



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County

May 2014

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Mothers who have lost a child-May 14, 1995

By Erma Bombeck. If you're looking for an answer this Mother's Day on why God reclaimed your child, I don't know. I only know that thousands of mothers out there today desperately need an answer as to why they were permitted to go through the elation of carrying a child and then lose it to miscarriage, accident, violence, disease or drugs.

Motherhood isn't just a series of contractions. It's a state of mind. From the moment we know life is inside us, we feel a responsibility to protect and defend that human being. It's a promise we can't keep. We beat ourselves to death over that pledge. "If I hadn't worked through the eighth month." "If I had taken him to the doctor when he had a fever." "If I hadn't let him use the car that night." "If I hadn't been so naive, I'd have noticed he was on drugs."

The longer I live, the more convinced I become that surviving changes us. After the bitterness, the anger, the guilt, and the despair are tempered by time, we look at life differently.

While I was writing my book, *"I Want to Grow Hair, I Want to Grow Up, I Want to Go to Boise"*, I talked with mothers who had lost a child to cancer. Every single one said death gave their lives new meaning and purpose. And who do you think prepared them for the rough, lonely road they had to travel? Their dying child. They pointed their mothers toward the future and told them to keep going.

The children had already accepted what their mothers were fighting to reject. The children in the bombed-out nursery in Oklahoma City have touched more lives than they will ever know. Workers who had probably given their kids a mechanical pat on the head without thinking that morning are making phone calls home during the day to their children to say "I love you."

Continued on page 2.

Wishing every mother of every child, living or dead, a gentle Mother's Day of Peace.

Sponsorship of this newsletter has been made by the following parents:

Stephanie Banchemo
December 16, 1985-April 9, 2010

I'm so proud you are my daughter and I'll never understand why I was so deserving of your blessing. Our love is never ending. I long to be with you again and dream of your hugs. Your loving dad



Tori Stitely
May 21, 1985-November 26, 2012

Continued on page 2.



Mothers who have lost a child (continued from page 1)

This may seem like a strange Mother's Day column on a day when joy and life abound for the millions of mothers throughout the country. But it's also a day of appreciation and respect. I can think of no mothers who deserve it more than those who had to give a child back.

In the face of adversity, we are not permitted to ask, "Why me?" You can ask, but you won't get an answer. Maybe you are the instrument who is left behind to perpetuate the life that was lost and appreciate the time you had with it.

The late Gilda Radner summed it up well: "I wanted a perfect ending. Now I've learned the hard way that some poems don't rhyme and some stories don't have a clear beginning, middle and end. Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it, without knowing what is going to happen next."

**Mother's
Day**

About Tori Stitely (continued from page 1)

TORI

T - Tenacious is holding fast, persistent, stubborn. If Tori believed in something she stood firm - nothing could shake her.

O - Ornery. Tori was ornery and mischievous almost from day one. We miss her playfulness.

R - Rebellious. To say Tori was a rebel is an understatement. Thank goodness for this trait because she didn't live in a world of black and white or left and right - she ventured in between, sideways and always outside of the box!

I - Individualistic. She was a true individual. She definitely moved to the beat of her own drum.

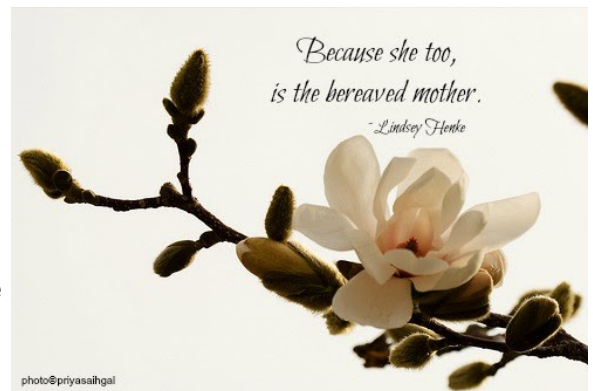
These traits are just a glimpse of our amazing, talented, beautiful daughter! We miss you Tori and love you forever and ever. One day we will be together again...Love, Mom and Dad

The Sisterhood of Solace

by Lindsey Henke

Still Standing Magazine - Nov. 2013

I feel comfortable around her, because she knows. She knows the pain. The anguish. The hurt. She uncovers the secret I hold as there is no hiding it from her. She can read through the words of false delight that cover up my pain deep within. For she is not a surface level friend. She is a sister at the deepest level of what that bond means. She can tell your true thoughts because she has them too and without words she can see the hidden sorrow written all over your face and I find comfort in that. My fears she has lived. My truth she speaks even though we have never met. My emotions she knows as she has also ridden this wild ride of love and loss. Her strength she shares and it carries me across the seas of sorrow even when the waves get rough. My pain is real. The greatest pain a woman can ever feel. Ever know. At times I fear no one will understand, but then there she is. She comprehends when no one else can. She meets my pain through hers with love and provides me with hope to live my life despite it, as she does. I want healing to happen. So does she. But unlike others, she knows that when the rainbow of hope emerges from this desolate place of grief, it will look different, not better or worse, but different. Because even our brightest hopes are now tinted by our greatest sorrow. And this she knows. This she accepts me for and welcomes me into the sisterhood of solace for the wounded. She welcomes me as others do not, with kind, understanding and unfortunately, knowing eyes. For our hearts share the same pain, the same suffering and only she can see how I would not survive without this sisterhood she lovingly wraps me in with her warm and tender arms as she lets me weep on her shoulder. Because she too, is the bereaved mother.



FROM SIBLINGS FOR SIBLINGS:

Don't be afraid to show your feelings.

If your parents keep saying things about your dead sibling, like "He was too good for this world", don't take that to mean that you are not as good because you are still here. Remember that parents don't expect to outlive their children and they are searching for justification.

If your parents seem to be ignoring your needs, don't think they have forgotten you. They just have to have time to themselves to grieve. And if you really need attention, try telling them in a calm way that you would really appreciate it if they would take time to go with you to an event or look at something. Don't make accusations though.

Don't keep waiting for things to return to "normal". Normal will be different now than it was before your brother's or sister's death. Try to understand that there is no "right" way to grieve. What you are going through is different from what your parents are going through: all members of your family will grieve in different ways.



Monday, May 26, 2014

In remembrance of those who have lost children, grandchildren, siblings, relatives and friends in the service. Freedom is not free. Sometimes it comes at the ultimate cost.

Know that life does get better. The pain will decrease in intensity, even though there will be small spells of it throughout your life. And memories that seem painful now will become precious.

~ Betsy Bugereit, TCF
Birmingham News

Chapter News

Angel Gowns Made From Wedding Dresses

Several members of the chapter have shown an interest in the NICU Helping Hands' Angel Gown Program. We have been in touch with June Caudill at the Anne Arundel Medical Center about providing finished angel gowns made from wedding dresses. There is a need to support families who lost a baby while in the hospital. The Angel Gown Program provides comfort for families by providing a beautiful gown for final photos and for burial services. There is no greater gift that can be given to a grieving family than affirming the importance of the life of their child by offering this simple gift. If you have a wedding gown you would like to donate, or if you can sew from a simple pattern provided, please contact June Erickson for more details at JuneErickson@aol.com.



December 2014 Cruise for Alive Alone Parents:

Members of Alive Alone will be leaving Fort Lauderdale on December 8 for 5 nights on the Celebrity Constellation. The itinerary is Fort Lauderdale, Cozumel, and Key West. More info on the ship and itinerary are available on the Celebrity Cruises website. If interested, please contact Joy Hagens at cjmurrayhagens@hotmail.com.

Chapter News

The BP-AAC 2014 Hope and Healing Conference was a huge success and a wonderful experience for those who attended. Many thanks to all the speakers, those who presented workshops, donated, sponsored and worked so very hard to make everything come together on Saturday. None more than Carol Tomaszewski who kept everyone on track and pulled everything off beautifully. We are truly not alone, and everyone left with more hope and healing in their hearts. Job well done Carol, thank you!

Photos provided by attendees Nancy Vollmer, Ilona Lantos, June Erickson and Rick Tomaszewski.



Morning Keynote Speakers: Kay Bevington and her husband Rodney. "Turning Baggage of Grief into a Trip to Remember our Children"



Kay Bevington workshop, "What to do with your child's possessions." She shared this poem, written especially for her:

"Memories will bring you ~
Love from the Past,
Courage for the Present,
Hope for the Future."
-Sascha Wagner



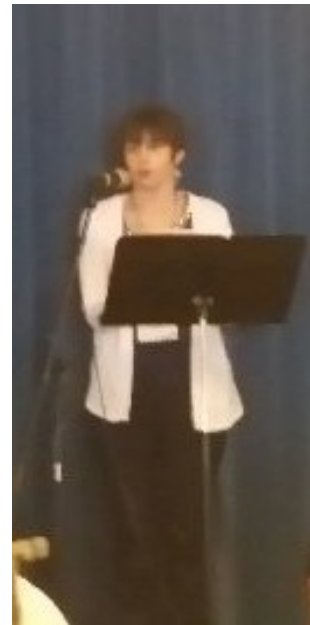
Top: Healing and Memorial Garden in loving memory of our children. Right: Sponsorship of each workshop done in memory of our children.



Chapter News



Conference Chairwoman Carol Tomaszewski



Afternoon Keynote Speaker Beth Hewett, Ph.D. **"Hope, Healing and the Look-back Bird"**



One of the scarves made in Patti DiMiceli's workshop, **"Embrace the Angel"**. For Patti and Claudia's presentation and instructions, please visit <http://www.embracetheangel.com>.



A memento for each of our children.



Closing candlelight saying the names of our children. "The mention of my child's name may bring tears to my eyes—but it never fails to bring music to my ears. Please don't keep me from hearing the beautiful music. It soothes my broken heart and fills my soul with love." – Nancy Williams

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 1, 2014 at 7:15 p.m.

Chuck and Kathy Collins, bereaved parents who are active in TCF Virginia Chapter. Chuck wrote a book entitled "Holding Onto Love". They will be talking about the differences in men and women grieving.

Calvary United Methodist Church • 301 Rowe Boulevard • Annapolis, MD 21401
Sharing groups, a key part of each Chapter meeting, will be held as desired for first-time attendees, and the newly and non-newly bereaved. **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 June newsletter are due to the Newsletter Team by May 10.
Send an email to: newsletter@aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org.

Chapter Leader: Tiffany Gordon
405.234.6854, dtleh@yahoo.com
Newsletter Team:
June Erickson, Linda Khadem,
Katie Redmiles
Treasurer: Fran Palmer
Correspondence &
Hospitality:
Rick & Carol Tomaszewski
Librarian: Bob and Sandi Burash
Programs: Mary Redmiles
mary.redmiles@gmail.com

Do You Use Amazon.com?

If you enter Amazon through our Chapter's website (www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org), the Chapter will earn a commission of 5% on your purchases. Using the link does not increase your cost (and information about your purchase is not shared with the Chapter). It's an easy way to support our Chapter's activities. Go to the Chapter's home page, click on the butterflies on the welcome page, and 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 through the Chapter's website credits the Chapter with the 5% 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) 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 Mary Redmiles (mary.redmiles@gmail.com) or call her at 410-721-6671, or sign up at a monthly meeting. Say Their Names!!! And help the Chapter, too!

REPRINT POLICY: Material in this newsletter of the Anne Arundel County Chapter/ BPUSA may be copied only: 1) if the article is copied in its entirety; 2) if the person writing the article is identified as noted in the newsletter; 3) if it is clearly stated that it was taken from the newsletter of the Anne Arundel County Chapter/ BPUSA; 4) if our website is cited in the credits. This material is to be used and given to help persons with the grieving process and may not be sold or become a part of something being sold for profit, unless first obtaining the permission of the author of the article and/or the current Editor or Chapter leader as noted in this newsletter.

BOOK REVIEW: Holding Onto Love by Chuck Collins

Chuck Collins, along with his wife Kathy will be speakers at our Thursday, May 1 Chapter Meeting. "Holding Onto Love" blends an anguished father's heartfelt experience with advice from respected authors to offer comfort and hope to parents reeling from the death of a child. Chuck Collins' refreshing, down-to-earth writing style explores the anguish and hopelessness of child loss and exposes the myriad of emotional landmines grieving families face.

The author rejects the common belief that bereaved fathers and mothers must "move on" or "get over it" to have normal lives. In contrast, Chuck offers a strategy for survival and healing that recognizes a new sense of normal and renewed purpose in life. A special chapter educates relatives and friends how to reach out to a grief-stricken family, what not to say or do, and includes a checklist of helpful suggestions.

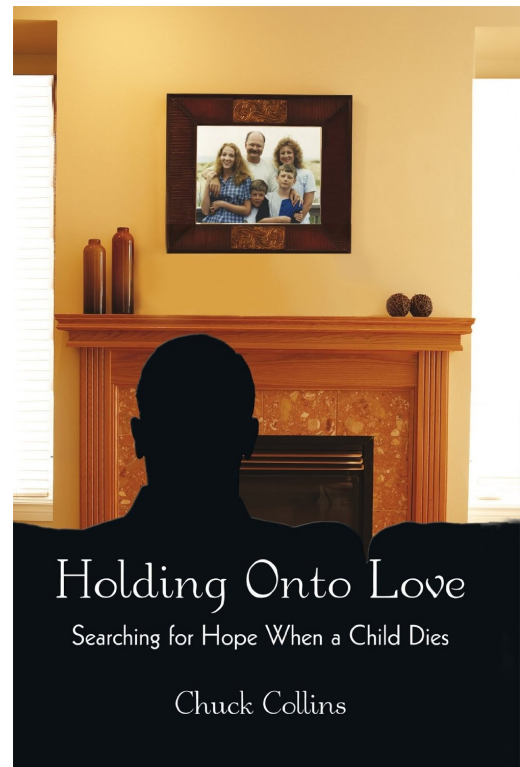
Like
a
bird
singing
in the
rain,
let
grateful
memories
survive
in time of
sorrow.

Robert Louis Stevenson



Holding Onto Love tackles difficult topics including spousal and sibling grief, returning to work, handling holidays, grieving through investigations, civil or criminal litigation, and shares the author's attempts for after-death communication. This candid, but gentle account finds hope through the tears and is a "must read" for grieving families and their loved ones."

What we have once enjoyed deeply
we can never lose.



Connect With Us on Facebook

We are now on Facebook. It is a closed group where we can continue our discussions in private. Your other Facebook friends will not be able to see what you post there, and you will not be able to share postings by others. You have to join Facebook first before you can become a member. Please go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BPUSAAAC/> and ask to join. You will be approved within 24 hours. If you have any questions or problems, please contact June Erickson at JuneErickson@aol.com.



Our Children Remembered

Jordan Edward Ambrozewicz Son of Steven and Beverly Ambrozewicz May 27, 1993 - May 10, 1995 Dora Baldwin Daughter of Aurelia Ferraro December 11, 1964 - May 2, 2012 Donald Gordon Barrett Son of Kathy and Don Barrett May 14, 1976 - May 3, 2002 Paul Shane Brough Son of Theresa and Steve Bleemke May 18, 1982 - April 4, 2003 Pamela Grace Clair Daughter of Doris and Charles Clair June 3, 1954 - May 11, 1984 Michelle Marie Dyke Daughter of Marie Dyke May 19, 1975 - November 10, 1992 Joseph Fredrick Errichiello Jr. Son of Susan and Joe Errichiello April 6, 1979 - May 29, 2004 Tracy Ann Fotino Daughter of Martha Murphy May 14, 1971 - August 25, 2000 Andrew Thomas "Drew" Gawthrop Son of Brenda Gawthrop May 25, 1990 - August 12, 2002 Matthew Gordon Haines Son of Gordon and Peggy Haines May 3, 1977 - July 4, 1996 Jennifer Lynn Hamilton Daughter of Kathleen and Donald McGlew May 2, 1980 - January 7, 1999	Kenneth "Chuckie" Jones Son of Suzzelle Reid July 13, 1976 - May 26, 2010 Brian Keith Jones Son of Leroy and Jeanne Jones May 22, 1974 - May 22, 1974 Jerry Mason Jr. Son of Mary and Jerry Mason May 6, 1968 - March 23, 2005 Graham Kendall Miller Son of Ken and Abby Miller February 3, 1981 - May 4, 1999 Daniel "Dan" Michael Milord Son of Mike Milord July 15, 1982 - May 5, 2004 Sydney Elaine Patronik Daughter of Holly and Michael Patronik March 26, 2002 - May 11, 2002 Samantha Ann Rankin Daughter of Vickie and Bart Rankin November 19, 1988 - May 31, 2010 Wendy Dawn Saunders Daughter of Ronald and Aljuana Saunders May 20, 1972 - May 14, 1998 James Benjamin Scheff Son of James and Gail Scheff May 9, 1979 - June 1, 2012 Michelle Inez Scott Daughter of Charlotte and Donald Scott February 1, 1969 - May 1, 1987 Brandon Michael Sisler Son of Laura Sisler May 7, 1993 - October 15, 2011	Abigail Helen "Abbey" Skuletich Daughter of John and Glenda Skuletich March 9, 1984 - May 12, 1992 Tori Danielle Stitely Daughter of Tawny and Kevin Stitely May 21, 1985 - November 26, 2012 Christopher Lewis Strader Son of Lewis and Peggy Strader May 27, 1979 - June 21, 1997 Tenoch Bennett Sweeney Son of Richard Sweeney March 30, 2011 - May 21, 2011 Russell "Rusty" Joseph Tarr Son of Lorraine A. Tarr December 22, 1963 - May 12, 1994 John Leroy Waters Jr. Son of Stella and Roy Waters September 19, 1970 - May 23, 2000 Carole Anne Wilford Sister of Aljuana Saunders January 7, 1944 - May 4, 1998
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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:

Kenneth Smith in memory of his niece Tracy Fotino



Chapter Notes: Upcoming Meetings & Announcements

May Meeting

7:15 pm @ Calvary United Methodist Church, Annapolis, MD • Thursday, May 1, 2014

Chuck and Kathy Collins, bereaved parents who are active in TCF Va. Chapter. Chuck wrote a book entitled "Holding Onto Love". They will be talking about the differences in men and woman grieving.

June Meeting

7:15 pm @ Calvary United Methodist Church, Annapolis, MD • Thursday, June 5, 2014

Jessica Klug, a bereaved parent, will talk about her experience with perinatal loss. She contributed a chapter to the book "Because They Lived"

Chapter's Core Group Meeting

The Core Group will meet on May 13th at 7 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church. Please park in the front of the church and check the bulletin board in the foyer for the specific room number. We will be discussing specifics for the upcoming conference and are in need of volunteers. This is a great way to honor your loved one and we hope to see you there.

Urgent News: We've gone green!

In order to save time, money and waste, our Chapter has opted to move to electronic newsletters instead of paper copies beginning in May of 2014. ***If you would like to continue receiving your paper newsletter in the mail each month***, or if you do not currently receive our newsletter in your e-mail each month, ***we need to hear from you***. Please feel free to email us at chapter-leader@aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org or at aabereavedparents@gmail.com, or send us a note at PO Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

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NEXT MEETING: May 1, 2014

Time Sensitive
Must be delivered by May 1, 2014

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The Compassionate Friends National Conference
Chicago, IL • July 11 – 13, 2014

BP/USA 2014 National Gathering
Sheraton Clayton Plaza • St. Louis, MO • July 25 – 27, 2014

Resources:

Hospice of the Chesapeake

www.hospicechesapeake.org or 410-987-2003

Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center

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 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