



Bereaved Parents of the USA Anne Arundel County Chapter

MARCH 2015

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Help Yourself by Helping Others

By Chapter Leader Carol Tomaszewski, Dave's Mom

As you read this, I hope that March is bringing warmer weather because February has been a hard month for me. Not only the winter cold, ice and snow, but the cold claws of grief reach into my heart and soul, for my son David who died in February, 2001.

For 14 years I have been going to meetings of the Anne Arundel County Chapter of the Bereaved Parents, USA, and learning to live with my grief. Throughout the years I have volunteered for some responsibilities within the chapter, such as organizing refreshments, writing thank you notes, helping edit the monthly newsletter. This past year I organized a Regional Conference which offered a day of Hope and Healing for many.

Now I feel it's time to devote more time and energy to the Chapter and to those parents who are newly bereaved, so I have volunteered to be the Chapter Leader. I believe I can continue to help myself by helping others. I want to "pay it forward" and make sure that those following in my grief footsteps are given a helping hand.

As bereaved parents, many of us look for ways to honor our children, to find a purpose in our lives once again, and to help others. So I am asking you to look for opportunities to do this. And consider volunteering with our Chapter because I assure you that by helping others, you will be helping yourself.

Possibilities to consider for our Chapter:

- Sponsor the newsletter or website
- Provide refreshments for the monthly meetings
- Write something for the Newsletter or provide other content
- Write thank you notes for donations received
- Get involved with the Core Group (the steering group) that meets quarterly
- Be the Core Group secretary
- Become the Memory Walk Coordinator
- Assist with Community Outreach efforts

For further information, please see me at the meeting, or email me at chapterleaderaacountymd@gmail.com.



An Article Written by Bereaved Father Lary Doe, BP-AAC Chapter Member

About a year ago I was forced to join a club that I really hadn't ever given any consideration. We meet on the first Thursday of every month and every person who has joined, either before or after me, hasn't wanted to be there either. The faces are a mixture of smiles, some hiding the discomfort they feel about how we are going to spend the next few hours. There are others that you can see the pain from the moment they remove their coats. But I promise that they will most likely be there next month.

Our clubhouse is a church basement. Lots of parking for those who need to come, plenty of seats which at times are completely filled. Books laid out for people to borrow, pictures of children, the ever popular, buffet of sugar and dairy. Coffee flowing, and ironically a youth group meeting above us. Those sounds we all shook our heads about before, a welcome sign that life goes on, for some, like myself, a necessary sound.

See, these collected faces, parents all, are trying to come to terms with the loss of their children. For some it has been years of learning how to cope with holidays, birthdays with one less person at the table, graduations where every person they grew up with is walking across the stage. Others, like myself, are very new to the process. Maybe they needed time to come out and be social, to feel like someone might be able to relate. In my case it was that the loss hit me so quickly and I needed to be around people who were going to tell me how to deal with the change in my life.

There are a set of lyrics that describe plenty of people –

“Don't you know, I've got to paint me on
When I smile, I've got to paint it on
When I say Hi, I've got to paint it on
When I cry, I've got to paint it all, my tears.”

It's about the masks we all use to cover how we feel. Those nights, while driving from my house, my heart is racing. There is panic, anxiety, pain, and relief. Those first three are ones everyone expects, but that last one is hard to describe. I can sit in a room and talk about my daughter. I could talk to them until my voice gives out, my stomach tied in knots, and they will listen to every last word because at some point they were exactly where I am right now.

Our paths are very different when we walk out the door. Some go home to other children, spouses who may not be able to express themselves in the same manner, and some go home to quiet. There is a collection of every possible demographic, enough that some person who would be studying us would realize that there is only one common denominator – we lost children. Through every effort made to prevent it, fate landed on our doorsteps.

For some it was that late night knock on the door telling them that their child had passed due to some traffic accident. How they fought so hard to keep breathing, kept trying to fight for every breath until they took their last. That maybe they weren't alone in that moment. There are the few who get the opportunity to make it to the hospital and hold their child's hand one time before having to make some final medical decision. Learning to live with the idea that they did the best they could, learning to put down the doubts about what might have happened if some different choice earlier might have spared them.

Others have the long task of watching their child slowly slip away while they sit in the corner fearfully watching their child's chest rise and fall. Praying that this isn't their moment, but also knowing that time is not on their side. That same common thread with someone down the hallway, crying as they are lead away from the room for the last time. A series of blurs and words that don't make sense when they are being uttered, and most likely won't make much sense later when the shock has worn off.

I fall into this subcategory of these two intertwined groups of parents. My daughter never was able to take her first breath. She died at the moment of her birth, possibly before, I'm not really sure. I never had the opportunity to hold her, I missed out on hearing that cry as she broke into our world. The voice on the phone telling me that the life I had spent months preparing for had been extinguished. I was sitting in the parking lot of the doctor's office and didn't know what to do. Panic took over, I called my parents and told them I needed them to come get me. It was time to go to the hospital but for a very different reason then they expected.

The next couple of days are the same blur, curled up in bed trying to make sense of everything. More silence followed, questions that couldn't be answered for various reasons. What did I miss? Did we do something wrong? Who might be responsible for not telling us something that could have changed the outcome? I'm all for the stages of grief, but the one that took hold was anger. And it took a good grip.

Anger is a blanket I was able to wrap myself to keep me warm. It was something that allowed me to not feel the pain. I wasn't angry at the world. My anger was directed at specific people. There was nothing that was going to change that. The cost was something I wouldn't learn until later. The price my friends paid, my family paid, and eventually myself, those ripples are still being felt. Some things will never be the same, other things are stronger, but several of the things I valued I should have remembered during the angry phase. In time, that's the phrase I live by now, hopefully in time...

And that is where I find myself at this point in time. Hoping that I may find the answers to the simple questions anymore. Why are we here? Where did we come from? Where do we go when we die? The one universal truth I have learned in meeting this new group of friends is that we no longer fear death. No one is playing with powders or deciding that a game of Human Frogger on the highway is the way to spend the afternoon, but the idea that we will get to spend that notion of eternity with our children is appealing.

How does that spirit carry on? History teaches that lessons were passed down as parables until Gutenberg established a method to get words on paper for the greater masses, a wider audience. We spend a few minutes saying our children's names. And they are honest up front at these meetings about how hard that is. Rarely do you say it out loud anymore. There's no yelling at them to make their beds, clean up after themselves or even just tell them how proud you are of them. Sitting in a room, saying something that for some hasn't been spoken since the last meeting, its gut wrenching. The picture of who they were frozen in time, the thought of what they could have been too painful to contemplate.

As I enter into the second year of this new club, I know I'll continue going. As the years progress it will fall on my generation to take the torch that others help to establish. Try to honor all that they have accomplished, not only for themselves, but for me and my daughter. It the legacy we knowingly build in the memory of our children. A lasting place for others to join, to share, to cry, to scream, but most importantly to know that they belong.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 5, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

Our new Chapter Leader, Carol Tomaszewski will speak on her journey through the years since her son David's death.

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.**

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY: Calvary Church follows the closings and delays of AA Community College – www.AACC.edu and AAC Public Schools – www.aacps.org. When the office and building are closed, groups are not to meet.

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 be-

Submissions for the April newsletter are due to the Newsletter Team by March 10th.
Send an email to: newsletter@aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org.



Chapter Leader: Carol Tomaszewski, chapter-leADERaacountymd@gmail.com
Newsletter Team:
June Erickson, Linda Khadem, Katie Redmiles
Treasurer: Fran Palmer
Correspondence & Hospitality: Tawny Stitely
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!

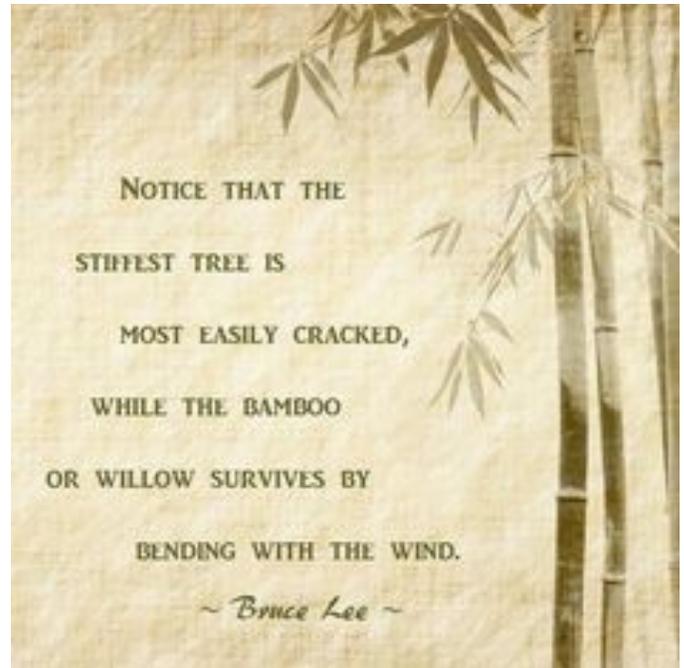
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The Homecoming

By Jessica Powers

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 foretold 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 endearments to His breast.

**~ Submitted by The Redmiles Family
 for Tommy Redmiles' angelversary**



“Pain is a pesky part of being human, I've learned it feels like a stab wound to the heart, something I wish we could all do without, in our lives here. Pain is a sudden hurt that can't be escaped. But then I have also learned that because of pain, I can feel the beauty, tenderness, and freedom of healing. Pain feels like a fast stab wound to the heart. But then healing feels like the wind against your face when you are spreading your wings and flying through the air! We may not have wings growing out of our backs, but healing is the closest thing that will give us that wind against our faces.”

— C. JoyBell C.

Connect With Us on Facebook

We are 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

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

Melanie Suzanne Berkow
Daughter of Sandra Winans
January 2, 1956 - March 23, 2012

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

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

Ryan Corr
Son of Pam Corr
March 2, 2003 - June 4, 2011

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

Zachary Lee Dukes
Son of Cindy Dukes
February 12, 1989 - March 31, 2010

Manuel Junior Esparza
Son of Dianna McKinnon
March 20, 1987 - February 14, 2012

Cynthia Lynn Ferguson
Daughter of Doris and Charles Clair
September 4, 1952 - March 28, 2010

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

Brian Michael Hendricks
Son of Jeannine Hendricks
March 4, 1991 - April 22, 2012

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

Andrew Scott Hoffman
Son of Donna and Bryan Hoffman
March 6, 1986 - October 27, 2013

Kole William Hoffman
Son of Erin and Jim McKinney
McDonald
December 23, 2007 - March 7,
2010

Emilio Juan Honesto
Son of Alexandra Honesto
June 29, 2010 - March 26, 2011

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

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

Jerry Mason Jr.
Son of Mary and Jerry Mason
May 6, 1968 - March 23, 2005

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

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

David M Murnane
Son of Jennifer Murnane
March 7, 1987 - December 9, 2008

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

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

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

Thomas H Redmiles
Son of Mary and Joe Redmiles
February 22, 1985 - March 14,
2011

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

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

Abigail Helen "Abbey"
Skuletich
Daughter of John and Glenda
Skuletich
March 9, 1984 - May 12, 1992

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

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

Joseph Claude Smith
Son of Gary and Desirae
Smith
March 19, 2005 - July 11,
2006

Jacob Stephen Sutton
Son of Janet Sutton
February 1, 2009 - March 1,
2009

Tenoch Bennett Sweeney
Son of Richard Sweeney
March 30, 2011 - May 21,
2011

Shardeh Danielle Callis
Watkins
Daughter of Lori Norris
April 30, 1989 - March 2,
2013

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

George & Catherine Schindler in memory of their daughter Emily Ann Schindler

Kathy Tullier in memory of Helen Josephine Higuera



Book Review

By Mary Redmiles, Tommy's Mom

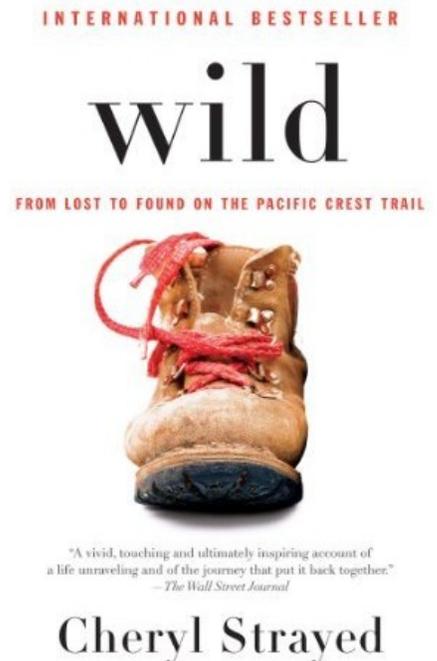
Review of "Wild: From lost to found on the Pacific Crest Trail" by Cheryl Strayed

As a young woman of 22 years old, Cheryl finds herself adrift in a life full of struggles. Her early years were spent with an abusive father and a mother trying to find a way out of their situation. Once her mother was able to begin a new life with Cheryl and her two siblings, struggles over money and a terminal diagnosis of cancer for her 45 year old mother consumes her life. Her own early marriage was deteriorating due to her self-destructive behavior of occasional drug use, frequently moving around and sexual exploits.

When her mother died, she and her siblings were left trying to find their way on their own, unable to help each other survive. Consumed by grief for her mother, she decided on a whim to hike the Pacific Crest Trail after seeing an ad in a brochure. In June of 1995 she began her trek of the 2,600 mile trail, having no experience in hiking and with little to no knowledge of the perils she was soon to experience.

Cheryl's shares her journey with raw honesty, openly sharing her shortcomings and impulsive behaviors. She takes the reader along on the trail, experiencing with her the joys, fears and emotions of a young woman hiking alone in the wilderness. Her journey resembles our own journey of child loss and how, we too, struggle to put one foot in front of the other on a trail full of darkness and unknown destinations. Cheryl finds herself in perpetual motion, hiking multiple mountain ranges while in physical and emotional pain. At the end of her journey she is a transformed person, full of gratitude and hope. "Wild" is an easy read and has been made into a movie starring Reese Witherspoon as Cheryl.

Amazon.com: http://www.amazon.com/Cheryl-Strayed-Wild-Pacific-Paperback/dp/B00RWU7F4K/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1424650569&sr=8-2&keywords=wild+cheryl+strayed+book



Grieving Through Interaction with Police, Attorneys, and Courts

By Chuck Collins

Criminal prosecutions, civil lawsuits, or investigations related to a child's death produce emotional turmoil for a family already overwrought with pain. I have witnessed grief-stricken families struggle to cope with each of these stressful challenges over the years. Their anguish may seem stifled by these enormous distractions as they yearn for an opportunity to privately grieve. In dealing with the stress of a lawsuit filed after my daughter died, at times numbness replaced my raw emotions.

When I asked Dr. Beverly J. Anderson, BCETS, Director of the Metropolitan Police Employees Assistance Program in Washington, D.C., to explain this phenomenon, she noted:

"Compartmentalizing emotions is a special coping mechanism that some people are naturally able to employ. It represents a kind of cognitive-emotional prioritizing that temporarily blocks painful emotions. I believe that it is a healthy, adoptive partnership wherein cognition takes primacy over emotions so as to allow the individual the energy and clarity to make important decisions regarding the "crisis" at hand. In effect, the parent deals with the trial or investigation somewhat distanced from the emotional enormity of the event."

When confronting these situations, developing a basic strategy to navigate such potentially heart-wrenching territory can be helpful.

Criminal Prosecutions

When a child dies, those responsible may be criminally charged (e.g., the intoxicated driver who caused a collision, a dealer who supplied illegal drugs, the assailant who inflicted the fatal wound). When this occurs, bereaved parents should meet with the prosecutor and police officer early in the process to open communication, ask questions, and voice their concerns.

Although each case is different, a state's attorney may explain: (1) the meaning of "beyond a reasonable doubt," (2) the elements of each offense, (3) any anticipated legal defenses, (4) the impact of any prior court interpretations, (5) any weaknesses in the government's case, (6) the statutory range of punishment, (7) any applicable sentencing guidelines, and (8) whether a victim's assistance advocate is available to assist the family during the trial.

Although "permission" is not required before a plea agreement is entered, most prosecutors seriously consider the family's wishes. If a conviction results, the family's rights and court's expectations should be explained regarding victim impact statements or penalty phase testimony.

At the sentencing hearing, the judge and/or jury should be educated about the child. The tragedy's impact should be explained including: any resulting physical, mental, or emotional problems; medical treatments, including therapy and medication; support group attendance and absences from work. A poster-sized photo may be introduced into evidence to personalize the child for the judge and/or jury.

If incarceration results, the family may be contacted when the inmate becomes eligible for release. Some relatives avoid further post-trial involvement, while others insist on being heard. It is a difficult decision either way.



Grief

Civil Litigation

A newly bereaved family is so devastated after a child's death, they are usually too overwhelmed to consider whether legal action is appropriate. Eventually, the need to understand what happened or desire to prevent future tragedies may motivate a family to explore this option.

A caring relative or friend can locate a competent lawyer for the devastated family. This should be done promptly, because the right to sue can be forfeited when statutes of limitation or notice requirements are unsatisfied. An attorney's legal skills, experience, reputation, and sensitivity to the family are important considerations.

Once counsel is identified, a consultation can be scheduled to discuss the facts, identify potential obstacles, determine the statute of limitations and notice requirements, discuss the family's goals, and estimate litigation costs. The attorney can gather information and conduct interviews to evaluate whether a lawsuit is warranted. In the interim, the family grieves taking solace that their rights are being preserved.

Civil litigation usually involves a multitude of pre-trial motions and witness depositions, and the family may not be required to appear during this phase. Some parents insist on attending, while others appear only when necessary.

Investigation

When the cause of death or person responsible cannot initially be determined, authorities will initiate an investigation. Although deference is given to official autopsy reports, these often take months to complete. Meanwhile, the family suffers in silence as police conduct extensive, seemingly repetitive interviews.

In their weakened emotional state, it is difficult for a family to withstand the uncertainty and, in some cases, suspicion that surrounds their child's death. Rather than facing this crisis alone, it makes sense to retain competent legal counsel to guide them through this stressful ordeal.

Anticipating Renewed Anguish

The constant pressure of monitoring litigation or an investigation may initially shield the family from the full impact of their pain. When these distractions end, they face an abrupt detachment. If they overestimated their healing progress, the family may be blindsided by intensive pain and renewed episodes of depression, isolation, and anger. Regardless of the case's outcome, the renewed realization that their child is gone forever is gut-wrenching.

As Dr. Anderson characterized this reaction:

"Once the ordeal is over, emotional processing now demands its fair share of the parent's energy wherein the feelings of loss and depression will return after the emotional anesthesia has worn off."

Anticipating this emotional setback can better prepare a family to seek assistance from others. This is an opportune time to reach out to a professional therapist, a support group, or a close friend or relative for comfort, rather than suffering alone.

Chuck Collins is a bereaved father; former police commander, retired attorney, and author of "Holding onto Love: Searching for Hope When a Child Dies."

Shock Confusion Fear
 Anger Sadness Loneliness Guilt
 Emptiness Exhaustion

Chapter Notes: Upcoming Meetings & Announcements

Inclement weather policy for all meetings - Calvary Church follows the closings and delays of AA Community College – www.AACC.edu and AAC Public Schools – www.aacps.org. When the office and building are closed, groups are not to meet.

Angel Gown Project

Another delivery of Angel Gowns has been made to the NICU at Anne Arundel Medical Center. (See picture below submitted by Sandi Burash) Ann O'Sullivan from the NICU loves the gowns but mentioned they needs a few more small size gowns, and possibly bonnets or hair ribbons. Since we have produced so many beautiful gowns (8 more gowns have been completed since our last delivery to AAMC), we are now thinking of expanding to another hospital soon. Also Tawny Stitely has designed a Thank You card to be sent to those who donated gowns and materials for this project, and Holly Enders volunteered to help mail them.



We also have tons of tulle/netting left over from the wedding gowns we have already used, so an announcement date will be decided soon to work on Tu-Tus. We are looking into donating the Tu-Tus to special needs children. If anyone has other suggestions where the Tu-Tus could go, please contact Tawny. We will announce the dates for another Angel Gown Group, and/or Tu-Tu Workshop in the next newsletter. Please come join us....

Newsletter Submissions – by March 10, 2015

If anyone has a story to tell, a poem to share, a bereavement book they read, an upcoming grief conference, a photo they took of an event, or an article they thought was particularly helpful in their grief journey, please pass them on to others through our Newsletter. These personal submissions will make the newsletter more interesting for everyone. NOTE: All submissions should be made by the 10th of each month for the following month's newsletter. That includes those sponsoring the newsletter in memory of their child. Sponsorship submissions should include a photo, poem/saying, parents' name, child's full name, birthday and angel date. Please email all of these directly to JuneErickson@aol.com.

March Chapter Meeting – Thursday, March 5, 2015

7:30 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis MD. Our new Chapter

Chapter Notes: Upcoming Meetings & Announcements

Leader, Carol Tomaszewski will speak on her journey through the years since her son David's death.

April Chapter Meeting – Thursday April 2, 2015

7:30 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis MD. Speaker to be announced.

May Chapter Meeting – Thursday May 7, 2015

7:30 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis MD Our speaker will be Sheila Gudiswitz, a Sibling Facilitator from The Compassionate Friends - DC Chapter who will talk about Mother's Day. She will be back at a later date to speak on Sibling Grief. Sheila lost her sister at a very young age.

Core Group Meeting – Tuesday, May 12, 2015

7:00 p.m. at Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis, MD. Enter through the front of the church and find room number on electronic board. Topics: Newsletter, Outreach, Spring Activity, Angel Gowns and Tu-Tus

The Compassionate Friends National Conference – July 10 - 12, 2015

The 38th TCF National Conference, "Hope Shines Bright ... Deep in the Heart", is the theme of next year's event. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas. Visit their website at ---> http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Conferences/National_Conferences.aspx



Bereaved Parents of the USA National Gathering - July 24 - 26, 2015

Hartford, Connecticut

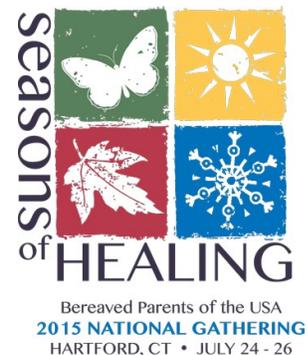
Visit their website at ---> <http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org/Gathering.html>

TCF Regional Conference - October 2 - 4, 2015

Rochester, MN

"Hope and Healing for Our Broken Hearts" Kahler Grand Hotel, Rochester, MN

Speakers Mitch Carmody, speaker, author and bereaved dad and sibling; Executive Director of TCF and bereaved dad, Alan Pedersen; Dr. Heidi Horsley, TCF National Board Member and Executive Director of "Open to Hope" and bereaved sibling; and Glen Lord; vice president of the



Chapter Notes: Upcoming Meetings & Announcements

TCF Board of Directors and The Grief Toolbox, and bereaved dad. Special Friday Night program with Carla Blowey of "Dreaming Kevin" and Mitch Carmody of: "Letters to My Son" on signs from our children and dream work. If you would like to further information, would like to volunteer or donate to our conference in some way, please call Cathy at 651.459.9341 or email at peachy3536@comcast.net or Mary and Darwyn at 651-923-4922 or Tri at dntri@sleepyeyetel.net

TCF Regional Conference - October 9 - 11, 2015

"From a Broken Heart....Emerges Hope and Healing"

Radisson Hotel Valley Forge, King of Prussia, PA

Please contact Bobbi Milne at mcfly423@aol.com or Ann Walsh at tcfestrc@yahoo.com if you would like to volunteer, be a sponsor or send a donation. More details will come later.

Resources

Hospice of the Chesapeake Life Center

90 Richie Highway

Pasadena, MD 21122

410-987-2129

Toll Free: 888-501-7077

Website: <http://chesapeakelifecenter.org/programs-and-services/groups>

1) Child Loss Group

Monthly support group for parents experiencing the loss of a son or daughter of any age.

2) Suicide Grievors

Monthly Support Group with a professional facilitator for those 18 years and over who are grieving the death of a loved one by suicide. Please call 410-987-2129 for further information.

3) Support Group for those Grieving a Loss Due to Substance Abuse

This monthly drop-in/open support group is designed for those who have lost a loved one due to substance abuse and will address issues common to this particular type of loss.

4) Perinatal Scrap-N-Share Group

This group is designed for individuals or couples coping with a difficult pregnancy diagnosis or infant loss. Participants can make a scrapbook, collage, or shadow box or just come for support with others who have experienced a similar loss. Group meets bi-monthly in the evening.

5) Career-Aged Widow and Widowers Support Group

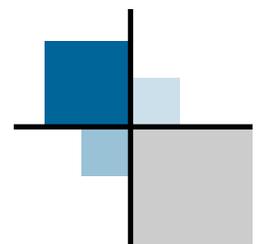
Groups for career-aged adults who are grieving the death of a spouse or a life partner.

Grief Counseling

Website: <http://www.chesapeakelifecenter.org/programs-and-services/ind-counseling>

Complementary Therapies

Website: <http://www.chesapeakelifecenter.org/programs-and-services/complementary-therapies>



Resources

Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center

Website: <http://www.mdcrimevictims.org> or call 410-234-9885

Suicide Support Group

Meets the first Tuesday of each month in Severna Park, MD. Call 410-647-2550

MIS Support Group

(miscarriage, infant death or stillbirth)

Meets the first Monday of each month in Edgewater, MD. Call 443-481-6114

Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP)

Website: www.grasphelp.com or call 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 parents with no surviving children)

North County Government Center, Reston District Police Station, 12000 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston, VA. Meetings on the second Saturday of each month from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Gilchrist Grief Services

Registration is required for all services - Online at gilchristospice.org/grief_registration

For Hunt Valley, Gilchrist Center, Forest Hill and Dundalk events call 443-849-8251 or email GHC_bereavement@gilchristospice.org

For Howard County events call 443-539-4086 or email GHC_bereavement@gilchristospice.org

Hunt Valley:

11311 McCormick Road, Suite 350

Hunt Valley, MD 21031

Support Groups:

Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (all Ages) evening

Tuesdays - TBA

Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (all Ages) daytime

Adults with Parental Loss

Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (ages 50 & under)

Workshops:

Craft Night: 6:30-8pm, Monthly

A social time of friendship, fun and creativity

Select Thursdays

In Forest Hill:

Hooper House

2007 Klein Plaza Drive

Forest Hill, MD 21050

In Towson:

Gilchrist Center - 555 W. Towsontown Blvd.

Towson, MD 21204

Support Groups:

Mother's Grief: 3-4:30pm, Monthly

For mothers who have lost adult children

In Columbia:

5537 Twin Knolls Road, Suite 434

Columbia, MD 21045

Support Groups:

Men's Support Group: Monthly

For men who have lost a spouse/significant other

Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (all ages) morning

Thursdays, TBA

Adults with Parental Loss Widowed Persons/Life Partner Support Group (all ages) evening

In Dundalk:

Mosaic Community Services in the Dundalk

Professional Building, near the intersection of

Dundalk Avenue and Center Place.

40 S. Dundalk Ave, Dundalk, MD 21222



Resources

Mental Health Crisis Hotline Numbers

Maryland Hotline – Call 800-422-0009

Anne Arundel County Suicide Hotline – Call 911 (emergency) or 410-768-5522

Baltimore City – Call 410-931-2214

Baltimore County – Call 410-752-7272

Calvert County – Call 800-422-0009

Charles County – Call 800-422-0009

Frederick County – Call 301-662-2252

Howard County – Call 410-531-6677

Montgomery County – Call 240-777-4000

Prince Georges County Suicide Hotline – Call 911 (emergency) or 301-864-7130 / 301-429-2185

St. Mary's County – Call 800-422-0009

Veterans Hotline – Call 800-273-8255

New Web Resources

WEEKLY WEB-RADIO SHOWS - To access the weekly "Open to Hope Show" on Thursdays at noon, go to <http://www.opentohope.com>. This show deals with the different aspects of grief. You can also pick up archives of this show at this site or go to <http://www.thegriefblog.com>. For archives of "Healing the Broken Heart" go to <http://www.voiceAmerica.com>

American Association of Retired People - AARP- A grief and loss program includes online articles, publications, support groups, and discussion boards on coping with the loss of a loved one. Website: http://aarp.org/families/grief_loss

American Foundation For Suicide Prevention - Dedicated to advancing knowledge of suicide and the ability to prevent it. Phone:1-888-333-2377 Fax: 1-212-363-3500

Website: <http://www.afsp.org> E-mail inquiry@afsp.org Address: 120 Wall St., 22nd Floor, New York, NY 10005

Adult Sibling Grief - A support & resource community for surviving adult siblings.

Website: <http://www.adultsiblinggrief.com> E-mail author@adultsiblinggrief.com

Alive Alone - Designed to benefit bereaved parents whose only child or all children have died by providing a self-help network and publications to promote communication and healing, to assist in resolving their grief, and a means to reinvest their lives for a positive future.

E-mail alivalon@bright.net Address: 1112 Champaign Drive, Van Wert, Ohio 45891

Bereaved Parents of the USA-BPUSA - Offers support, care, and compassion for bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents. Phone: 708-748-7866 Website: <http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org>

Address: PO Box 95, Park Forest, Ill. 60466

Break The Silence - Impatient safety for those in crisis or at risk for self-harm and suicide.

New Web Resources

Website: <http://www.break-the-silence.org> E-mail BTSSaaveALife@aol.com Phone: 1800-Suicide (1-800-784-2433)

Address: 821 Landis St., Scranton, PA 18504

Center for Loss of Multiple Birth – CLIMB - By and for parents who have experienced the death of one or more children during a multitude pregnancy, birth, and through childhood. Phone: 907-222-5321

Website: <http://www.climb-support.org> E-mail: climb@pobox.alaska.net

Address: PO Box 91377, Anchorage, AK 99509

Children's Bereavement Support Group - Support group for children 7-14 who are bereaving the loss of a parent, grandparent, sibling or friend. Meets the first and third Thursday of each month from 5-6PM in the Cory Building, 599 Route 37 West in Toms River, Phone: 1-732-505-KIDS.

Comfort Zone Camp - For siblings and children (age 7-17) coping with loss of a sibling or parent.

Phone: 1-804-337-3430 Fax: 1-804-377-3433 Website: <http://www.comfortzonecamp.org>

E-mail: info@comfortzonecamp.org Address: 4906 Cutshaw Ave. 2nd Floor, Richmond, Va 23230

Compassion Connection - Contains articles and readings for all who have suffered a loss.

Website: <http://www.compassionconnection.org>

Good Grief Resources - Connects the bereaved and their caregivers with as many bereavement support resources as possible in one efficient and easy-to-use web directory. Website: <http://goodgriefresources.com>

GriefHaven - Provides loving support, hope, and hands-on for those who have lost a child, brother, or sister, or grandchild, and also provide education to professionals and others seeking to help bereaved family members rebuild their lives. Phone: 1-310-459-1789 Website: <http://griefhaven.org> E-mail: hope@griefHaven.org

Address: The Erika Whitmore Godwin Foundation 15332 Antioch St. #147, Pacific Palisades, Ca 90272

GriefNet - offers e-mail support groups for the bereaved including parents, siblings and grandparents. It also offers a wide variety of bereavement related content including a comprehensive resource guide of bereavement organizations Website: <http://www.griefnet.org> Address: PO Box 3272 Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3272

and a sister website for bereaved children(**KIDSAID**) Website: <http://www.kidsaid.com>

Grief Speaks - Lisa Athan is a grief specialist who facilitates workshops and training programs on grief.

Phone: 973-912-0177 Website: <http://www.griefspeaks.com> E-mail: lisa@Griefspeaks.com

Grief Work Center - Barbara Rivel is a grief speaker who specializes in helping those who have to deal with suicide and homicide and in general death, dying and bereavement issues by providing compassion

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

New Web Resources

during a time of need. Phone: 732-422-0400 Website: <http://www.griefworkcenter.com> E-mail: griefwork@aol.com

GROWW - Grief recovery online offers wide variety of grief and bereavement resources. Phone: 800-854-3402 Website: <http://www.groww.org>

Hospice Foundation of America - Includes information about hospice care and programs including bereavement support for families using hospice. Phone: 1-800-854-3402 Website: <http://www.hospicefoundation.org>

Mothers Against Drunk Driving - MADD- Phone: 1-800 GET MADD (1-800-438-6233) or 1-877-MADD HELP (1-877-623-3435) Fax: 1-972-869-2206/7 Website National: <http://www.madd.org> Website Local: <http://www.madd.org/nj>

Address National: 511 E. John Carpenter Frwy. Suite 700, Irving, Texas 75062
New Jersey Chapter: P.O. Box 5085, Trenton, NJ 08638 Phone: 1-609-585-7233

Mothers In Sympathy and Support-M.I.S.S - Provides immediate and ongoing support to grieving families, empowerment through community volunteerism opportunities, public policy and legislative education, and programs to reduce infant and toddler death through research and education.

Phone: 1-623-979-1000 Website: <http://www.missfoundation.org> E-mail: info@missfoundation.org
Address: P.O. Box 53333, Peoria, Arizona 85385-5333

National Funeral Director's Association – NFDA - Provides many grief resources for coping with the death of a child within the family. Phone: 800-228-6632 Website: <http://www.nfda.org> E-mail: nfda@nfda.org

Address: 13625 Bishops Drive, Brookfield, WI 53025

National SIDS Resource Center - Provides information service and technical assistance on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and related topics.

Phone for grief counseling: 1-800-221-7437 Information/resources 1-866-866-7437

Website: <http://www.sidscenter.org> E-mail: info@sidscenter.org

Address 2115 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Suite 601, Washington, DC 20007

Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep - When a baby or infant has died, Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep, through its nationwide network of professional photographers, will arrange a tasteful private setting at the hospital with no charges for service or pictures. Phone: 1-877-834-5667 Website: <http://www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org>

E-mail: headquarters@nilmdts.org

Address: 7800 S. Elati St. #111, Littleton, CO 80120

Parents of Murdered Children – POMC - To provide support and assistance to all survivors of homicide victims, while working to create a new world free of murder. Phone: 1-513-721-5683 Fax: 1-513-345-4489

Website: <http://www.pomc.com> E-mail: natipomc@aol.com

Address: National POMC 2200 East Eighth St. Suite 202 Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

New Web Resources

SHARE - Support for those whose lives are touched by the tragic death of a baby through early pregnancy loss, stillbirth, or in the first few months of life.

Phone:1-800-821-6819 Fax:1-636-947-7486 Website:<http://www.nationalshareoffice.com>

Address: St. Joseph Health Center, 300 First Capitol Dr., St. Charles, MO 63301

SIDS - National SIDS Resource Center - Provides information service and technical assistance on sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and related topics.

Phone for grief counseling: 1-800-221-7437 Information/resources 1-866-866-7437

Website: <http://www.sidscenter.org> E-mail: info@sidscenter.org

Address 2115 Wisconsin Ave. NW, Suite 601, Washington, DC 20007

SIDS Alliance - For those who lost a child through sudden infant death.

Phone:1-800-221-7437 Website: <http://www.sidsalliance.org> E-mail: njsids@yahoo.com

SIDS Network-Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Network - Offers latest information, as well as support, for those who have been touched by the tragedy of SIDS or other infant death. Website: <http://sids-network.org>

Spanish Resources (Los Amigos Campasivos) - For those needing assistance if Spanish you can go to www.compassionatefriends.org and go to En Espanol. For brochures go to resources (then go to available brochures and scroll down to bottom of page for brochures written in Spanish). Another webpage you can access is www.tcfatlanta.org/Spanish.html which offers a lot of information on their site and has additional links to other resources.

Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood – SUDC - Program offers support, information, advocacy, and research opportunities for those touched by the sudden and unexplained death of a child (over 12 months of age)

Phone: 1-800-620-SUDC or in NJ 1-201-996-5080 Fax: 1-202-996-5326

Website: <http://sudc.org> E-mail: info@sudc.org

Address: SUDC Program c/o The CJ Foundation for SIDS

Don Imus Pediatric Ctr. 30 Prospect Ave Hackensack, NJ 07601

Suicide Prevention (American Foundation For Suicide Prevention) - Dedicated to advancing knowledge of suicide and the ability to prevent it. Crisis: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) Phone:1-888-333-2377 Phone: 1-363-3500 Fax: 1-212-363-6237.

Website: <http://www.afsp.org> E-mail inquiry@afsp.org Address: 120 Wall St., 22nd Floor, New York, NY 10005

Suicide Prevention (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) - Suicide hotline with free and confidential national network of crisis centers. Phone:1-800-273-TALK (8255) In Spanish phone 1-888-628-9454

Website: <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

New Web Resources

Survivors of Suicide – SOS - To help those who have lost a loved one to suicide and to help resolve their grief and pain in their own personal way. Local chapter meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 at St. Dominics, Church Rd, in Brick. Phone:1-732-899-8483 Contact-Dave Thelen

Website: <http://www.survivorsofsuicide.com>

Survivors of Suicide Awareness of Education - SAVE- A suicide prevention hotline.

Phone: 1-800-273-8255 Website: <http://www.save.org>

Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors – TAPS - Made up of and provides services to, all those who have lost a loved one while serving in the Armed Forces.

Phone: 1-202-588-8277 Website: <http://www.taps.org> E-mail: info@taps.org

Address: 910 17th St. NW Suite 800, Washington, DC 20006

Trauma and Loss in Children (National Institute) - TLC-Dedicated to helping traumatized children and families restore a sense of safety and reduce the effects of trauma; information available about trauma, resources and training for professionals. Phone: 1-877-306-5356 Fax: 1-313-885-0390

Website: <http://www.tlcinstitute.org> Address: 900 Cook Road, Gross Pointe Woods, Michigan 48236

Twinless Twins - Serves in support of twins (and all multiple births) who suffer from the loss of companionship of their twin through death, estrangement, or in-utero loss.

Phone: 1-888-205-8962 Website: <http://www.twinlesstwins.org> E-mail: contact@twinlesstwins.com



The March wind roars
Like a lion in the sky,
And makes us shiver
As he passes by.
When winds are soft,
And the days are warm and clear,
Just like a gentle lamb,
Then spring is here.
~ Author Unknown

 Hello, March! 

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org