



# Bereaved Parents of the USA

## Anne Arundel County Chapter

November 2013

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### Stepping Down...

I am pleased to announce that our Anne Arundel County Chapter of BP/USA has a new Chapter Leader, Tiffany Gordon. I'm excited about our new Leader because she brings with her enthusiasm and creative ideas that will serve the Chapter and our members well, yet she understands our Chapter's existing strengths and will continue to rely on them. I know you'll join me in welcoming Tiffany and in providing her with your support as she serves the bereaved parents' community.

It has been my sincere privilege and honor to have served as the Chapter's Leader for the past five-and-a-half years. For me, it's all about my daughter Cortney and my niece Traci and helping others in their memory. I was drawn into service to our Chapter because the volunteers that are this Chapter showed me not only how to survive the worst tragedies of my life, but also how to live again. I will be forever indebted to this Chapter, and I will continue to repay the debt.

There is no way I could have done the Chapter Leader's job these past years without the "forever-giving legion of volunteers" – fellow bereaved parents (all but one)– who serve our Chapter. I know that I will surely forget someone and I apologize for that, but I would be remiss if I did not offer a special, heartfelt thank you to Ann & Noel Castiglia, Sandi & Bob Burash, Barbara Bessling, Fran Palmer, Carol Tomaszewski, Paul Balasic, Janice Kunkel, Gene and Marlen Maier, Bobbi Remines, Janet Tyler and my daughter Eryn and my husband John -- you were always there and our members and I were the benefactors of your time and caring. Thank you!

— Terre Belt

### Stepping Up

When I lost my daughter, Lahna, I felt like I couldn't live without her. As that feeling faded I was left living in a world that didn't understand me. That feeling continued for about 5 ½ years...until I came to my first Bereaved Parents meeting. Ever since, I have felt that I do belong and that I am not alone in my grief. This group is amazing! Each time you come to a meeting and share your feelings and thoughts, you are helping someone else who may not be able to verbalize how they are feeling. As the new Chapter Leader, I only want to continue the process of helping other bereaved parents and family members. I would also like to introduce June Erickson, who will be working with Barbara Bessling on our website, and Mary Redmiles, who will be taking over the programs for Paul Balasic and acting as Vice Leader for the Chapter. Together we will work with our wonderful Core Group members to ensure you have the support needed to continue your grief work.

That said, this is your group and we need to hear from you! Please let any of us know if you have suggestions for programs or ways we can improve. You can also attend our next Core Group meeting on November 12. This meeting is where we discuss the monthly meetings and upcoming events. Please join us and together we will continue providing help to those who need it.

— Tiffany Gordon



### Announcing the Chapter's Gift Giving

For many mourning the loss of a child, holidays are difficult days, and gift giving loses its luster. This year, consider buying a gift in memory of your child and bringing it to our monthly meeting in DECEMBER. We'll donate these "love gifts" to children in need through local charities. Doing good deeds in memory of your child lets you stay connected to them while providing for children who have very little.



### 2013 Service of Remembrance

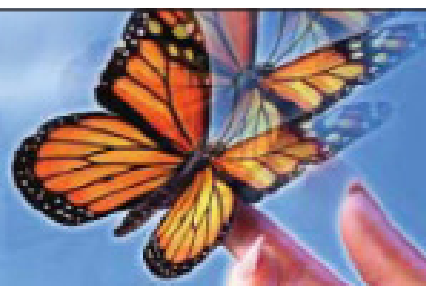
Please join us for this special Service sponsored by the Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA at 3 p.m., Sunday, December 8, 2013 St. Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal Church in Severna Park, MD.

The printing and mailing of this newsletter have been donated by

Pat Donoho in memory of her daughter

**Jacquelyn Connolley**

October 3, 1969 – September 13, 1986



## Next Meeting: November 7, 2013

**What Do I Have to be Thankful for?** – Thanksgiving is a day when we “count our blessings” and take note of those things in our life for which we are thankful. After our child dies, it is hard to think of anything for which to be thankful, as our grief colors everything. A panel of Chapter members will relate their own experiences and what they have found to be thankful for in their lives.

Sharing groups – a key part of each Chapter meeting – will be held as usual for first-time attendees, and the newly and non-newly bereaved.

Calvary United Methodist Church  
301 Rowe Boulevard  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month beginning at 7:30 p.m. 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.

*Doors open at 7:15 p.m.*

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 December newsletter due to the Newsletter Team by November 1.

Send an email to: [newsletter@aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](mailto:newsletter@aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org).

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### Do You Use Amazon.com?

If so, AND you enter through our Chapter’s website ([www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org)), the Chapter will earn a commission of five percent on your purchases. Using the link does not increase your cost (and information about your purchase is not shared with the Chapter), but it does earn the Chapter a commission from Amazon. It’s an easy way for you to support our Chapter’s activities.

Go to the Chapter’s home page, click on the butterflies on the welcome page, and then scroll down the first page to the bottom, where there is an Amazon.com graphic that takes you to Amazon’s site. Entering Amazon’s site in this manner – through the Chapter’s website – ultimately credits the Chapter with the five percent commission on any purchases that follow.

Thanks in advance for your help!

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 Newsletter Editor Terre Belt ([thbelt@comcast.net](mailto:thbelt@comcast.net)), 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  
P.O. Box 6280  
Annapolis, MD 21401-0280



### At Thanksgiving

As I sit and think of you  
I see your face with eyes of blue.  
I wonder how you are.  
In your separate world so far.  
Will you have a Thanksgiving Day?  
In your world so far away.  
I still question what I am thankful for  
As I watch through the silent door.  
Then I remember what I felt with you  
When your life was so fresh and new  
Then I know I am thankful (for you)

— Maureen Kelley, TCF  
Fort Leonard Wood, MO

### Thanksgivings 1977 – 1981

#### *I remember –*

The inability to chew or swallow that first Thanksgiving after Linda died; the choked back tears, the sick heart, the hollowness, the painful memories of Thanksgivings past, and the blessed relief sleep brought to my pain

#### *I remember –*

The busyness of working as a volunteer that second and third Thanksgiving after Linda died; and the good feeling it gave me of “running away” from it all and the blessed relief sleep brought to my pain

#### *I remember –*

The inability to prepare any of her favorite foods that fourth Thanksgiving after Linda died; the tears that fell at the smell of turkey cooking, the parade, the football game, the emptiness, the incomplete family and the blessed relief sleep brought to my pain

#### *I remember –*

Awakening with a lightness and joy in my heart that fifth Thanksgiving after my Linda died; the thankfulness for having my remaining family together, the beautiful memories of past Thanksgivings, the “Wholeness” of me, and the blessed relief Peace brought to my pain.

— Priscilla J. Norton, TCF, Providence, RI



### Thankful vs. Thankless

This is the time of year when many bereaved parents start saying out loud what newly bereaved parents have been thinking for weeks and weeks: “I really am dreading the holidays.” And why not? When your grief is so new, you haven’t had the necessary time to accept life as it is for you now.

On the other hand, there are those of us who have had that necessary time, and the proper support, who are able to observe the holidays in a less painful way. We have kept some of the old traditions that warm our hearts, and thrown out those that are either too painful or meaningless now. We have created a life that doesn’t include someone who was a vital part of who and what we were. We’re different now, doing different things because losing a child forces you into that position if you are to survive in an emotionally healthy way.

The words “thankful” and “thankless” follow one another in my dictionary – so close together in a book, yet so far apart in meaning. When you think about it, the difference between the two words is “full” and “less.” Although those of us who have had more time do, like the more newly bereaved, have less in the way of family, our lives still do have a fullness, because we have learned to be thankful and to appreciate that which we have left in the way of people and memories – more so than we ever thought possible.

As you approach this Thanksgiving, if you haven’t been able to make your adjustment, I hope you will feel whatever you must for now, because whatever you are feeling is okay. It isn’t until you have reached the place in your grief where the ability to make good choices returns to your life, that you can make some important changes in how you approach the holidays. I hope the transition from thankless to thankful will be soon in coming for you, for that will mean some peace has returned to your life. Above all, I do wish you peace during this holiday season. I wish you more of the same in the new year.

— Mary Cleckley, Atlanta, GA



## I Don't Know Why

I don't know why.  
I'll never know why.  
I don't have to know why.  
I don't like it.  
What I do have to do is make a choice about my living.  
What I do want to do is accept it and go on living.  
The choice is mine.  
I can go on living, valuing every moment in a way I never did before,  
Or I can be destroyed by it and, in turn, destroy others.  
I thought I was immortal.  
That my family and my children were also  
That tragedy happened only to others.  
But I know now that life is tenuous and valuable.

So I am choosing to go on living, making the most of the time I have,  
Valuing my family and friends in a way never possible before.

— Iris Bolton

*Submitted by Tiffany Gordon in memory of her daughter Lahna*



## Washing the Family Car

As the water began to head across the hard black surface, my mind slipped into a memory. Back to a time when a smile could fix the pain, and mortality was not questioned.

You and I played during the dreary task of washing the family car. Rinsing turned into a water fight. Soapy sponges became weapons, and upside down buckets served as our fortress. This dull chore became an adventure, a game shared only by you and me. Drenched, the giggles slowly subsided, and we turned to complete the more serious side of our labor. We began to dry off the car.

As the memory faded, so did my smile. While forlorn, my mind came back to the present. I had my own serious task to complete. So I picked up a towel to dry off your headstone.

— Adela Rosales

## Waiting for Answers

Years ago I left my first meeting of the bereavement support group The Compassionate Friends (TCF) and drove home in tears. My son Max had died a few short weeks before and I had been anxiously awaiting this evening. These people must have some answers, I thought. With paper and pen in my purse, I was ready to take notes and do as they prescribed. I would do anything to ease the ache in my soul.

But when I walked out into the spring air later that night, I felt betrayed. I hadn't heard any answers. Instead of learning how to leave my grief behind, it had been confirmed, made more real with expression. I knew I would miss Max forever. Now I wondered if I would grieve forever. Would it always be this way, a flash of pain aligned with every memory?

During the next months and years, I attended TCF meetings and conferences, read books, raged, kept busy, sometimes spent the day in bed. I wrote, cried and talked about Max. Slowly, I discovered the answers I had long feared were true: yes, I would grieve forever, and yes, my memories will often provoke tears. But something had changed.

My grief was now more forgiving, my tears almost sweet with memory. Max's life took shape again as the anguish of his death began to recede. If I would always miss him, I would also always have him with me in so many ways. I wanted to carry his memory into the future – the joy, the lessons, and the inevitable pain. How could I do otherwise?

As I walked to my car after that first meeting, the TCF Chapter Leader caught up with me. "How can I stop this pain?" I asked. She put her arm on my shoulder. "Just do what feels right to you," she said. "Listen to your heart. And we'll be here to listen, too." Sometimes the best advice is none at all.

— Mary Clark, TCF, Sugarland/SW Houston, TX





## One Breathtaking Moment on a Particularly Hard Day

Last spring, Emilie was given a live butterfly garden kit for free at a yard sale. She lovingly stared at the box the whole way home, talking and talking about how she was finally going to have a real butterfly for a pet! I tried to explain that once the butterfly came out of its chrysalis, she would have to set it free. Emilie shrugged off my pessimistic comment and continued to explain why her butterfly would be different. She would love and care for her butterfly so well that it couldn't possibly leave her. I smiled and then rolled my eyes.

Weeks passed, and we watched her science project come to life in the hanging basket strung up in the corner of her room. Every day, we would peek in and look to see if there were any changes yet. Then finally, one morning, the first butterfly emerged! In a few days, the rest of them would be ready and we would have to let the butterflies go free. While we all excitedly talked about the upcoming liberation, I could see the disappointment in Emilie's eyes. When I asked her if everything was OK, she just shrugged her shoulders and walked away.

The day finally came to let the butterflies free, and the whole family gathered in front of the house to watch. On my way out, Emilie quietly pulled me aside and asked, "Do you think at least one butterfly will sit on my finger before it flies away?" I sheepishly smiled at her, not wanting to get her hopes up and simply said that I had never seen that happen before, but you never know!

The girls all gathered around the basket and Emilie began to unzip the lid and pull it back to let the butterflies out. One by one, each of the butterflies flew up into the sky and fluttered around the yard. Madeline and Samantha were ecstatic and screaming with excitement. Emilie, on the other hand, looked disappointed. She leaned up against her bike with a flat expression on her face. I knew she was sad that none of the butterflies had landed on her finger.

I miss Em a lot lately. I miss everything about her sweet, beautiful face smiling up at me. It is sometimes hard to understand why I don't still have my little butterfly. There are days when my face, I am sure, looks a lot like Emilie's did the day we let her butterflies go. I want her to be with me. I want to hold her and listen to her constant talking. I pray for help, strength and patience to endure the longing my heart feels for my little girl.

Last week, I was having a particularly hard day. School was over and it was so beautiful outside that we decided to play in the backyard for a bit. Madeline and Samantha both jumped on the swings and I sat down on the grass to watch. A few minutes later, Madeline leapt off the swing and came running towards me pointing into the air and shouting for me to look up. A large, beautiful butterfly was flying by and softly landed on the ground in front of me. It was gorgeous!

Madeline bent down to get a closer look and said, "Mom, I think I want to hold it." And I automatically responded, "Madeline, butterflies don't really like..." My eyes widened and my heart stopped as I watched this beautiful butterfly walk right onto Madeline's open hand. I couldn't believe it. I truly had never seen something like that before. In that moment, I could feel my body being filled with love and happiness. I could feel her, my baby, with me. It was wonderful. Madeline held the butterfly up to her face to get a closer view and then smiled up at me with excitement. She then turned to Samantha and asked if she wanted a turn, too.

Samantha excitedly held her hand next to Madeline's and I watched in shock as the butterfly was passed easily over onto her hand. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. It was amazing! A few moments later, the butterfly flew away and I was left catching my breath, wondering if what I just saw really had happened at all.

Again, it was wonderful. It was... a good day.



— Alissa Parker, mother of Sandy Hook shooting victim Emilie Parker  
Submitted by Rhonda French in memory of her son Brandon French



## Playing with Three Strings

We have seen Yitzhak Perlman, who walks the stage with braces on both legs, on two crutches. He takes his seat, unhinges the clasps of his legs, tucking one leg back, extending the other, laying down his crutches, placing the violin under his chin.

On one occasion, one of his violin strings broke. The audience grew silent, but the violinist did not leave the stage. He signaled the maestro, and the orchestra began its part. The violinist played with power and intensity on only three strings. With three strings, he modulated, changed and recomposed the piece in his head. He re-tuned the strings to get different sounds, turned them upward and downward. The audience screamed with delight, applauded their appreciation.

Asked later how he had accomplished this feat, the violinist answered, "It is my task to make music with what remains." A legacy mightier than a concert. Make music with what remains. Complete the song left for us to sing, transcend the loss, play it out with heart, soul and might with all remaining strength within us.

— Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis



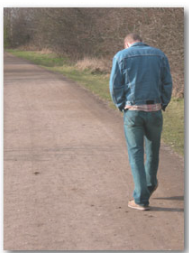
## To Love and To Mourn

When someone you care about dies, your capacity to love dictates your necessity to mourn. Work with thousands

of bereaved persons, combined with my personal losses, have convinced me of one thing: You cannot heal without mourning or expressing your grief outwardly. Denying your grief, running from it, or minimizing it only seems to make it more confusing and overwhelming. To lessen your hurt, you must embrace it.

Reconciling your grief does not happen quickly. Grief is a process, not an event. Consequently, you must be patient with yourself. When you come to trust that pain will not last forever, it becomes tolerable. Deceiving yourself into thinking that the pain does not even exist, will make it intolerable.

— Alan D. Wolfelt (from *Understanding Grief, Helping Yourself Heal*)



## A Solitary Journey

Grief is a solitary journey. No one but you knows how great the hurt is. No one but you can know 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

## Butterflies and Visions

The daughter of a friend of mine was killed in an auto crash a short time ago. In one of our telephone conversations she hesitantly told me that her surviving son had a "vision" of his sister. I could tell by the way she was telling the story she wasn't sure just how I would react. She told me her son is an intelligent and stable person and would not make up something like this. I could almost hear the relief in her voice when I told her his experience is not an unusual one; a large number of grieving people report similar experiences.

Actually, nearly half of the grieving population has a sensory experience that involves their deceased loved one. Griefers report seeing, hearing or strongly feeling their loved one's presence. Others report an event or occurrence that assures them their loved one is safe and happy.

Various theories attempt to explain this phenomenon, but none are conclusive. For those of us who have had these experiences, the only important conclusion we need is that the experience was very real and very meaningful to us. You may be able to explain the presence of a purple butterfly over the grave of my three-year-old granddaughter one sunny afternoon, but for me it is a message from Emily saying, "Grandma, I'm okay." Coincidence might explain it, but it was certainly significant for me, considering that purple is a color I wear often and butterflies are one of my favorite things.

These experiences may be hallucinations or coincidences, but nonetheless, a lot of us are having them. Personally, I'm glad of it.

— Margaret Gerner, BP/USA, St. Louis, MO

# SIBLING PAGE



## Will You Know Me?

Jordan, will you know me when I get to your home?  
 When I walk through the gates, will you call me your own?  
 Will you say, "Laura, my sister," or "Hi, what's your name?"  
 Will I look different? Will you look the same?  
 How will we act? Will it be like before?  
 Will we laugh again, "'Til our sides are sore?"  
 Will the love be like it should be between a sister and a brother?  
 Or will it be as if we just met one another?  
 When I get there, you'll never be alone.  
 Jordan, will you know me when I get to your home?

— Laura Touton, TCF, Knoxville, TN

## Especially for Brothers and Sisters

What do I say? What do you say when you're asked, "How many brothers and sisters do you have?" Or maybe you've picked up the phone and the caller wants to speak to the person who died. What can you say? You might be meeting someone for the first time and they don't know about the death in the family, and you aren't sure you want to tell them, and you don't know what to say.

These are tough questions for lots of young people who grieve the death of someone close. These situations bring up all sorts of emotions...like sadness, anger, fear, loneliness, embarrassment...and it's hard to think of a good answer. Some kids talked about this and had some good ideas.

You can think about these questions in advance, before they come up, and you can be prepared with an answer. For instance, when you get one of these phone calls, and the caller is obviously just selling something and not a friend, you could say, "She is deceased, please don't call back."

Answer in a way that will help you feel comfortable and in control. For instance, you could say that you have two brothers; one died a year ago at the age of 13 and the other is now nine. If your tone of voice shows that you feel comfortable with your answer, then the other person will, too. You can even practice how you would answer.

You can say as much or as little as you like. You can always add more details later if you want. For instance, you could say, "My brother (or sister) died last year, but right now is not a good time to talk about it." Later, when you become better friends with the person, you might feel like telling them about the person who died, and telling them how it is for you now. Good friends don't have to worry about what to say.

— Barb Coe, Inside Fernside newsletter, Cincinnati, OH



## Our Children Remembered

Jon Russell Aikin  
Grandson of Elizabeth and Barry Aikin  
September 4, 1983 - November 19, 2001

Mariah Nicole Albee  
Daughter of Valerie and Richard Albee  
November 27, 1982 - September 7, 2012

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

Glorimar Arán  
Daughter of Sandra Arán  
July 26, 1989 - November 11, 2001

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

Linda Lou Boyce  
Daughter of Cora Boyce  
March 29, 1967 - November 30, 2004

Michelle Marie Dyke  
Daughter of Marie Dyke  
May 19, 1975 - November 10, 1992

Alice Engleman  
Daughter of Elizabeth Engleman  
November 20, 1997 - June 21, 2011

Tom James Geoghegan  
Son of Maureen Geoghegan  
November 13, 1969 - June 30, 2013

Jeffrey Andrew Grimm  
Son of John and Linda Grimm  
November 25, 1973 - September 28, 1989

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

Galen Andrew Harig-Blaine  
Son of Clare and Stephen Blaine  
November 14, 1989 - April 22, 2007

Jolene Dawn McKenna  
Daughter of Charlene Kvech  
February 8, 1967 - November 22, 1971

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

John David "JD" Openshaw  
Son of David and Lily Openshaw  
November 9, 1994 - February 21, 1997

Marco Pena  
Nephew of Dianna McKinnon  
November 28, 1989 - February 14, 2012

Nicholas Grant Poe  
Son of Karen and Michael Willey  
November 9, 1982 - January 23, 2002

Samantha Ann Rankin  
Daughter of Vickie and Bart Rankin  
November 19, 1988 - May 31, 2010

Joseph William Remines  
Son of Bobbi Remines  
November 16, 1980 - January 3, 1994

André Marc Sanders  
Son of Karen Sanders  
April 8, 1968 - November 27, 2002

Erin Michelle Shannon  
Daughter of Karen Shannon  
November 21, 1979 - March 18, 2009

Gary "Jake" David Spirt  
Son of Dee Spirt-Rayment  
November 19, 1962 - November 21, 2002

Karen Leese Stevens  
Daughter of Judith and John Leese  
July 19, 1962 - November 17, 2009

Tori Danielle Stitely  
Daughter of Tawny and Kevin Stitely  
May 21, 1985 - November 26, 2012

Robert Matthew White  
Son of Kathleen Savage  
September 20, 1972 - November 13, 1993

Tracy Woodfork, Jr  
Grandchild of Julie Bergmeier  
November 28, 1989 - October 8, 2012

Maraki Yemane  
Daughter of Patrizia Giorgio and  
Menelik Yemane  
April 1, 2006 - November 21, 2010

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*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 recently:

John and Jayne Astle in memory of their son David Astle  
Paul and Claudia Balasic in memory of their daughter Bethany Balasic  
Joseph and Irene Belcher in memory of their son Joey Belcher  
John and Terre Belt in memory of their daughter and niece Cortney Belt and Traci Heincelman  
Barbara Bessling in memory of her son Ricky Bessling  
Wayne and Wanda Bessling in memory of Ricky Bessling and Dorothy Bessling Pascas  
Bob and Sandi Burash in memory of their son Paul Burash  
Noel and Ann Castiglia in memory of their daughter Tria Marie Castiglia  
Lauri Crumback in memory of Samantha Rankin  
Pat Donoho in memory of her daughter Jackie Connelly  
Gary and Beverley Dunn in memory of their grandson Dayden Alexander Dunn  
Earp and Associates Realty, Inc. in memory of Samantha Rankin  
Alli and Holly Enders in memory of their daughter Christine Kelly Enders  
Paul and Sheryl Eulitt in memory of Christine Enders  
Carol Fritz in memory of her daughter Katie Fritz  
Brenda Gawthrop in memory of her son Andrew Gawthrop  
Carol Harris in memory of Samantha Rankin  
Patricia Lakomyj in memory of Samantha Rankin  
M/M Magnus in memory of Samantha Rankin  
Donald and Norma Melcher in memory of their son Brian Richard Melcher  
George and Amy Messina in memory of Andrew Gawthrop  
Justin and Becky Michaud in memory of Samantha Rankin  
Rich O'Donnell and Fran Palmer in memory of Scott Thomas Palmer  
Bart and Vickie Rankin in memory of their daughter Samantha Rankin  
Brandie Rankin in memory of her sister Samantha Rankin  
Joe and Mary Redmiles in memory of their son Tommy Redmiles  
Tom and Joyce Schall in memory of Thomas Jeffrey Schall  
Laura and Ashley Sisler in memory of Brandon Michael Sisler  
Kenneth Smith in memory of his niece Tracy Fotino  
Kevin and Tawny Stitely in memory of their daughter Tori Stitely  
Rick and Carol Tomaszewski in memory of their son David Tomaszewski  
Brian and Terri Vosburg in memory of Tori Stitely

At the Memory Walk, family and friends also walked in memory of Tori, Tracey and Katie; Zachary Lee Dukes; Owen Robert Sinex; Jayla Powell; Joseph Claude Smith; Lahna Lynn Gordon; and Kelly Schultz.

## Chapter Notes

### Core Group to Meet on November 12

Please join our Chapter's Core Group to plan future programs and activities. We will meet beginning at 7:15pm at Calvary United Methodist Church. Enter through the front of the church and our meeting room will be announced on the message board in the foyer.

### Conference News

Our Chapter is planning a one-day Conference for April 26, 2014. This will be a day of learning, sharing, and communicating with others who understand our grief. The day will begin with registration and a continental breakfast, opening remarks and a keynote speaker, followed by two workshops/sessions. Lunch will follow, with two additional workshops/sessions and a closing ceremony. We hope to have a book sale area, a sales table with a variety of items, and of course, the "memory button" makers.

Everyone will have the opportunity to participate in four workshops during the day, and we hope to provide a choice of four or five different workshops for each time slot, so that means a possibility of 16 to 20 different topics. These workshops MAY include learning about different aspects of grief, discussions on certain circumstances related to losing our child, hands-on creative sessions, and discussions on relationships and signs from our loved ones.

This Conference is for YOU, so please let us know if there are any topics you would like included during the day for our workshops/sessions. Have any of the monthly programs been meaningful to you, so that you would like an expanded version during the Conference? Also, if you know someone you feel would be a good speaker and/or presenter, please let me know.

We will need volunteers for a myriad of behind-the-scenes activities in order to make the day a success. In future newsletters, I will give more details. So watch for CONFERENCE NEWS.

Please send your comments and suggestions to our Conference email: [hopeandhealing2014@gmail.com](mailto:hopeandhealing2014@gmail.com) or call Carol Tomaszewski, 410-519-8448 (evenings or weekends), or mail to:

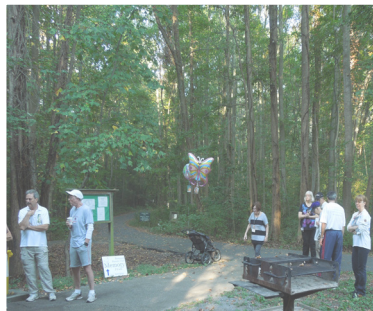
BP/USA, Hope and Healing 2014  
PO Box 6280  
Annapolis, MD 21401-0280

We plan to provide a day that will garner hope and healing for each of you. I hope you will give some serious thought to workshop/program suggestions, and to volunteering in some way. And above all, please plan to attend.

— Carol Tomaszewski, Conference Chairperson

### Eleventh Annual Memory Walk -- a Huge Success

Thanks once again to Barbara Bessling for spearheading and organizing our Eleventh Annual Memory Walk. Year after year, she continues to do a good job for us. The weather was beautiful, as was the entire gathering. Thanks, too, to Paul Balasic, Fran Palmer and Rich O'Donnell, Bob and Sandi Burash, Ann and Noel Castiglia, Norma Melcher and Holly Enders for their assistance in making the Walk a wonderful event. Thanks to Sam's Club of Annapolis for their donation, too.



## Chapter Notes (cont.)

### Service of Remembrance Set for December 8

You should have received an invitation to our Chapter's Service in December. PLEASE remember to fill out the forms and send them in before November 15 so that your child's name and picture can be included in the program and our slide presentation respectively. We need to hear from you!!

We also need volunteers to help with food preparation, set-up and take-down, and we invite everyone to bring cakes, cookies and other desserts to the Service and reception to follow. Call Barbara Bessling (410-761-9017) or email her at [bebessling@aol.com](mailto:bebessling@aol.com) if you can help.

### Chapter Library Update

The following books are new to our Chapter library; they were either purchased or were donated as noted:

Proof of Heaven  
Have Heart  
Heaven is for Real for Kids  
Embrace the Angel  
Why People Die by Suicide  
The Last Day  
To Heaven and Back  
90 Minutes in Heaven  
ABC's of Healthy Grieving

Understanding Your Grief  
I'll Hold You in Heaven (*donated by Tiffany and Daniel Gordon in memory of their daughter Lahna*)  
Pinky-Swear (*donated by Persis Oberreither from the BP/USA St. Louis Chapter in memory of her daughter Amy*)  
When Things Fall Apart (*donated by Maggie Hurd in memory of her son Patrick H. Hurd*)  
A Decembered Grief and Healing a Parent's Grieving Heart (*donated by Bob and Sandi Burash in memory of their son Paul*)

*Wishing You  
A Peaceful  
Thanksgiving*





Bereaved Parents of the USA  
Anne Arundel County Chapter  
P.O. Box 6280  
Annapolis, MD 21401-0280  
[www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org](http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org)

Presorted Standard  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 922  
Capitol Heights, MD

*NEXT MEETING: November 7, 2013*



**Time sensitive**  
**Must be delivered by October 31, 2013**

**UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:**

**What Do I Have to be Thankful for?**

**Calvary United Methodist Church, Annapolis, MD  
Thursday, November 7, 2013**

Thanksgiving is a day when we "count our blessings" and take note of those things in our life for which we are thankful. After our child dies, it is hard to think of anything for which to be thankful, as our grief colors everything. A panel of Chapter members will relate their own experiences and what they have found to be thankful for in their lives.

**Introducing Our Children**

**Calvary United Methodist Church, Annapolis, MD  
Thursday, December 5, 2013**

The focus will be on our deceased children, giving everyone the opportunity to tell others about who they were. There will not be a presenter; sharing groups will be the focus. For all who want to participate, bring a picture or memento and introduce your child and describe what he or she was like.

**Service of Remembrance**

**St. Martin's-in-the-Field, Severna Park, MD  
Sunday, December 8, 2013**

**Worldwide Candle Lighting**

**December 8, 2013 @ 7 p.m.**

**Sponsored by The Compassionate Friends**

**RESOURCES:**

**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

**The Compassionate Friends, Reston Satellite Group  
(for no surviving children)**

North County Government Center  
Reston District Police Station  
12000 Bowman Towne Drive  
Reston, VA

Second Saturday of each month; 2pm - 4pm

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