



Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

March 2009

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

Spring Is Coming

If you are newly bereaved and looking toward your “first” spring, you may be surprised at some of the feelings you may experience during the next few weeks.

We hear much about the beauty of spring – the new life and the feelings of renewal that are supposed to accompany this lovely time of year. During my “first” year I expected that spring would cheer me up and make me feel lots better.

How surprised and frustrated I was when, on one of those truly magnificent spring days that life seems to burst forth everywhere, I was in “the pits.” When a friend said to me, “Doesn’t a day like this really lift your spirits and make you feel better?” I had to reply honestly that I was having a really bad day – that sense of loss and emptiness was greatly intensified. Gradually I began to realize that my expectations for spring were unrealistically high. I had looked forward to spring with the wrong kind of hope.

When we are newly bereaved, we are constantly looking for something to take away the pain and make our lives all right again. Unfortunately, there is no magical event or moment when this takes place. It does happen, but only with time and the grief work we all must do before we can “be healed”.

The coming of spring can’t make everything okay again. What it can do, however, is remind us that regardless of what happens in our lives, nature’s processes will continue and that can offer us hope.

I am looking forward to spring this year. I welcome the sun’s warmth, the return of the birds from their winter in the south, the forsythia, the daffodils, and the greening of the world.

Know that someday you will once again welcome spring. Be gentle and patient with yourself and with nature. Don’t expect too much. Be ready to let a little of the hope that spring can offer into your heart.

— Evelyn Billings
Springfield, MA

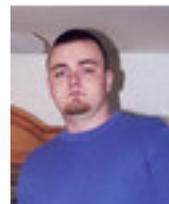
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The printing and mailing of this newsletter has been donated
by Kathy Franklin
in memory of her son Tanager Rú Ricci
and
by Dave and Gayle Morris and Family
in memory of their son, brother and uncle
Kevin Michael Morris



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

P.O. Box 6280

Annapolis, Maryland 21401-0280

Website: www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

24 hour Message Line: 443.572.7872

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Newsletter Team

Jan Hylan

Clare Harig-Blaine

Kathy Ireland

Chapter Leader

Terre Belt

410.721.1359

tbelt@nahbrc.org

Correspondence:

Barbara Bessling

Treasurer:

Fran Palmer

Hospitality:

Carol Tomaszewski

Librarian:

Kathy Franklin

Programs:

Paul Balasic and Jane Schindler



**Submissions for April newsletter
due to Newsletter Team by March 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: March 5, 2009

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. 

You Can Sponsor our Newsletter or Website



If you are looking for a way to honor the life of a child who died, please consider sponsoring a month of our newsletter or website in their memory. Currently our Chapter newsletter is mailed to over 400 homes, locally and all around the country. Your sponsorship helps to underwrite the costs associated with the printing, labeling and mailing of our newsletter and maintaining our space on the World-wide web.

For the website, sponsorship is \$25.00 for the month. Your child's name will appear at the bottom of the home page on our Chapter's website (www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org). For the newsletter, full sponsorship of one issue is \$200. Two people or families can sponsor an issue and the cost will be divided equally. If interested email

newsletter@aacounty-MD-bereavedparents.org

Country Cemetery

In a quiet country cemetery,
Where the gentle breezes blow,
Lies my daughter I love so dearly,
She died two years ago.

Her resting place I visit,
Placing flowers there with care,
Can anyone know my heartache
When I turn to leave them there?

Though her smile is gone forever,
And her hands I cannot touch,
Still I have so many memories
Of the daughter I love so much.

— *Author Unknown*

A Reason, A season, A time:
Love them for who they are and
who you have become.

— *Author Unknown*

It is a fearful thing to love what death can touch.

*A fearful thing to love, hope, dream;
To be – to be, and to lose.*



*For your life has lived in me, your laugh once lifted
me, your word was a gift to me. To remember this
brings painful joy. 'Tis a human thing, Love – a
holy thing, to love what death has touched.*

— *Chaim Stern*

Do You Miss Us, Too?

So tell me dear Michael
Do you miss us, too?
The way your dear family
here misses you.

I always imagine you
Happy and at peace
'cause my thoughts and my memories
Of you never cease.

Are you playing your drums,
Or perhaps your guitar?
I'm sure you've got chess-
So you haven't gone far.



I know you are with us
Throughout every day -
To help and to guide us
Each step of the way.

I know you look forward
to having us there.
But until that time comes,
We'll have to stay here.

So much has happened
In seventeen years.
The things that remain
are always the tears.

Love always,
Mom

— *From Margie O'Malley
Anne Arundel County Chapter – BP/USA
to her son Michael
January 2009*



You gain strength, courage and confidence by
every experience in which you really stop to
look fear in the face. You are able to say to
yourself, 'I have lived through this horror. I
can take the next thing that comes along.' You
must do the thing you think you cannot do.

— *Eleanor Roosevelt.*

Time Does Not Bring Relief

Time does not bring relief; you all have lied
 Who told me time would ease me of my pain!
 I miss him in the weeping of the rain;
 I want him at the shrinking of the tide;
 The old snows melt from every mountain-side,
 And last year's leaves are smoke in every lane;
 But last year's bitter loving must remain
 Heaped on my heart, and my old thoughts abide.
 There are a hundred places where I fear
 To go - so with his memory they brim.
 And entering with relief some quiet place
 Where never fell his foot or shone his face
 I say, 'There is no memory of him here!'
 And so stand stricken, so remembering him.

— Edna S. Vincent Millay (1892-1950)

Then And Now

They were my children, then.
 Resounding voices, arguments and laughter –
 Intense and wide awake at storytime –
 In love with music, dance and birthday parties –
 So serious about their great inventions –
 So filled with promise, all-involved with life.
 They are my children, now.
 Remembered like a touching of the wind –
 Remembered in the clarity of mornings –
 Remembered in the smiles of other children –
 Remembered like the charm of cradlesongs –
 Alive in silence and in absence, present.
 My children, now.

— Alexandra Sascha Wagner
 For You From Sascha

In March

The year moves on.
 Between the weeks and days
 are spaces filled
 with more than only time:
 those minutes, moments
 when your life stands still
 And aches in memory...

And part of you
 needs to endure the dark,
 because it means
 to have that love again.
 And part of you
 prays for forgetfulness,
 Because your mind
 may break, remembering.

Between the weeks and days
 Are spaces filled
 with more than only time.

— Alexandra Sascha Wagner
 For You From Sascha

Learning From Death

The true worth of a life
 Is the story it has left behind.
 Tell it well.
 Search for meaning and understanding.
 Search for truth:
 Did he teach you about love?
 Did she personify genius or sensitivity?
 Did his life warn you of the danger of bitterness and anger?
 As I stand and behold the eyes
 Of those who mourn, I realize that
 The only difference between people in this world
 Is not their wealth, fame or success.
 The only difference is
 Those who had love in their life
 And those who did not.

— Karyn D. Dedar
 "God Whispers: Stories of the soul,
 Lessons of the heart"



SIBLING PAGE

Siblings Speak Out

Having a brother or sister die creates a family crisis. Some of us have extreme reactions while others react as if we've never heard the news. Many things affect the way we behave, what we think, and how we feel. Some of us may know all the facts of what caused our sibling's death, while some of us may be confused by what we overheard. We may believe we were not included in what happened, or feel overlooked by the adults. We may wonder why this had to happen. We may even think we are to blame, even when others say we were not. All of us have thoughts and feelings we are afraid to share.

Other siblings have probably felt very much the same way we do at times. Reading the thoughts below of other siblings may encourage us to talk with adults we trust, to attend a sibling support group meeting or write our feelings in a diary. Siblings see if you relate to any of the statements below.

- Children grieve too, in our own way, in our own time. We grieve differently from adults. Sometimes we appear not to be grieving at all.
 - We do not want to be forgotten while our parents grieve. Parents often seem to emphasize the child that died instead of those of us who are living.
 - We need to know we are loved as much as our brother or sister who died. Sometimes we wonder if we would be missed as much.
 - We are afraid someone else will die. We want to be reassured but don't know what questions to ask.
 - Our relationship with our dead brother or sister was different from the relationship we had with our parents. We will not grieve the same as our parents will.
 - We know our sibling was not perfect. We know that he/she did things that were wrong. Please do not make an "angel" out of her or place him on a pedestal.
 - Just because siblings are not grieving or speaking openly doesn't mean that they aren't grieving in private. Often we talk with our friends or other adults.
 - We will grieve when we are ready. Please do not rush us or tell us we aren't doing it right. When we are not willing to talk about our dead brother or sister, it may be because we are trying to protect our parents. We do not want to make our parents cry or hurt more.
 - We are different people since our sibling died. Our parents are different people now too. We may think and act in new ways. Our personalities and values may not be the same as before they died.
 - People may have told us to "be strong" for our parents. We may resent this or find this too difficult, so we may feel even worse.
 - We may be overprotective of our parents after our sibling dies. Often, our parents are overprotective of us. We just want to be treated as "normal" kids.
 - We are not the same person as our sibling who died. Please do not compare us to them. Comparing children harms our self-esteem.
 - We are concerned when our parents bottle their grief inside and refuse to talk with us about it. It makes things more frightening.
 - Some siblings like to visiting the cemetery, some do not. Avoid forcing us to go if we don't want to.
 - We may not be ready to attend support group meetings. Listen to our answers when we are asked about going.
 - Even though we had fights with them, we did love them and miss them. There is a big hole in the family now.
 - Sometimes we believe we are to blame for their death. Maybe we could talk about it with an adult we trust. Perhaps someone can help us sort out what our responsibilities are.
 - It is okay for our parents and us to talk about them together. It's also okay for us to cry together.
 - We know our family will never be the same again. We wonder what it will be like in the future.
- Birthdays, anniversary, and holidays are especially hard to bear. Sometimes we act as though these days are not special. Sometime we pretend our family is the same way as before our sibling's death.

— BP/USA National Newsletter
"A Journey Together"
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Our Children Remembered

James William Aikin
Son of Earle Cleek
Grandson of Elizabeth and Barry Aikin
June 5, 1982 - March 18, 2008

Hope Barber
Daughter of Douglass and Vonda Barber
March 11, 2003 - April 25, 2003

Jay W. Barnett
Son of Virginia Barnett
March 13, 1988 - June 15, 2005

Richard Allen Bessling
Son of Robert and Barbara Bessling
March 18, 1982 - March 15, 1995

Ashley Nichole Bouher
Granddaughter of Mitzi Patelski
January 13, 1992 - March 10, 2008

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

Preston Leon Bromley
Son of Sandy and Leon Bromley
March 30, 1982 - September 2, 2003

David Ronnie Cain III
Son of Ginny and Donald Bussink
March 17, 1983 - January 31, 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

Emilia Morgan Claytor
Daughter of Ruthi and Ken Claytor
March 6, 2007 - March 6, 2007

David Michael Copeland
Son of Jay and Lois Copeland
March 27, 1978 - January 30, 2000

Michael J. Dickens Jr.
Son of Michael and Marla Dickens
July 7, 1968 - March 29, 1996

Brian Edward Durner
Son of Lynn and Bill Durner
Brother of Jamie Durner
March 24, 1983 - July 8, 2005

Rebecca Lynn Faires
Daughter of Georgia Nelsen
March 16, 1985 - December 18, 2003

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

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

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

Eric Paul Haynal
Son of Nancy Doherty
March 7, 1969 - September 13, 2005

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

Daniel Embert Hinton Jr.
Son of Dan and Pam Hinton
September 23, 1970 - March 7, 2003

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

Matthew James Katz
Son of Bob and Sue Katz
March 13, 1982 - September 7, 2003

Gary Wayne Keats
Son of Delores Shuey
December 3, 1964 - March 8, 2004

Stephen William Kilian
Son of Billy and Aimée Kilian
Grandson of Andre and Anne Denault
Grandson of Jay and Debbie Kilian
January 15, 2004 - March 18, 2006

Darin Michael Kilton
Son of Gil and Twanda Kilton
March 21, 1974 - June 5, 1985

Troy Matthew Kotsol
Son of Kathy and Bill Boob
March 2, 1971 - September 3, 2005

Bryan Adam Krouse
Son of James and Judy Krouse
March 11, 1965 - June 29, 2007

Richard McKinney Jr.
Son of Richard and Ellen McKinney
March 6, 1975 - February 19, 1998

Our Children Remembered

Matthew David Miles
Son of David and Donna Miles
March 24, 2000 - April 7, 2000

Edwin Brandon Molina Jr.
Son of Carole and Edwin Molina
July 6, 2005 - March 3, 2007

Kevin Michael Morris
Son of Gayle and David Morris
October 7, 1982 - March 30, 2007

Jennifer Margaret Neafsey
Daughter of Beth Neafsey
March 20, 1969 - February 25, 1984

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

Brian James Para
Son of Joan Para
February 19, 1970 - March 19, 1991

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

Michael Alfred Persetic
Son of Joan Persetic
March 26, 1968 - July 2, 1986

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

Daniel Keith Rogers
Son of Thomas and Lauri Rogers
June 16, 1981 - March 18, 2000

Philip Francisco Saff
Son of Jeff and Teri Saff
March 12, 2001 - March 16, 2001

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

David Michael Schell Jr.
Son of Betty and Joseph Jones
April 7, 1981 - March 20, 2005

Scott Christopher Shaffer
Son of Barbara Shaffer
March 17, 1967 - June 5, 2004

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

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

Christopher John Smith
Son of Debi Wilson-Smith
March 27, 1981 - June 30, 2000

Misty Dawn Smith
Daughter of Anne and DeWitt Wilcox
March 15, 1976 - January 12, 1997

Darin Lacey Valerio
Son of Gerry and Sharie Valerio
July 26, 1967 - March 18, 1991

John Kirkpatrick Wallace
Son of Catherine and James Wallace
March 3, 1953 - July 14, 1971

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

One More Day

If I were granted one more day
To spend alone with you,
I'd say the things I should have said
And do all I wanted to do.

I'd tell you that I love you.
Did I tell you that before?
Or did I just take it for granted
That you'd always walk through the door?

I'd play all the games you asked me to play
But I was too busy, you see.
I'm sorry for the times I wasn't there,
Now, I wish you were here for me.

I'd tell you I miss you so very much.
You've been gone forever, it seems,
And I still hope that one of these days
I'll wake from this terrible dream.

If one more day were given to me
To tell you the things I'd say,
The only thing I'd want after that,
Would be just one more day.

— Crystal (Armes) Gibbs

Hard Times

How to hold on and how to let go...How to lose and how to keep...these are hard problems for the bereaved parent.

We want to keep the child in our life, we want to remember the child, we want to save those parts of our life which are tied to the child.

Yet, at the same time, we know that the child is dead – things cannot be as they were before. The memories of good times now bring pain; the memories of the bad times raise guilt and feelings of powerlessness.

The end of the grief process is a resolution of this tension between holding on and letting go.

We can remember and be sad; we can remember and be happy; we can remember and just be.

But it takes a long time for such a resolution to happen and while we are in the process, we find ourselves pulled to one side and then to the other.

Sometimes we want to leave the room exactly as it was,. Other times we want to put everything away so nothing reminds us of the child.

Some times we want to talk over and over again about the events of the death; other times we want to avoid the topic altogether.

Sometimes, when all we have left of our child is our sadness, we don't want to give up our grief for fear of giving up on our child.

All that is a normal process. We go through it at any death. When our parent dies, the problem is how to hold onto our childhood and youth and yet give up our childhood and youth. So, we find ourselves keeping a bit of our parents in ourselves by becoming a little more like them. I was once talking about this in a class when, suddenly, a woman blurted out, "So that's why I wanted to use the good china so much a year after she died."

It is a lot harder to give up the child and keep the child at the same time because, when our parents die, we have to lose and keep our past. When our child dies, we have to lose and keep our future.

In our grandparent's day, losing a child was an expected part of life. But it is not in our time. Few of us ever knew anyone else to whom it happened. So we have few models.

Each of us seems to have to find out our own way for ourselves. It is a hard and lonely journey. But the experience of others who have gone down this valley is that there is a resolution at the end. We can hold on and let go.

If we can, for a moment, share with others on the same journey, we can help others find directions and let them help us.

That is what Bereaved Parents is all about.

— *Dennis Klass, Ph.D.*
Former Advisor to BP/USA

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations:

Denise, Russ and Nick Calo in memory of their son and brother Russell Joseph Calo Jr.
 Kathy and George Ireland and Lisa Willingham in memory of their daughter and sister Melissa Ireland Frainie
 Dave and Gayle Morris and Family in memory of their son, brother and uncle Kevin Michael Morris
 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.

ANNE ARUNDEL CHAPTER
 BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA
10th Annual Conference of Hope and Healing
Saturday, May 16, 2009, 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Would You Like to Help? There is a wide range of roles and tasks — both large and small — that go into organizing and producing the Conference, including finding workshop presenters, setting up the workshop rooms, stuffing envelopes and mailing out the announcements, assembling conference folders, helping with registration, and, of course, helping clean up after the conference.

If you would be interested in helping, *please contact Debi Wilson-Smith.*

410.757.8280 — debiws@verizon.net



Bereaved Parents of the USA
2009 National Gathering

Light My Way

New York City

Friday through Sunday, July 10 - 12, 2009

To register for the Gathering go to www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Crowne Plaza Laguardia Airport Hotel

104-04 Ditmars Blvd., East Elmhurst, NY

Reservations BP/USA

Discounted room rate (Double/Single) \$115.00 w/taxes \$133.88

Call toll free 1-888-233-9527 or go to www.cplaguardia.com

The Annual BP/USA Gathering this year will be in New York City — easily reachable by car or train. If you haven't attended a Gathering, we encourage you to make this one your first. Make your hotel reservation now to assure getting a room in the Gathering hotel. Also register for the Gathering as soon as possible — there is an early registration discount. Prior to June 1 registration is \$25.00 per person (up to \$75.00 per family); after June 1 the fee is \$35.00 per person (up to \$85.00 per family).

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.

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.

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.

MIS 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

G.R.A.S.P. (Grief Recovery After A Substance Passing)

Provides help, compassion and understanding for families or
 individuals who have had a loved one die as a result of drugs.
www.grasphelp.com; mom@jennysjourney.org
 Call Pat or Russ Wittberger at 843.705.2217.

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NEXT MEETING March 5, 2009



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DATED MATERIAL



UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

Helping Your Surviving Children

Thursday, March 5, 7:30 P.M.

The surviving children in our families often have issues of their own. These issues can be vastly different depending on the age of the surviving child, his/her location in the order of the family, etc. Alice Baij, a bereavement counselor and a bereaved sibling, will talk about her experience in dealing with the issues faced by the siblings of deceased children, and offer ideas on how we might help them.

Where Was God When My Child Died?!

Thursday, April 2, 7:30 P.M.

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.

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, if you wish, to say your child's name. 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 (410.721.1359) or tbelt@nahbrc.org.