



Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

December 2008

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org



A Gift From My Daughters



This year will be our second Christmas season since the death of our adult daughter, Missy. Last week, I was talking with our other daughter Lisa about the upcoming holiday season and how I have found it so incredibly hard and sad to pass by something in a store that I knew Missy would have loved. Lisa gave me a wonderful and meaningful suggestion that I decided to try. This year, instead of passing by that special gift that reminds me so much of our precious daughter, I am purchasing that gift to give to another young woman who may be at a point in her life where she is struggling and could use a kind reminder that there are people in the world who care. The next weekend while at a store that Missy loved, I passed by a black wool coat and had an instant picture in my mind of Missy snuggling in it. Being a very petite and slender young woman, she was always cold and had this special way of scrunching her shoulders up around her neck so that the only thing you saw of her face was from the nose up, and no neck. I could not stop thinking about it, and something just kept pulling at me to purchase that coat which I finally did, my first gift of the season for a stranger. Since that day, I keep smiling at the picture in my mind of Missy snuggling in that coat, and it just suddenly struck me.....is it really a gift for a stranger, or was it actually a gift from my daughters to me?

— *Kathy Ireland*
Anne Arundel County Chapter – BP/USA
In Memory of Melissa Ireland Frainie
December 12, 1971 – February 12, 2007

IN THIS ISSUE:

Chapter Contact InformationPage 2
Telephone FriendsPage 2
Meeting InformationPage 2, 10
Articles, PoemsPage 3, 4, 9
Sibling PagePage 5

Our Children Remembered.....Page 6, 7
Acknowledgments and Thanks.....Page 8, 9
Other Resources.....Page 9
Upcoming Meeting & Events.....Page 10
What to Expect at our Meetings.....Page 10



The printing and mailing of this newsletter has been donated
by Denise, Russ and Nicholas Calo in memory of their son and brother
Russell Joseph Calo Jr.

and

by Kathy and George Ireland in memory of their daughter
Melissa Ireland Frainie



**Anne Arundel County Chapter
Bereaved Parents of the USA**

P.O. Box 6280

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**Submissions for January newsletter
due to Newsletter Team by December 1**
newsletter@aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

We are a self-help support organization that is dedicated to assisting parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child. We also aim to provide information and education to extended family, friends and coworkers desirous of being supportive to our Chapter members. We gather to listen, to care, and to understand the process of grieving as we start our recovery process and attempt to heal. Our greatest strength as bereaved families is the unity we find in shared experiences which can lead us out of isolation, give us a place to "belong", and offer us hope that together – we can make it.



Telephone Friends: Sometimes we may have the need to talk to someone who can understand our pain. If you feel the need to talk, have questions to ask, or just had a difficult day, these people will welcome your call and are willing to listen to you.

Bob Bramhall 410.867.4956 Daughter (19), drunk driver; men's grief.

Marie Dyke Daughter (17), single parent, only child; car accident.

Sandy Platts 410.721.6457 Infant death.

Tia Stinnett 410.360.1341 Miscarriages and infant death.

Janet Tyler 410.969.7597 Daughter (5) and brother (33); car accident.

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MEETING INFORMATION

Next Meeting: December 4, 2008

Doors open at 7:15 P.M.

Meeting begins at 7:30 P.M.

Calvary United Methodist Church*

301 Rowe Boulevard

Annapolis, MD 21401

***Please park in lower lot behind church**



Meetings are usually held on the **first Thursday of every month**. We meet on the lower level of the building in the fellowship room which is accessible from the rear entrance. There is no cost to attend our monthly meetings.

Refreshments at our monthly meetings are donated by Chapter members. To make a contribution, please see the sign-up sheet on the refreshment table (drinks, ice, and paper products are provided).  For information please contact Carol Tomaszewski at 410.519.8448.

Inclement weather on a meeting night?

Our meeting is cancelled if Phase 1 of the Snow Emergency Plan is in effect that same day at 5:00pm. Please check our Chapter's website or call our Message Line for information on possible cancellations. 

Laptop or PC Needed

We are looking for a laptop or PC running Windows XP or Vista for use by our newsletter editor. If you or your employer have a computer which could be donated to the Chapter, please contact our newsletter team by email at:

Newsletter@AACounty-MD-BereavedParents.org

or call Dave at 410-544-3634. Our chapter is designated a 501(c)3 organization by the IRS.

A New Meaning

When I saw the September 2008 issue of the magazine *Real Simple*, published by Time Inc., New York, NY, I just couldn't wait to read it, particularly an article pages 236-239. I'm all for reading everything that I can, thinking that if I finally touch upon the ideal answer then everything will be fixed. A magazine that boasts simplicity and basics. Well, that *must* be my magazine. This mantra of keeping it simple seemed to work, more or less, until my teenage son's death almost a year and a half ago.

The article says, "Loss is as much a part of human existence as breathing. It is an everyday event...But then there are losses that can't just be shrugged off – voids that trigger a powerful kind of emotional responses...Chances are you felt like this if your home was destroyed, you lost a job or a beloved pet, or your marriage ended in divorce. Maybe your health was devastated by a chronic illness or you experienced the death of a loved one."

Two paragraphs into this article and I am in shock. How can this writer possibly understand the death of a child and the repercussions that shadow all concerned for the rest of their lives. I'm not here to say that all grieve singularly. However, I am here to offer testimony that the loss of my child has left me bereft, jobless, hospitalized, on the brink many a time and now reaching a point where I finally get it.

My doctor stated that, "He's not coming back...and you didn't cause it." Those few words and I finally accepted that the meaning of my life was now to go on. How to do that will always be a challenge for me. But to be honest, it wasn't always so easy even before my son's death. Balancing work, pleasing bosses, trying to button a voice that was always the most strident and argumentative. Both challenged me then and still challenge me now.

The article goes on to say, "Today most experts have shifted away from the idea of a prescribed series of stages toward a view of grief as a transition that people manage in their own, individual ways and, for the most part, with relative ease." All of you who prepare for and attend our Bereaved Parents monthly group would certainly disavow any notion that there is an ease in attending at first, along with the milestones of talking to relatives, friends, coworkers and strangers on the street, without breaking down into tears or feeling disoriented in the midst of a conversation where you are suddenly from the outside looking in.

Finally, and I'll end with this, the articles states that, "It can be just as normal to feel little or no grief in the face of a great loss." My experience when meeting others who have lost their child or children by accident, illness, suicide, premature birth or an after birth tragedy have never indicated that they really have "little or no grief." Maybe I'm just around the wrong crowd.

What I can say with certainty, is that the existence of the Bereaved Parents of the USA/Anne Arundel County Chapter, has maintained my life and given me a structure and sounding board for more than a year now. I couldn't do without the group. I can survive being fired, being mocked, being dismissed as over-wrought or high strung. But the group gives me power, knowledge and the fortitude to know that I am okay and always will be.

The meaning of my life is to exercise my free will to find a new place in the world. I'm doing this, thanks, in part, to the group.

— *Clare Harig-Blaine*
November 6, 2008

Anne Arundel County Chapter – BP/USA
In loving memory of Galen Andrew Harig-Blaine
November 14, 1989 – April 22, 2007

Silent Grief

I am learning to live with this silent grief. This grief is not as ugly or as uncomfortable to others. When asked, I can smile and say I am fine and they believe me. And most days I really am fine. This grief is quieter and somewhat gentler than those first few years after you left us. It still catches me by surprise in unexpected ways. It is the lump in my throat when I hear a song that brings me back to a place I was with you. It is the ache in my heart when I hear your name, only to turn and see that it is not you. I asked myself who you would be, now at 23. What would you be like, would you be in love, would you have a job you enjoy. I think of all the good things that have happened in the past 4 ½ years and I am reminded of how much better they would be if you were here to experience them with us. I still yearn to watch you grow into who you were meant to be. And because I cannot, I must learn to live with my silent grief.

— *Jane Schindler*
Anne Arundel County Chapter – BP/USA
In Memory of Emily Ann Schindler
July 27, 1985 – January 27, 2004

SIBLING PAGE

A Sibling's View of the Holidays

The worst time of the year for me is the holidays. I guess the worst part of the holidays is the changing of the seasons. My brother, Sean, always loved Fall. For him it was a romantic time of the year. Sean's birthday is November 11, the height of the Fall. So, the holiday season begins for me with the first leaf falling off the tree.

As Sean's birthday approaches, I find myself getting sadder and sadder. I never know how much I really miss him until I realize he's missed another birthday. As the other holidays grow nearer, I begin to dread them more.

The first year, no one wanted to have Christmas, but we felt we needed it for my daughter. Her birthday is Christmas Eve and she turned two that year. Doing Christmas for her makes it a little easier, but at the same time makes it that much more difficult.

Sean thought we needed holidays all year long. While helping my Mom put up Christmas decorations, I looked at our family picture above the piano, the last of the five of us. I told my Mom that we would never be that happy again. I know that is a sad thing to say, but I know a part of me will always be missing.

Each year I feel a numbness set in over the holidays. The numbness begins around Sean's birthday and ends after the first of each year. The year of Sean's death, my Mom didn't know what to do with the ornaments that Sean had collected

over the years.

The Christmas before Sean died, my Mom purchased a miniature tree for the family room. Sean made fun of it. The next year, Mom purchased Sean his own miniature tree for the family room. Sean's tree is filled with all of his ornaments and his used guitar strings for tinsel. Sean's tree goes up right after Thanksgiving and doesn't come down until after January 24th, the anniversary of his death. This tree has actually helped to make the holidays seem a little brighter.

A part of my brother is there in that tree. I was out shopping a few weeks ago and I bought an ornament that would go perfectly on Sean's tree. The ornament is the first one I have purchased for Sean since he died. Just buying that one ornament has actually made me look forward to the holidays.

I know the holidays will never be the same without our "Holiday Clown", but we will make new memories, laugh and cry at the old ones, and just survive this time of year.

I wish you a peaceful holiday season filled with precious moments and happy memories. I also hope that you can share a smile.



Traci Morlock— St Louis

The Room Across the Hall

The room across the hall is dark and empty now.
 All of the things that once filled it have been removed somehow.
 The clothes that were once in the closet have all been given away.
 The occupant won't be needing them, for he died in the month of May.
 The room across the hall was filled with a young man's things:
 Guns, and knives, and video games, and rocks from many springs.
 All of these have been locked away inside a small square chest.
 Just like the room's occupant, they have been laid to rest.
 The room across the hall arouses feelings such as pain.
 The fact that it is empty can make tears fall like rain.
 I cry because the occupant was very much like me.
 The occupant was my brother, whom now I cannot see.
 The room across the hall belonged to a normal boy.
 He could bring you heartache and lots of sorrow, but he could also bring you joy.
 He was not another Socrates, for he wasn't quite that clever.
 But the memories he left me will be with me forever.

— *Melissa Broadway*
 TCF – Atlanta, GA



My Sister, My Friend

With our hearts
 you will always be.
 Our minds will be filled with sweet memories.
 Your spirit and love will never be gone
 For each life you touched will carry them on.

— *Catherine Hall*
 TCF – Hinsdale, IL

Our Children Remembered

- Cito Arán
Son of Sandra Arán
December 2, 1978 - July 11, 2000
- David Sheridan Astle
Son of John and Jayne Astle
October 21, 1974 - December 6, 1997
- Matthew Stephen Auer
Son of Carol and Steve Auer
December 11, 1982 - May 4, 2004
- Christopher Lewis Borngesser
Son of Diane Borngesser
December 21, 1961 - May 28, 2001
- Nicholas Allen Bowling
Grandson of Jack and Audrey Bagby
December 27, 1979 - July 31, 1985
- Christine Elaine Bramhall
Daughter of Robert and Patricia Bramhall
December 21, 1961 - May 9, 1981
- Herbert John Buzby
Son of Gerlinda and Clark Coleman
December 31, 1961 - December 19, 2003
- Russell Joseph Calo Jr.
Son of Denise and Russell Calo
Grandson of Virginia Potts
Nephew of Karen Brown
March 15, 1983 - December 30, 2006
- Gary Lee Downey Jr.
Son of Pat and Gary Downey
Brother of Melissa Barnhart
October 30, 1980 - December 24, 2005
- Tyler Dudley
Son of Julie Cremen
December 29, 2000 - February 23, 2001
- Rebecca Lynn Faires
Daughter of Georgia Nelsen
March 16, 1985 - December 18, 2003
- Christina Ann Fisher
Daughter of Rick and Carol Wilson
December 17, 1985 - June 30, 2001
- Melissa Ireland Frainie
Daughter of Kathy and George Ireland
December 12, 1971 - February 12, 2007
- Brian Christopher Gray
Son of Mary Gray
Grandson of Peggy Campbell
July 26, 1987 - December 10, 2007
- Phillip Wayne Gray Jr.
Son of Joan Gray
July 8, 1970 - December 22, 1986
- Michael Thompson Heany
Son of Frank and Jean Heany
February 7, 1973 - December 23, 2004
- Mallory Heffernan
Daughter of Dianne and Edmund Heffernan
December 19, 1985 - April 18, 2003
- Kurt Willard Johnson
Son of Willard and Marian Johnson
December 9, 1963 - August 11, 2003
- Gary Wayne Keats
Son of Delores Shuey
December 3, 1964 - March 8, 2004
- Logan Robert Kugler
Son of Sherry Kugler
December 10, 2000 - December 10, 2000
- Michael Robert Legér
Son of Daryl and Elizabeth Legér
July 11, 1986 - December 29, 2000
- John F. Marinelli
Son of William and Annette Marinelli
May 30, 1964 - December 19, 1986
- Joseph A. Miller
Son of Mary J. Miller
Brother of Marlene Miller
December 13, 1956 - May 12, 1977
- Kim Jonathan Nixon
Son of Stephen and Carolyn Tew
December 5, 1957 - December 16, 1984
- Michael Henry O'Malley
Son of Margie and John O'Malley
August 25, 1971 - December 7, 1991
- Michael Patrick Patterson
Son of Sylvia Simmons
September 6, 1965 - December 18, 2006
- Phillip "PJ" Bernard Riek Jr.
Son of Pamela and Tracy Peterson
December 29, 1989 - January 17, 2000
- Aaron Sebastian Royer
Son of Diane and Robert Royer
December 21, 1982 - July 5, 2001

Our Children Remembered

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

Timothy A. Scaggs
Son of Bette and Tim Scaggs
December 29, 1996 - March 23, 2005

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

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

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

Victoria Shimonkevitz
Granddaughter of Jim and Margaret Williford
December 9, 1993 - December 12, 1993

Jason Edward Skarzynski
Son of Benjamin and Sharon Skarzynski
December 19, 1977 - December 14, 1995

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

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

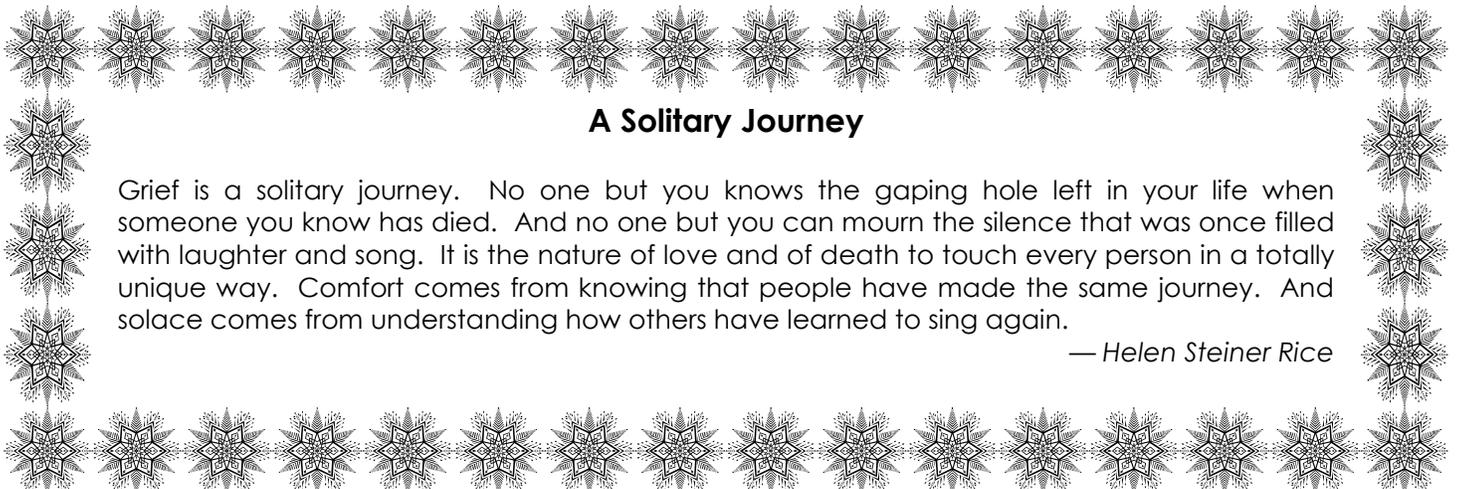
Marie Rose Trehey
Daughter of Greg and Chere Trehey
December 21, 2000 - December 21, 2000

Renetra "Nee" Lotrice Wallace-Connor
Daughter of Pamela Davis
Daughter of Vernon Wallace
December 22, 1972 - September 22, 2006

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

Miriam Luby Wolfe
Daughter of Larry and Rosemary Mild
September 26, 1968 - December 21, 1988

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



A Solitary Journey

Grief is a solitary journey. No one but you knows the gaping hole left in your life when someone you know has died. And no one but you can mourn the silence that was once filled with laughter and song. It is the nature of love and of death to touch every person in a totally unique way. Comfort comes from knowing that people have made the same journey. And solace comes from understanding how others have learned to sing again.

— Helen Steiner Rice

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations

Jeanne Angier "In loving memory of my dear nephew, Jamie Alexander, who died on October 26th, 10 years ago"
 Susan Alexander "In loving memory of my nephew, Jamie Alexander and in recognition of his birthday, October 12
 and the anniversary of his death 10 years ago on October 26"
 Kathy and George Ireland in memory of their daughter Melissa Ireland Frainie
 Ken Smith in memory of his niece Tracy Ann Fotino



Donations are gratefully accepted to offset the costs of our local Chapter's events and communications.

Memory Walk Donations (continued from November's newsletter)

Marlen and Gene Maier in memory of their son Eric Eugene Maier

Service of Remembrance Donations (continued on following page)

Cheryl Alderdice in memory of her son Arthur Gordon Phillips
 Gina Barnhurst in memory of her son Eric William Herzberg
 Bonnie Boone-Adamecz in memory of her daughter Traci Lynn Boone
 Carol Boslet in memory of her grandson Christopher Ryan
 Cori Boyce in memory of her daughter Linda Lou Boyce
 Jenny Bush in memory of her son Bryan Clinton-Duvall Edwards Jr.
 Rose Marie Carnes in memory of her son Walter H. Maynard IV
 Ann and Noel Castiglia in memory of their daughter Tria Marie Castiglia
 Fran Cease in memory of her son Richard C. Watts
 Melanie Crawford in memory of her son Ronald Edward Towson
 Gerlinda Coleman in memory of her son Herbert John Buzby
 Karen Coulson in memory of her son Craig Steven Nelson
 Mary Louise de Sarran in memory of her daughter Elizabeth de Sarran
 Marie Dyke in memory of her daughter Michelle Marie Dyke
 Edith Dorsey in memory of her daughter Anita Evangeline Dorsey Richardson
 Linda East in memory of her son Zachary Laurence Luceti
 Susan and Joe Errichiello in memory of their son Joseph Frederick Errichiello Jr.
 Aurelia Ferraro in memory of her son Jeff Baldwin
 Melanie Freeburger in memory of her son Daniel Paul Freeburger
 Carol Fritz in memory of her daughter Katie Fritz
 Needra Gorman in memory of her son Wayne Wilson Jr.
 Pam and Jerry Haley in memory of their son Brian Jeffrey Haley
 Betty Hodges in memory of her son Charles "Chip" Hodges
 Marian and Willard Johnson in memory of their son Kurt Willard Johnson
 Jeanne and Leroy Jones in memory of their sons Jeremy Scott Jones and Brian Keith Jones and Jeanne's brother
 Roger Wallace Johnson
 Robert and Susan Katz in memory of their son Matthew James Katz
 Bryant and Missy Lawrence in memory of their daughter Susan Lawrence Barr
 Marlen and Gene Maier in memory of their son Eric Eugene Maier
 Kathleen McGlew in memory of her daughter Jennifer Lynn Hamilton
 Rosemary Mild in memory of her daughter Miriam Luby Wolfe
 Ruth and Lowell Minor in memory of their daughter Susan Blair Minor
 Debbie and Fred Moreland in memory of their son John Carl Moreland
 Paul Muehlhauser in memory of her son Chad William Muehlhauser
 John and Margie O'Malley in memory of their son Michael Henry O'Malley
 Sharon Poe in memory of her son John Christopher Poe
 Linda and Robert Rasmussen in memory of their son Steven Craig Rasmussen
 Stephanie Rice in memory of her son Charles "Charlie" Hubner Rice
 Lydia Sanders in memory of her son André Marc Sanders
 Kathleen Savage in memory of her son Robert Matthew White
 Joyce and Thomas Schall in memory of their son Thomas Jeffrey Schall
 Sharon and Ben Skarzynski in memory of their son Jason Edward Skarzynski



Service of Remembrance Donations (continued from previous page)

Glenda and John Skuletich in memory of their daughter Abigail Helen Skuletich
 Peggy Smeltzer in memory of her son Mark Edward Smeltzer
 Peggy and Lewis Strader in memory of their son Christopher Lewis Strader
 Lorraine Tarr in memory of her son Russell "Rusty" Joseph Tarr
 Karen and Jim Temple in memory of their son Matthew Jason Temple
 Rita Whitby in memory of her sons Albert Whitby Jr., David Whitby, and Danny Whitby
 Mary Ellen Young in memory of her son Zachary Daniel Robertson

**Informal Support Group for the Holidays**

Sylvia Simmons, a member of our chapter, will be sponsoring an informal support group to help those who are having a difficult time during the holidays. Anyone who feels alone during the holidays and would like to be with someone is welcome. The group will meet each Wednesday from November 26th through December 31st from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m., at the Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Boulevard, Annapolis. For further information contact Sylvia by email at Spsimmons@aol.com or by phone at 410-268-2020.



ANNE ARUNDEL CHAPTER
 BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA
24th Annual Service of Remembrance
Sunday, December 7, 2008
Three o'clock to five o'clock in the afternoon
St. Martin's in the Field Episcopal Church
375 Benfield Road
Severna Park, Maryland 21146

You can still get your child's name and picture in the
 Slide presentation for the service.

Call 410-544-3634 by 5:00 pm, Friday, December 5th to make arrangements.

OTHER RESOURCES**Bereaved Parents of the USA (National headquarters)**

www.bereavedparentsusa.org 708.748.7866

Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc.

(formerly known as The Stephanie Roper Committee
 for Victims of Violent Crime) www.mdcrimevictims.org
 410.234.9885. 14750 Main Street, Suite 1B, Upper Marlboro,
 MD 20772.

S.O.S. (Survivors of Suicide)

Meets 1st Tuesday of each month at Severna Park Methodist
 Church, 731 Benfield Road, Severna Park, MD 21146. For
 information call 410.987.2129.

Hospice of the Chesapeake, Maryland

Serving A.A. and P.G. counties. Help for adults, teenagers,
 children grieving the loss of a loved one. Counseling; support
 group sessions; weekend camps for children, teens and adults.
 www.hospicechesapeake.org or 410.987.2003.

M I S Support Group

For those who have experienced loss through miscarriage, infant
 death or stillbirth. Meets 1st Monday each month from 7:00 to
 8:30 pm, St. Andrew's United Methodist Church, 4 Wallace
 Manor Road, Edgewater, MD. 443.481.6114

Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

P.O. Box 6280

Annapolis, MD 21401-0280

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org



NEXT MEETING DECEMBER 4, 2008



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED
DATED MATERIAL



UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

Introducing Our Children

Thursday, December 4, 7:30 P.M

The focus of this evening will be on our deceased children and giving us a better sense of who they were. There will not be a presenter; sharing groups are the focus.

For the non-newly bereaved sharing group, each person brings a picture or some memento of his/her child; each person holds the picture or memento facing the group, "introduces" his/her child and describes 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.

Twenty-Fourth Annual Service of Remembrance

Sunday, December 7, 3:00 P.M.

Facing the New Year – Revisiting the Grief Process Again

Thursday, January 8, 7:30 P.M

The January program will focus on looking ahead to the new year as we continue to deal with the loss of our children.

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We appreciate feedback on our Chapter meetings. If you have suggestions for future topics of discussion, please contact one of our Program coordinators:

Paul Balasic at pjbspmd@gmail.com or 443.566.0193, or
Jane Schindler at cwschind@cablespeed.com.



WHAT TO EXPECT AT OUR CHAPTER MEETINGS

Our Chapter gathers one evening a month to address topics and offer support to those who are mourning the death of a child. Our meetings last for approximately 2 hours. We occasionally schedule a 30 minute presentation at the beginning of our meeting to address a topic that we hope is of interest and value to many of our Chapter members. When the speaker or panel has concluded the presentation, you will be invited to introduce yourself and then say your child's name - but only if you are able to participate in this manner. We then take a short break before dividing into sharing groups.

These sharing groups are facilitated by fellow Chapter members and are completely confidential. During this time the issues that are discussed - particularly for the newly bereaved - do not necessarily have to focus on the evening's topic, unless it is relevant to the group.

Please see page 2 of this newsletter for more details including our meeting location and other helpful information. If you have questions please contact our Chapter leader Terre Belt (410.761.1359) or tbelt@nahbrc.org.