



# Bereaved Parents of the USA

## Anne Arundel County Chapter

August 2011

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### Sunrise in August



Can it be true:  
This is an easy morning.  
The day escaping from  
Its dark confinements,  
While sun starts brushing  
Earth with silken warmth.  
No strain at all.  
No hurry anywhere.

Can it be true:  
Your mind is whole and steady  
Now you remember things  
As once they were  
On other mornings, then,  
And other days...

Can it be true:  
This is an easy morning?  
Remembering does not hurt?  
And you can close your eyes,  
And you can see,  
Can smile – at sunrise.

This is an easy morning.  
Use it well.

— Sascha (from *The Heart Always Remembers*)

### Chapter News

Several Chapter activities are underway, and several opportunities for your involvement in our Chapter are available:

- Our “Core Group” (that manages our Chapter) will meet Tuesday, August 9, at Calvary Methodist Church beginning at 7:15 p.m. Even if you’re not ready to volunteer for Chapter tasks, please come and provide us with your input on future programs and activities.
- The 9th annual Memory Walk will take place on Saturday, October 1 (see page 11 for more detail).
- The 27th annual Service of Remembrance is set for Sunday, December 4.
- Newsletter and website sponsorships in memory of your child are available; \$75 for newsletter sponsorships and \$25 for website sponsorships (see page 2 for more detail). Sponsorships and donations support the monthly newsletter, monthly meetings and special Chapter activities.

We hope you can join in and support the work of our Chapter.

— Terre Belt, Chapter Leader

The printing and mailing of this newsletter has been donated by

William and Jody Dale in memory of their son

**Joshua William Sims Dale**

August 30, 1980 – August 30, 2007



We could never have imagined a world without you, but the moon still elicits the ocean back to the shore, and the leaves continue to fade, yet return again. After losing you, you must know that we can now swim any tide or change of season.  
We carry you with us.

Bob and Sandi Burash in memory of their son

**Paul John Burash**

January 18, 1972 – August 8, 1992



We wonder how 19 years could have passed since you left us on that early August morning. Our love for you keeps growing, but how we miss that smiling face of yours, and wish with all our hearts that you could have stayed with us.  
We love you Paul.

## Next Meeting: August 4, 2011

Doors open at 7:15 p.m.  
Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

Program To Be Determined – No program is confirmed at the time of publication, but after a brief opening, sharing groups will be held as usual for first-time attendees, the newly bereaved, and the non-newly bereaved.

Calvary United Methodist Church  
301 Rowe Boulevard  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month and are open to anyone grieving the death of a child. Come around to the back of the church—there is parking and an entrance directly into our meeting room.

We are a self-help support organization dedicated to assisting parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child. We provide information and education to extended family and friends. 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.

### WHAT TO EXPECT AT OUR CHAPTER MEETINGS

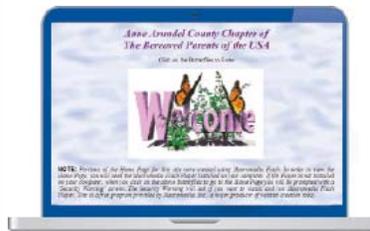
Our Chapter gathers one evening a month to address topics and offer support to those who are mourning the death of a child. Our meetings last for approximately 2 hours. Sometimes we schedule a 30-minute presentation at the beginning of our meeting. When the speaker or panel has concluded the presentation, we introduce ourselves and say our child's name. We then take a short break before dividing into sharing groups.

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—focus on the issues facing participants today.



Submissions for the September newsletter due to the Newsletter Team by August 1.  
Send an email to: [newsletter@aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](mailto:newsletter@aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org).

Chapter Leader:	Terre Belt 410.721.1359 <a href="mailto:tbelt@nahbrc.com">tbelt@nahbrc.com</a>
Newsletter Team:	Terre Belt Kathy Ireland Eryn Lowe
Treasurer:	Fran Palmer
Correspondence & Hospitality:	Carol Tomaszewski
Librarian:	Bob and Sandi Burash
Programs:	Paul Balasic



Would you like to sponsor the Chapter's newsletter or website  
([www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org))  
for one month in memory of your child? It's a wonderful way to honor your child's memory – to say his or her name for all the world to hear -- while providing financial support to the Chapter and its many activities offered to all those mourning the loss of a child.

Newsletter sponsorship is \$75 and website sponsorship is \$25. Just send an email to Chapter Leader Terre Belt ([tbelt@nahbrc.com](mailto:tbelt@nahbrc.com)), or call her at 410-721-1359, or sign up at a monthly meeting.

Say Their Names!!! And help the Chapter, too!

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BPUSA/AA County Chapter  
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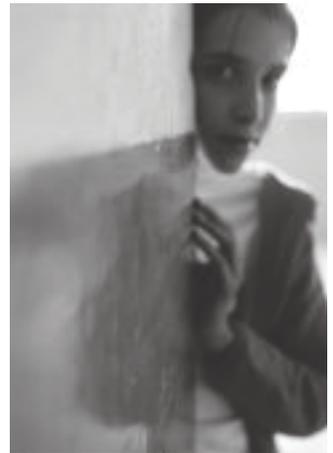
## Death is Nothing at All

Death is nothing at all. I have only slipped away into the next room. I am I, and you are you. Whatever we were to each other, that we still are. Call me by my familiar name, speak to me in the easy way which you always used to. Put no effort into your tone, wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow. Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together. Play, smile, think of me, pray for me. Let my name be ever the household word that it always was, let it be spoken without effect, without the trace of a shadow on it.

Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was; there is unbroken continuity. Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight? I am waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near, just around the corner.

Nothing is past; nothing is lost. One brief moment and all will be as it was before. How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when we meet again! All is well.

— Henry Scott Holland



### I Had a Dream

I had a dream the other night,  
It was a miracle, you see.  
I rocked you in my favorite chair,  
And held you close to me.

I sang to you a lullaby,  
So sweet and clear and fair;  
But then awoke. I called your name,  
And knew you were not there.

As darkness then engulfed me,  
I started to softly cry,  
"I love you so, my baby,  
Why did you have to die?"

I pray for sleep to come again,  
And hope that I will see  
Another dream just like before,  
With my son held next to me.

— Sherry Schwande, TCF  
Fond Du Lac, WI



### The Homecoming

The spirit, newly freed from earth,  
is all amazed at the surprise  
of his belonging suddenly  
as native to eternity  
to see himself, to realize  
the heritage that lets him be  
at home where all this glory lies.

By naught fortold could he have guessed  
such welcome home: the robe, the ring,  
music and endless banqueting,  
these people his, this place of rest  
known, as of long remembering  
himself a child of God and pressed  
with warm endearment to His breast.

— Jessica Powers

*Listen closely to the winds, and hear the gentle whisper of an angel's wings in flight.*

*Look far into the sky and see the shimmering stardust left behind...*

*Close your eyes, clear your thoughts, and feel the love of your very own, very real, guardian angel.*



## Newly Bereaved

PICTURES. I set them out, I put them away.... I get them out and start to go through them filled with wonder that the daughter pictured there is no longer going to call or walk in the door or send a card filled with love and humor – cards that brightened my day, made me laugh and always prompted me to call her and give her a big hug when she walked in the door.

PICTURES. I get them out. I run my hand over her face, lingering on her lips, remembering “kissy face mom.” And suddenly, overcome with grief, I pull that picture to me and kiss her and tell her how much I love her and how very much I miss her...and then I look again, and see her eyes – eyes that sparkled and twinkled with mischief though at times filled with deep reflection.

She was a sensitive, intuitive young woman who possessed wisdom and insight much beyond her years. She “left us” when she was only 24.

PICTURES. At times I hate them. They show me what I don’t have. They bring back memories of a time when Jody was healthy and happy. A time when life with her was a joy. I am not yet to a place in my grief healing where I can remember those times very well.

I’m still filled with memories of her illness, pain, and death, and I’m still at the place that I want all of those horrible memories to be a bad dream – a dream that I will wake from, hearing Jody’s voice calling me to come outside so that we can take some...

PICTURES.

— *Patty Fallon, TCF, Central Oregon*

## Being Strong

What is the myth about being strong? About “keeping a stiff upper lip?” Of course, if we could choose, we’d like to do our weeping in a place where we won’t cast a pall of gloom over some bright social occasion.



But who was ever ostracized for giving way to tears? If you have to explain, explain. If people are impatient – that’s their problem.

You have enough to contend with in your life right now without the extra burden of worrying about whether other people are going to be uncomfortable. If they’ve had a similar experience in their lives, they’ll know right away what’s going on. If they haven’t yet – maybe when sorrow comes their way, they’ll be grateful for the permission to grieve that your tears have given them.

You are not a stranger acting strangely. You are a human being, acting like a human being. In the map of the created world, the path to healing does not skirt around the edges of grief, but goes right through the middle of it.

— *Martha Whitmore Hickman (from Healing After Loss)*



## No One Told Me

No one ever told me that grief felt so much like fear. I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid. The same fluttering in the stomach, the

same restlessness, the yawning. I keep on swallowing.

At other times it feels like being mildly drunk, or concussed.

There is a sort of invisible blanket between the world and me. I find it hard to take in what anyone says. Or perhaps, hard to want to take it in. It is so uninteresting. Yet I want others to be about me. I dread the moments when the house is empty. If only they would talk to one another and not to me....

Do I hope that if feeling disguises itself as thought I shall feel less? Aren’t all these notes the senseless writhings of a man who won’t accept the fact that there is nothing we can do with suffering except to suffer it? Who still thinks there is some device (if only he could find it) which will make pain not be pain? It doesn’t really matter whether you grip the arms of a dentist’s chair or let your hands lie in your lap. The drill drills on.

— *Anne McCracken & Mary Semel (from A Broken Heart Still Beats after Your Child Dies)*

# SIBLING PAGE

## Memories of Your Face

I woke this morning  
Finding everything in a haze  
Wiping tears from my eyes  
I saw your smiling face.

I reached out and touched you  
Yet all I could feel was pain  
You felt nothing  
From your life within a frame.

I spoke. Receiving no reply,  
I told you that I loved you  
I asked you  
Why?

I'll never have another  
No one to take your place  
All I have, little brother, are memories and the picture of your face.

— Lisa Walmsley, TCF, Sarasota, FL



## Taken From Me



I'm sitting here in my room, looking at your picture.  
Wondering why you couldn't be a part of my future.  
Uncontrollable tears stream down my face,  
While my heart beat starts to race.

Asking god why he took you from my life,  
it was more painful than stabbing me with a knife.  
I still needed you here  
You were the one who made everything so clear.  
You are a part of me and I am a part of you  
When you died, a part of me died, too.  
I never knew how hard it was to lose someone you love  
Until the day you went to heaven above.  
Even though I can't see you,  
I know you're up there watching over me.  
I miss you more and more everyday  
And all I can do is pray.  
In my heart you shall forever remain.

— Angie Flores (from *Family Death Poems*)

## Missing You

There is so much I wish to say  
I think about you every day  
I miss your laugh  
I miss your smile  
Neither lost nor forgotten...  
I imagine them often

It just doesn't seem real that you're not around  
I still look for you when I'm in town...  
I'll never forget on the 9th of July...  
As I sat on the curb, tears filled my eyes....  
I found myself looking for you.....  
Until I realized what was true...

I will never again see your wave and your smile...  
We won't drive the streets and visit for a while...  
No "how you doing Sis" with a big hug to follow....  
No "what are you doing tonight" or "I'll see ya tomorrow"...  
All of these things, I cherish so dearly ...  
In my heart, I remember so clearly...



I still talk to you ...  
I know you can hear me...  
The song that reminds me of you began to play...  
As if you knew I was thinking of you this day...  
I smiled.. feeling you were there with me ...  
Again... I sat remembering...  
Tears filled my eyes as I listened to the song.  
But this time I accepted that you are gone.

Twelve years later..  
Seems like forever....  
I've asked myself and I've talked to God....  
How could he take you away for so long?  
The only answer that makes any sense is ....  
You're in God's hands now...  
As he planned  
Watching us from above...  
An Angel in heaven who will always be loved.

— Jaime (from *Family Death Poems*)

## Suicide

A death by suicide triggers great amounts of anger and guilt. However, some of those feelings can be balanced by struggling to see that the suicide was not so much a deliberate, hostile act, but a gesture of utter hopelessness and despair. Reminders that the person was so driven by emotional whirlwinds that it was impossible to sense any ray of hope can temper, considerably, the emotional impact of a death by suicide.

One of the best responses to a suicide that I have ever heard came through a sermon delivered by the pastor of a young man who shot himself. With great eloquence, his pastor was able to convey tremendous hope through these words:

*“Our friend died on his own battlefield. He was killed in action fighting a civil war. He fought against adversaries that were as real to him as his casket is real to us. They were powerful adversaries. They took toll of his energies and endurance. They exhausted the last vestiges of his courage, and only God knows this child of His suffered in the silent skirmishes that took place in his soul.”*

— Victor M. Parachin

*Following the death of his daughter Susy, Mark Twain described his loss by saying, “It would bankrupt the vocabularies of all the languages to put it into words.”*

## In the Twilight Zone

Do you remember the Rod Sterling TV dramas, “The Twilight Zone”? I was reminded of one recently when I passed another milestone in my grief journey.

The last TV show Ruthie and I watched together was a Twilight Zone about a mother who kept going into her daughter’s room and we could only see her go in and then hear her talking to her daughter. It was revealed, late in the show, that her daughter was, in fact, dead. She missed her so and would go into the room, shut the door, and visit with her. I remember that Ruthie thought that was spooky and said it sounded like something I would do! Neither of us could know that, not too long after, Ruthie would die and I would find out that I was in my own Twilight Zone!



From time to time in the last 11 years, I have gone into her room to clean, put things away, etc., but I had never packed up her things or really changed the room much. Everyone said we would know when the time was right. As we faced the 11th year since her death, we realized we had reached that time. Time to take the next step. So, in December I went through drawers, closet, etc. Some things went to our Family Refuge Center for children to use and some to our Head Start program. Some went into boxes to go under the bed and be there to look at whenever we want to. Memories went with each thing and both Jack and I kept saying – “Remember when....”

So, does this mean I’m out of the Twilight Zone? I doubt it – I just visit it less often! Do I talk to her and feel she is there with me – absolutely! Does this mean I “slipped over the edge”? I think not. I am a mother still on that journey through grief.

— Author Unknown



## Death and Grief

You want to know who has helped me?  
That's easy.

It wasn't the folks with the answers or the folks with the clichés and platitudes or the folks with the advice.  
No.

It was those wonderful people who listened all the way to the end of my sentences even when my sentences did not have periods.

It was those precious people who let me sob and slobber and wail and moan and who simply sat with me, staring into the bottom of empty coffee cups as if answers I needed might be hiding there.

It was those who listened and nodded and patted and hugged and wept and waited with me for this season called grief to end.

— *Harold Ivan Smith (from Death and Grief: Healing Through Group Support)*



## We Often Hear...

"It's been a couple of years, and I am still not getting any better." In other words, "Will I ever heal and how long will it take?"

Part of the problem is that we have so much to learn about grief. This may be the first time in our lives that we will be forced to give in to our feelings.

As children, we were told that it is not nice to be angry. We must be brave and not cry. Did you ever hear, "Cheer up, things are never as bad as they seem"? Well, now they are as bad as they can get. The advice we were given didn't help us deal with the death of a child.

Here are some more questions to ask and ponder:

How long will it take to see things differently?

When will we allow ourselves to believe that it is okay to cry, grieve, and feel so bad?

How long will it take us to accept that life can still be good, even if we have suffered a terrible loss?

With all this grief work to do, a couple of years is not a long time.

Some of us are still in the beginning stages of grief. But even when we begin to grow, we slip back sometimes. Eventually, we find a way to function, cope, and even enjoy life again. Then we can cherish the memories and be thankful for time and patience.

— *Jack Todd, TCF, Burlington County, NJ*



## Our Children Remembered

Karlee Marie Andrews  
Daughter of Brian Andrews  
November 15, 1992 - August 11, 2007

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

Douglas Lee Baer III  
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  
Sister of Eryn Belt  
Niece of Ed and Jeanne Heincelman  
August 26, 1979 - July 9, 1996

Morgan Jane Elizabeth Beverly  
Daughter of Kimberly and Wayne Beverly  
August 17, 1992 - January 25, 2009

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

Jasmin Ann Brisson  
Daughter of Pat and Paul Brisson  
August 27, 1979 - June 8, 2010

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

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

William Frederick Carter Jr.  
Son of Dot Carter  
Brother of Janet Tyler  
Brother of Lisa Beall  
April 24, 1959 - August 16, 1992

Ronald Joel Copas  
Son of Anne Copas  
August 22, 2001 - February 11, 2004

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

Joshua "Josh" William Sims Dale  
Son of Jody and Bill Dale  
August 30, 1980 - August 30, 2007

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

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

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

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  
Brother of Carrie Forbes-Reitzel  
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

Michael James Ha  
Son of Belinda Hawkins  
August 16, 1975 - November 22, 2008

Kelly Lynn Hopkins  
Daughter of Denise Morin  
August 24, 1974 - February 11, 2009

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

Jeremy Scott Jones  
Son of LeRoy and Jeanne Jones  
Grandson of Walter and Shirley Johnson  
August 4, 1976 - August 21, 1986

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

Scott Andrew Katsikas  
Son of Linda Snead  
June 9, 1980 - August 13, 2004

## Our Children Remembered

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

Demrick Paul "Rick" Ma  
Son of Rosemary and Steve Poppish  
August 11, 1961 - October 11, 2008

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

Solymar Rodriguez Torres  
Daughter of José Rodriguez and Vanya Torres  
August 27, 1993 - April 13, 2007

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

Michael Clark Schwink  
Son of Patricia and Glenn Schwink  
August 27, 1985 - June 14, 2009

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

Michael Leeman Smith  
Son of Pat Coja  
August 9, 1962 - August 7, 2008

Heather M. Spindler  
Daughter of Rich Suess and Becky Spindler  
Sister of Amber Faul  
August 7, 1985 - September 3, 2006

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

Tyler Hill Stubbs  
Daughter of Geri Thompson  
August 6, 1978 - November 11, 2003

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 Dan Tyler  
Granddaughter of Dot Carter  
October 12, 1986 - August 23, 1992

Daniel Alfred 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

*This is for all the caterpillars that never became butterflies.  
All the butterflies that never caught the wind in their wings.  
And all the hearts that had hopes and dreams of a  
wondrous flight together.*

Donations may be made to offset the costs of our local Chapter's events and communications. We gratefully acknowledge the following donations made in the last month:

### DONATIONS:

Kenneth A. Smith in memory of Tracy Fotino



## A STORY OF HOPE

Shortly after Nina died, I remember well-meaning friends talking to me about hope. My reply was usually, "What was there to have hope about?" The only thing I prayed and hoped for was that my daughter would come back again, that the accident that took her life had never happened. Since that wasn't possible, what was the point of having hope?

Our lives have been turned upside down and we feel so out of control. We feel like we have failed – that the one thing we as good parents had tried to do was to keep our children out of harm's way. We made sure that we locked away poisons, that they got their immunizations on time, that they buckled their seat belts; when older we taught them about the dangers of drugs and unprotected sex—all the things that we hoped would ensure their safety and well-being. And still they died. How could that be?

With the knowledge of our total loss of control, we look for something to cling to that will help pull us out of the valley. I desperately sought out things that I could be hopeful for; I needed something that let me know that my daughter's life went on...that at 15 ½ years old she didn't just stop "being."

Many of you have heard my story of what I call the "miracle pictures." I told my story and brought the pictures with me to share at a Compassionate Friend's meeting about a year ago. But for those who haven't heard it, I would like to share that story, because if anything brings with it a message of hope that our children live on, I think it is this story. We were vacationing in Florida when the unthinkable occurred.

We were driving back from a day at Daytona Beach en route to my celebratory birthday dinner. Just a mile from our destination a drunk driver fell asleep at the wheel, crossed the median, and hit the side of the car where my beloved Nina was sitting. She was killed instantly. As we know, all too well in each of our own circumstances, the next few weeks were a blur. But the one thing that I remember, and was obsessed with, were the pictures that had been taken that day before the horrific accident that took my daughter's life. Shortly before we left the beach that day, only hours before the accident, Nina had handed the camera to her brother, Dan, and asked him to take a picture of the two of us together. It was the last picture taken that day. In the days following her death, I repeatedly cried out, "I need that picture" to anyone who would listen. They could only helplessly turn away knowing I was asking the impossible.

In our conversations with the highway patrolman who was in charge of the accident, we repeatedly asked if the pictures were found yet. The officer said that the trunk of the car where I had put the camera that day had been demolished and that it would take "nothing short of a miracle" to have survived the impact. For brevity's sake, I won't go into all the details, but I will tell you that three weeks after the accident, Corporal Gordon Jennings of the Florida Highway Patrol sent me a package. He had listened to this mother's hopeful plea that someone look for the camera, though he knew in his heart he'd never find it. Even so, he walked that stretch of freeway and came upon a drainage ditch, looked down and saw the flattened cardboard disposable camera covered in water with a tire track mark over it! It had been immersed in water for weeks and run over by a lawn tractor! He took the compressed camera to Walgreen's and asked them if they could try to salvage any of the pictures. Remarkably, 7 of the 24 pictures that had been taken had survived.

And one of those pictures was the last one of mother and daughter, together, her head on my shoulder, arm around me, smiling her dazzling smile. The watermarks seemed to split as they stretched toward the picture of the two of us on the beach—it was as if the waters had parted to allow the picture of the two of us to remain intact!

I had read in a past newsletter that the people who put together the Chicken Soup for the Soul books were looking for stories from bereaved parents. I felt this was such a hopeful story that I wanted to share it with as many people as possible. Even though I didn't expect it to be published, I felt I had nothing to lose. Amazingly, the story about the day my beloved Nina died and the "miracle pictures" was accepted and will be in the Chicken Soup for the Christian Family Soul, to be released in bookstores in late March of 2000.

I believe those pictures were a gift from Nina so that I could share this story of hope with all of you, to let you know that our lost loved ones are still very much with us. They don't always show themselves in such obvious ways, but they are with us.



## NINTH ANNUAL

### ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY CHAPTER Bereaved Parents of the USA

*Memory Walk*

**Saturday, October 1, 2011 • 8:30 a.m.**  
**Dogwood Pavilion at Quiet Waters Park**  
**600 Quiet Waters Park Road**  
**Annapolis, MD 21403**  
**Rain or Shine!**



On Saturday, October 1, the Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA is sponsoring the ninth annual Memory Walk...to remember all of our children who died too soon, but who still walk in our hearts and in the hearts of family and friends.

We will meet in the Dogwood Pavilion beginning at 8:30 a.m. for registration, light refreshments, and a few moments of fellowship before we proceed on the Walk.

Please come join us to remember.

Parking is free at Quiet Waters Park for those participating in the Chapter's Memory Walk. Indicate to the attendant at the entrance booth that you will be participating in the Walk. Once again we will be posting pictures of our children along the course of the Walk. If you are going to join us at the Walk and would like your child's picture posted, please send an email to [pjbspmd@gmail.com](mailto:pjbspmd@gmail.com). Attach a digital picture to the email or send a photo to PO Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401-0280. If your child's photo was in the 2010 Service of Remembrance slide show, you don't need to submit an additional photo.

For more information or to help with the Walk, call Barbara Bessling at 410-761-9017, or email [BeBessling@aol.com](mailto:BeBessling@aol.com), or go to our website at [www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org).

Bereaved Parents of the USA  
Anne Arundel County Chapter  
P.O. Box 6280  
Annapolis, MD 21401-0280  
www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

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*NEXT MEETING August 4, 2011*



**Time sensitive**  
**Must be delivered by AUGUST 1, 2011**

**UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:**

**Program To Be Determined**  
**Thursday, August 4, 2011**

After a brief opening (and possible program), we will have our usual sharing groups for first-time attendees, the newly bereaved, and the non-newly bereaved.

**T-Shirt Making**  
**Thursday, September 1, 2011**

After a short discussion about the emotional value of making a memorial, attendees will create Memory Walk shirts. You bring the shirt (t-shirt, button down, etc.) you wish to decorate and the picture that you would like to have copied and ironed onto your shirt, and the Chapter will provide the supplies. Come join us in making memories and learning more about your children and ours.

**Service of Remembrance**  
**Sunday, December 4, 2011**

St. Martin's-in-the-Field Severna Park, MD

**RESOURCES:**

**Bereaved Parents of the USA**  
[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org) or 708-748-7866

**Hospice of the Chesapeake**  
[www.hospicechesapeake.org](http://www.hospicechesapeake.org) or 410-987-2003

**Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center**  
[www.mdcrimevictims.org](http://www.mdcrimevictims.org) or 410-234-9885

**Suicide Support Group**  
410-647-2550; meets the first Tuesday of each month in Severna Park, MD

**MIS Support Group (miscarriage, infant death or stillbirth)**  
443-481-6114; meets the first Monday of each month in Edgewater, MD

**Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP)**  
[www.grasphelp.com](http://www.grasphelp.com) or 843-705-2217

**The Compassionate Friends of Prince George's County**  
Meetings are on the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m., United Parish of Bowie, 2515 Mitchellville Road, Bowie, MD

We appreciate feedback on our Chapter meetings. If you have suggestions for future topics of discussion, please contact our Program coordinator: Paul Balasic at [pjbspmd@gmail.com](mailto:pjbspmd@gmail.com) or **443.566.0193**.