolo Nutini
from his CD, These Streets
Warner Music, 2006

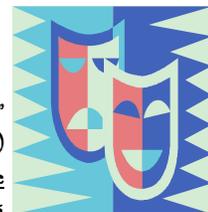
Today was a pretty good day. I was out shooting a few hoops, and some friends came by. A good game developed, and I concentrated on playing my best. I really gave it everything I've got. I completely forgot about you for a little while and actually felt good when I was playing and afterward. I was tired, but it was different kind of tired, hot and sweaty and muscle weary, normal and healthy, like before you died. It felt good to get the blood moving again instead of just being tired from grieving and missing you. I felt a little guilty that I forgot about you for a while and actually had fun, but then I realized that you wouldn't want me to feel guilty; you would be glad. I took a shower and knew that today was a good day.



From the book, Longing for My Child
Reflections for parents and siblings after a child's death
Christine O'Keeffe Lafser
Loyola Press, Copyright 2002

Although | laugh and | act like a clown
beneath this mask | am wearing a frown....

From the song, "I'm a Loser"
By John Lennon (and Paul McCartney)
From the album Beatles For Sale
Capitol Records, 1965



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

James "Jamie" William Henry Alexander
Son of Dave and Sue Alexander
October 12, 1970 - October 26, 1998

David Sheridan Astle
Son of John and Jayne Astle
October 21, 1974 - December 6, 1997

Joseph Phillip Baressi IV
Son of Sandy and Joseph Baressi
October 26, 2002 - October 28, 2002

Lydia Suzanne Barr
Daughter of Cyndi Barr
October 15, 1996 - October 18, 1996

Jamie Bessling
Son of Judy and Ed Bessling
October 23, 1974 - September 23, 2002

Wendy Jean Bolly
Daughter of Judith and Louie Bolly
April 6, 1977 - October 11, 2002

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

Hannah Lindley Campbell
Daughter of John and Cathi Campbell
October 10, 1992 - October 10, 1992

John Christopher Campbell
Son of Kathy and Jeff Campbell
April 18, 1981 - October 9, 2002

Tria Marie Castiglia
Daughter of Noel and Ann Castiglia
Sister of Carla Castiglia
July 6, 1963 - October 14, 1984

Raymond Joseph "Ray" Day
Son of Donna Mengele
November 11, 1968 - October 22, 2005

Vincent Mark DiBerardinis
Son of Laura and Mark DiBerardinis
October 16, 1996 - June 14, 2002

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

Andrea Faith Fiscus
Daughter of Debby and Kenny Fiscus
April 27, 1982 - October 9, 1993

Lisa Michelle Foster
Daughter of Audrey E. Foster
October 17, 1979 - October 11, 2003

Brandon Robert French
Son of Rhonda and Norman French
October 8, 1983 - July 29, 2006

Katie Fritz
Daughter of Carol Fritz
October 29, 1977 - February 27, 1993

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

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

Christopher George Gilmour
Son of Carole and Paul Gilmour
Brother of Sean Gilmour
October 17, 1997 - April 2, 2003

Andrew Thomas Gwaltney
Son of Hope Dorman
October 1, 1987 - April 6, 2004

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

Brian Jeffrey Haley
Son of Jerry and Pam Haley
October 26, 1973 - March 4, 1990

Traci Jeanne Heincelman
Daughter of Ed and Jeanne Heincelman
Granddaughter of Dorothy and Norm Heincelman
Niece of Terre and John Belt
Cousin of Eryn Belt
October 6, 1980 - March 10, 2002

Charles "Chip" Marshall Hodges
Son of Betty and John Hodges
October 24, 1954 - March 14, 2005

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

Ty'Lik De'Shawn Jenkins
Son of Tonya Lyons
July 28, 1999 - October 16, 2001

Mark Charles Knepper
Son of Pat and Joe Knepper
June 28, 1968 - October 17, 1988

Steven J. Landis
Son of Edwin and Susan Landis
April 4, 1968 - October 10, 1991

Raymond Wilson Leager
Son of Tom and Betsy Leager
October 3, 1991 - October 3, 1991

Temple Sidney Leager
Daughter of Tom and Betsy Leager
October 3, 1991 - October 3, 1991

Andrea Jean Loatman
Daughter of Janet and John Hewitt
January 12, 1980 - October 5, 1999

Timothy J. Mabe
Son of Marilyn Mabe
October 29, 1977 - February 18, 2001

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

Calvin Russell Miller
Son of Laura and Curtis Miller
October 11, 2003 - October 11, 2003

Kyle Brenner Millman
Son of Susan Millman
October 27, 1976 - June 10, 1989

Chad William Muehlhauser
Son of Paula and Bill Muehlhauser
October 3, 1983 - September 16, 1992

Melanie Carol Murphy
Daughter of Fred and Phyl Murphy
April 21, 1966 - October 17, 1985

Glynn Allen Owens
Son of Michael Owens
October 21, 1973 - April 2, 2003

John Christopher Poe
Son of Sharon and Ben Poe
October 12, 1967 - September 24, 2001

Jayla Monet Powell
Daughter of Dorie Powell
September 26, 1998 - October 22, 2005

Robert William Rey II
Friend of Peggy Smeltzer
September 14, 1965 - October 2, 2003

Tanager Rú Ricci
Son of Kathy Franklin
October 19, 1977 - February 16, 2004

Michael Louis Rixham
Son of Susan and Louis Rixham
July 5, 1977 - October 8, 2004

Zachary Daniel Robertson
Son of Mary Ellen and Jim Young
March 3, 1978 - October 26, 2006

David John Rose
Son of Carol Rose McAuliffe
October 21, 1969 - September 1, 1988

Thomas "Tommy" Richard Short
Son of Karen Short
September 25, 1997 - October 16, 1997

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

Deonte Joseph Simms
Grandson of Deborah Simms
October 1, 1981 - September 8, 2001

Jami Leigh Smith
Daughter of Deannie and Gerry Smith
October 19, 1977 - September 30, 1987

Matthew Jason Temple
Son of Jim and Karen Temple
October 6, 1987 - April 23, 1995

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

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

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

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

Kevin Michael Wengert
Son of Debbie and David Wengert
October 2, 1987 - September 3, 2005

Leslie Donn Whitman
Daughter of Donna Buono
October 28, 1963 - November 16, 2003

Grant Alan Williams
Son of Mark and Randy Williams
October 25, 2000 - October 25, 2000

Samuel Mark Williams
Son of Mark and Randy Williams
October 25, 2000 - October 25, 2000

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

You're Still Here

At the finest level of my being,
You're still with me.
We still look at each other,
At that level beyond sight.
We talk and laugh with each other,
In a place beyond words.
We still touch each other
On a level beyond touch.
We share a time together in a place,
Where time stands still.
We are still together,
On a level called love....



Richard Lepinsky
From the book, Chicken Soup for the Grieving Soul
Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen
Health Communications, Inc., Copyright 2003



It was a beautiful fall day. The air was crisp and fresh and the sun was shining brightly. The leaves were brilliant shades of gold and red and orange. I looked out the window of my gloomy house and was dazzled by the glorious view. I had to stand there for a few minutes, just drinking in the vibrant beauty of the hills and the sky. I felt refreshed and invigorated, in spite of my broken heart.

From the book, Longing for My Child Reflections for parents and siblings after a child's death by Christine O'Keeffe Lafser Loyola Press, Copyright 2002

In case you missed it...

... last month's meeting focused on something we all face - how to get through holidays and special days of significance after the death of our child. Our helpful panelists were bereaved parents Debi Wilson-Smith (Christopher's Mom), Jane Schindler (Emily's mom) and Noel Castiglia (Tria's dad). They offered many wonderful ideas that may help you make a plan for that day on the calendar that can be so emotionally difficult.



For family gatherings at the table you can display and light a candle, or place a flower in a vase, maybe set out a small item that represents your child. For gift giving holidays, designate a special and caring person to go with you on a shopping trip where you can talk about your child and buy presents they may have enjoyed. Then you can donate the toy or book to a toy drive, either the one we offer at our monthly meeting in December or one of your choosing. On personal days of significance, maybe give gifts to your child's friends - they are grieving your child's death, too. Give your time and volunteer, give your love and hug someone who understands your pain.

Most of all, what seemed to be the recurring theme from all our speakers is that you need to make a plan for the upcoming day and give in your child's memory.



While your loss hurts, giving can help.

-- Editor

FROM OUR CHAPTER LIBRARY

These suggested books are available to be signed out at our monthly meetings. We hope you find these items helpful and ask that you return them when you are ready:



For young children and young adults -
The Fall of Freddie the Leaf by Leo Buscaglia, Ph.D.

Loss after a young child's extended illness -
Hannah's Gift - Lessons from a Life Fully Lived by Maria Housden

For those who are spiritually minded -
Not by Accident - What I Learned From My Son's Untimely Death by Isabel Fleece

For bereaved men and those close to them -
When A Man Faces Grief / A Man You Know is Grieving by James E. Miller and Thomas R. Golden



By any chance, do you have one of our lost treasures? Our library is missing 14 audio cassettes and 190 books. Please look around your home, car, or office and if you're finished with an item you can return it in one of two ways - bring it to our next monthly meeting or drop them in the mail to our P.O. Box found on page 2 of this newsletter. Thanks for your consideration!

Chapter Annual Picnic - A Social Success

Any kind of colorful and yummy summer dish one can think of was set out on tables all over the Beall's dining room, porch and family room, Sunday afternoon, August 19. This set the tone of the Bereaved Parent's annual picnic social. Chuck and Lisa Beall had made sure their large screened-in porch and dining room was ready for this event. The weather was overcast and a few sprinkles fell, but, not to matter, we were very busy eating and talking and enjoying each other's company in this comfortable space.



Not only did we feast on traditional hamburgers, hot dogs and chili, and multiples of salads, but we had the treat of freshly caught and steamed crabs. The talented Danny Tyler made sure his boat was running up and early, and he caught a bounty of large and tasty crabs. His special steaming skills brought out their entire flavor and the crab table was always full as many of us picked and banged away, enjoying the best crabs of the season. Everywhere you turned Janet Tyler was making sure cups were full, desserts were available.



It was wonderful to see old friends and members, meeting new people, catching up on news and enjoying this time when we could so easily talk about our lost children. Our thanks go to all who brought such good food and especially go to Janet and Danny Tyler and Lisa and Chuck Beall for their warm hospitality and grand picnic.

Sue Alexander
Anne Arundel Chapter, BPUSA

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NEXT MEETING OCTOBER 4, 2007
MEMORY WALK OCTOBER 6, 2007



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.