



Tampa Bay Chapter

P.O. Box 3226
Tampa, Florida
33601-3226
www.bpusatampabay.com

April 2008

This month's newsletter lovingly sponsored by the families of:

Eric Rutkowski

Steven Scott Holdren, Jr.

Joseph "Joe" Dominic Martinez

MEETING INFORMATION

Regular Monthly SUNDAY Meeting

(held the second Sunday of the month)

Sunday, April 13, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

St. Joseph's Hospital

Medical Arts Building, Auditorium

3001 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Call Beverley Hurley at 813-832-3175

for directions or information.

Regular Monthly DAYTIME Meeting

Riverview/Gibson/Brandon areas

(held the second Friday each month)

Friday, April 11, 10:00 a.m. to Noon

The Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce

330 Pauls Drive, Brandon, Florida 33511

Please call Linda Delk at 813-661-0680

for directions or information.

Regular Monthly BRADENTON Meeting

Call for dates and location!

Melissa Coxwell at 941-708-7052

Regular Monthly PLANT CITY Meeting

(held the fourth Thursday each month)

Thursday, April 24, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

South Florida Baptist Hospital

301 N. Alexander Street, Plant City

in the Community Conference Room

Call Sue Bowditch at 813-661-9334

for directions or information.

Upcoming Events:

Angel of Hope monthly meeting

Please call Beverley Hurley 813-832-3175 for info!

Next meeting 7:00 pm April 7 and May 5, 2008

Perkins on Bears Avenue, just west of I-275

PHOTO GALERY SHOW

Friday, April 18, USF

Mimi Harrill and James Reiman present:

"Coming to Terms", photographic works that deal with loss and absence from the perspectives of both bereaved parents and fatherless sons, from April 7th through April 18th, 2008.

The closing reception will take place on April 18th, 2008 from 7 to 9 pm at the USF's Centre Gallery.

Normal gallery hours are Monday through Friday from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. For more information or driving directions please call (813) 974-5464. Come see some of our BP/USA members photographed and displayed

as the are "Coming to Terms" with their losses!

ANGEL OF HOPE— SPRING TEA

Saturday, April 26, 10 am—12:30 pm

New location - **Quorum Hotel**, 700 N.

Westshore Blvd. and Cypress Street



Wonderful guest speaker, entertainment, fashion show, silent auction, raffle, and of course a delicious brunch with

Starbucks tea or coffee! Please contact Gina Casal,

GinaCasal15@tampabay.rr.com (813) 495-7539 for tickets!

SUNDAY, APRIL 27, 7:00 pm —FREE

GRIEF WORKSHOP

AND ENTERTAINMENT WITH SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER, ALAN PEDERSEN

(Refreshments served)



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30		APRIL	



Alan Pederson's
"Celebrate the Children Tour"
Sunday, April 27, 2008



St. Joseph's Hospital Medical Arts Building, 7:00 p.m.

Alan Pedersen has been performing for more than 25 years.

An accomplished singer and award winning songwriter, he spent several years writing and recording music in Nashville, Tennessee. Alan has had several songs recorded by other artists. His writing has not been limited to music, he has written commercials, radio news copy, and collaborations for television shows and other comedy projects. His performing credits are numerous as well. Alan has worked as an actor, stand-up comedian, keynote speaker/emcee, and in radio as a network news and sports reporter for Westwood One Communications. Currently living in Englewood, Colorado, Alan is the father of two teenage boys and an angel.

In August of 2001 Alan's life took a tragic turn. His 18-year-old and only daughter Ashley was killed in an automobile accident. This tragedy would take his life in a direction he never imagined. Struggling for months to find answers and trying to cope with tremendous pain and anger, he entered a spiritually based grief program in Denver. He credits this program with saving his life, and inspiring him to honor his daughter's life by helping others. In July of 2003, Alan released a CD of songs he has written about his walk through the valley of grief, titled Ashley's Songbook. Alan now helps others by sharing his story of faith and hope. His message is simple; grief and loss offer the opportunity for ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things. He believes that healing begins when we once again give of ourselves by helping others. Alan speaks and plays his music for churches and grief organizations around the country. In 2005 he is planning the release of a new music CD, A Little Farther Down The Road, and a book titled Growing Through Grief. THE NEW CD IS DONE - "More Songs from the Journey" is done, I hope this music blesses you. Thanks for all your support.

Alan speaks and plays his music for churches and grief organization around the country and he will be in Tampa performing his music for us!

On the road in 2008 – A Message from Alan!

We are leaving February 2nd in our 1995 conversion van now affectionately known as Ashley's Butterfly Bus. Brenda and I want to play music for as many bereaved parents as we can the next two years. We are calling this the "Celebrate the Children Tour." It has all been inspired by the countless children whose faces, stories, and lives have been brought to life for us by their grieving parents, grandparents and siblings who have hugged us, cried with us, and shared their loss with us. This is not our journey alone, it is for all the families who walk in our shoes...we truly do share each others pain as well as each others healing and triumph. We are honored to do this work.

Chapter News



ANGEL OF HOPE UPDATE

Please check out our NEW improved website at www.angelofhopetampabay.com
Angel of Hope, P.O. Box 2573, Lutz, FL 33548

Angel of Hope monthly meeting

Please call Beverley Hurley 813-832-3175 for info! Next meeting April 7 and May 5, 2008 at Perkins on Bearss Avenue (at I-275)!

Angel of Hope Annual Spring Tea

What: The TAMPA BAY, committee will hold its fourth annual SPRING TEA

EVENT to benefit the construction of an Angel of Hope Memorial Garden to be placed in the soon to be constructed park in Temple Terrace along the Hillsborough River for the whole Community to appreciate!

We are extremely happy to have song writer and singer, Alan Pedersen, as our Keynote Speaker and Entertainer. We will also have entertainment by the talented singing group The Academy. You will also enjoy our new fashion show! We will serve choice Starbucks teas, coffee, and delicious Brunch along with having a wonderful raffle and silent auction!

Where: Quorum Hotel, 700 N. Westshore Blvd. (and Cypress Street), Tampa 33609 - NEW LOCATION.

When: Saturday, April 26, 2008, 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Who: The entire Tampa Bay community is invited to this event. We are currently looking for individuals to serve as table hosts or hostesses. Tickets available and must be arranged in advance:

* Table hosts/hostesses will make a donation of \$240.00 per table. Table hosts/hostesses have a great time planning a theme for their table, decorating the table and inviting seven of their friends to join them for a morning of fun and entertainment.

* Individual chair donation is \$30.00. Corporate Tables may be obtained for a minimum donation of \$300.00. The corporate name will be listed in the program with signage on the table as well.

* We are also looking for persons or corporations to make donations to our raffle/silent auction (i.e. gift certificates; handmade items; gift baskets; etc.)

Why: Our Angel of Hope garden is a memorial to a our children, gone but forever remembered, by parents and step-parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces, and dear caring friends. This memorial will be a gathering place for hope and healing. We are bringing the Angel of Hope Memorial Garden to our Tampa Bay community and it will be placed in the new Temple Terrace Park along Hillsborough River. The angel currently stands in 74 cities nation wide with many more proposed sites. The statue is cast in bronze and will have memorial bricks with our loved ones names placed surrounding the angel.

Contact: Please consider hosting a table for this wonderful event. If you are interested please mail a check to Angel of Hope, c/o Jackie Loadholtz, 7536 Berna Lane, Land O'Lakes, FL 34637, 813-929-0585 (jsl621@msn.com) or call Julie Leyde at 813-784-6929 or Gina Casal at 813-495-7539 for more information.

Tickets must be purchased in advance and before April 10th.

Telephone Friends

Need to talk? Call one of our Telephone Friends. They're here to lend a knowing ear because they've been there. Don't hesitate to call, we understand.

Linda Delk (General Information) (813) 661-0680

Theresa Farmer (Homicide) (813) 994-0707

Traci Cooley (Drowning) (813) 300-6877

Ron Ellington (Suicide/Grandparent) (727) 410-2308

Serena Graves (Sibling Contact) (813) 810-7169

Violeta "Cookie" Fernandez (813) 996-4281
(Se Habla Espano)

CRISIS CENTER 211

Love Gifts

Susan Zapata
Donation of Coffee
In loving memory of her son
Tarik Gonzalez
1/16/1976-10/12/2008

Tom & Judy Sluder
In loving memory of their son
Keith Joseph Sluder
4/25/1964 - 5/11/2006

Charles & Teresa L'Homme
In loving memory of his son
Ryan L'Homme
4/16 /81 - 3/23/00

Ron Ellington
In loving memory of his granddaughter
Kelli Colin Roark
4/30/1990 - 8/30/1998

Love Gifts-A Thoughtful Way to Remember

Love Gifts are a beautiful and loving way to remember a loved one. Through Love Gifts, we are able to reach out to others with our brochures and newsletters as well as obtain books and other information for our library. We truly appreciate every Love Gift, donation and sponsorship. Our Chapter work is done by volunteers and these donations help us reach out in many ways, including the preparation and mailing of the newsletter.

Electronic Newsletter

The Newsletter is available electronically. To receive it by Email, send your name and email address to: bee.hurley@gte.net and indicate your desire to switch from regular "snail" mail to email. Email recipients will also receive additional news and information, while helping our chapter save costs. We very much appreciate your cooperation by helping us out this way!

Chapter Library Books

If you have finished reading a BP/USA Library book, please, please return it to our library. There is no time limit for how long you can have a book, but the longer you borrow a book, the less opportunities other bereaved parents have to read it. We also gladly accept book donations in memory of your child.

Contact Tommy or Barbara Dietrich at (813) 234-4705 or visit the any monthly meeting to return a book, arrange a donation, or inquire about an available title.

A Special Way To Remember Your Child:

Sponsor A Newsletter Page

Anyone can sponsor a page in this newsletter in memory of their child. The price for a full page is \$60 which includes one black and white scan of one color or black and white photograph and your tribute to your child, which can include poems, stories or whatever you like. Your contribution supports the chapter and helps pay for the printing of the newsletter.

The newsletter page will also be posted on our new and improved website for one year on the *Our Children* page!

To sponsor a newsletter page, contact Beverley Hurley at (813) 832-3175 (email bee.hurley@gte.net). Please note that sponsorship pages are due by the 15th of the month BEFORE the publication month.

Bereaved Parents/USA National Office
Post Office Box 95, Park Forest, IL 60466
Phone/Fax: (708) 748-7866
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

LifePath Hospice Bereavement Program:

GRUPOS DE APOYO NUEVOS COMIENZOS
PARA ADULTOS- Para Mas informacion, llam al
813-877-2200, Ext. 10671



Our Children . . . Remembered

So long as we live, they too shall live ... For they are a part of us as we remember them.

April Birthdays

Alvarez, Dean
4/28/1965 - 6/12/2000
M-Diana Stenglein
B-Nadie Alvarez
S-Athena & Lynette Alvarez

Batten, Devon
4/4/1994—4/18/1999
M-Mary Battan

Bliss, Lindsay Rebecca
4/26/1977 - 12/1/1991
P - Jim & Mary Beth Bliss
S - Shannon Bliss

Buckley, Deja'
4/26/2001 - 4/26/2001
P - Lisa John & Wade Buckley

DeRoche, Cameron Gaines
04/11/89 - 01/25/95
P - Peggy & Karl DeRoche
S - Mary Amber DeRoche

Gladen, Renee Rose
4/21/1961-11/17/1999
S-Diana Gladen

Geiger, Jacob
4/9/2003 - 4/9/2003
M-Darla Geiger
B-Jared Geiger
S-Brooke Geiger
GP-Kenneth & Barbara Dykes

Hamm, Rusty
4/23/1960 - 4/2/2004
P-Ramon & Rita Hamm
Spouse-Joy St. Martin
Daughter-Sydney Hamm

Heath, Austin Noah
4/6/2000 - 7/4/2000
P - Isaac Heath & Regina Jacobs
GM - Gigi Schools

Hines, Heather
4/28/1975 - 11/25/1998
M - Sue Hines

Holdren, Scott
4/10/1986-5/31/2007
M-Donna & Bill Henry
& Steven Scott Holdren, Sr.
GP-Joseph & Catherine Washington,
George Wayne & Mary Jo Holdren

Horst, Trey
4/16/1974 - 9/8/2000
P - Art & Linda Horst
B-Todd & Thad
S-Trisha & Tammy

L'Homme, Ryan
4/16 /81 - 3/23/00
P - Charles & Teresa L'Homme
S - Cortney L'Homme

Martinez, Joseph Dominic
4/23/1972—10/13/20077
M-Josie Martinez

Mohammed, Ian Roger
04/19/73 - 08/02/92
P - Judy & Rick Mohammed
S - Alison Mohammed
B - Cameron Mohammed

Nadir, Peter
4/6/1971 - 2/8/2003
M-Barbar Nadir
S-Sue McFowan

Noriega, Aiden
4/4/2001 - 6/18/2001
P - Rick & Ethal Noriega

O'Connor, Ashley Lauren
4/12/1991 - 4/8/1996
M-Pamela Hite-Bocchino
B-John O'Connor
GM-Victoria Hite

Pegram, Baby Boy
4/1976 - 4/1976
Pegram, Jodi E.
04/06/70 - 07/22/01
P - Earl & Susan Pegram
S - Jodi & Robin Pegram
B - Scooter & Craig Pegram
GP - Betty Jennings

Rardin, Kelly Rose
04/17/1993 - 04/17/1993
M - Lori Rardin

Regis, Chad
4/7/1971 - 3/22/2005
P-Ray & LaRae Regis
GP-Bea Forbes

Roark, Kelli Colin
4/30/1990 - 8/30/1998
P - Joe & Angel Roark
B - Kyle & Kaleb Roark
GF - Ron Ellington

Rusnack, Tamara
4/6/1972 - 7/23/2004
M-Donna Johnson

Rutkowski, Eric John
4/11/1981 - 7/16/2003
P-Linda & Ron Rutkowski
GP-Ray & Doris Pomorski

Sluder, Keith
4/25/1964 - 5/11/2006
Children-Keith II and Miranda
P-Tom & Judy Sluder
Granddaughters-Kalie & Ella Mae
S-Theresa & Kathryn
B-Tom, III
N/N-Israel, Brando & Brandy

Spellman, Xavier Lane
4/17/2006 - 4/17/2006
M-Veronica Lane

Todd, Joan
4/22/1960 - 3/12/2004
M-Mary McCord

Tucker, Vince
3/8/1972-4/26/2005
M-Glenda Tucker

Violette, Alena
4/30/1989-4/9/2005
M-Joyce Violette



April Anniversaries

Aviles, Joseph
6/3/1974-4/24/2007
M-Carolyn Aviles

Baker-Dixon, Lori Kathleen
10/29/1975 - 4/12/2001
Child - Ryan
Spouse - Rusty
P - Donna & Ron Budd and Marie & Bill Baker
S - Tracy Goodson & Phylcia Baker
B - Jamey Baker

Batten, Devon
4/4/1994—4/18/1999
M-Mary Battan

Berry, Michelle
3/8/1967 - 4/2/2003
P-Joanne & Lawrence Ouellette
B-Russ,David,Scott & Joe
S-Denise Volo
Son-Bobby

Blazowich, Anthony "Tony"
2/20/1984 to 4/5/2006
Parents - Daniel, Sr. and Marianne
Blazowich
Siblings - Jennifer and Daniel Jr.

Buckley, Deja'
4/26/2001 - 4/26/2001
P - Lisa John & Wade Buckley

Buckstein, Ryder
6/22/2004-4/27/2005
M-Kristen Panico
GM-Jeanne Buckstein

Burger, Jeffrey Robin
02/05/61 - 04/20/97
M - Cecelia Burger
B - Hal & Curt Burger

Cason, Todd
10/28/1968 - 4/12/2003
P-Earl and Kay Cason

Clark, Kellen William
3/16/82 - 4/15/02
F - Bill Clark

Corbett, Shaun
7/8/1985 - 4/23/2003
M-Ellen Corbett

Decosta, Brittany
11/19/87 - 04/07/91
M - Kay Decosta

Dixon Jr., Anthony Howard
11/27/1978 - 4/1/1996
M - Brenda & Toney Dixon
B - David Dixon

Geiger, Jacob
4/9/2003 - 4/9/2003
M-Darla Geiger
B-Jared Geiger
S-Brooke Geiger
GP-Kenneth & Barbara Dykes

Hafford, Lauren Elizabeth
2/17/1977 - 4/13/1999
P - Gwen & John Hafford
S - Lindsay & Lesley Hafford

Hamm, Rusty
4/23/1960 - 4/2/2004
P-Ramon & Rita Hamm
Spouse-Joy St. Martin
Daughter-Sydney Hamm

Jones, Sherry
1/18/1971 - 4/27/2000
M - Brenda Copeland

Langford, Todd Allen
01/05/78 - 04/27/01
P - Fred & Janice Langford
B - Robbie Langford
S - Kathy Peterson
G/P - Betty Williams & H.P &
Ruby Langford

Leyde, Darek
7/17/1967 - 4/23/2003
P-Vern & Julie Leyde
S-Traci Gainforth

Makowski, Anthony
5/20/1983 - 4/24/2005
M-Cathy Makowski

Muse, Jennifer Lee
08/07/71 - 04/04/92
M - Gretchen Muse
F - Robert Muse, Jr.
GP - Bob & Gladys Muse
GM - Dorothy Deisch

O'Connor, Ashley Lauren
4/12/1991 - 4/8/1996
M-Pamela Hite-Bocchino
B-John O'Connor
GM-Victoria Hite

Panico, Ryder
6/22/2004-4/27/2005
M-Kristen Panico
GM-Jeanne Buckstein

Pegram, Baby Boy
4/1976 - 4/1976
P - Earl & Susan Pegram
S - Jodi & Robin Pegram
B - Scooter & Craig Pegram
GP - Betty Jennings

Rardin, Kelly Rose
04/17/1993 - 04/17/1993
M - Lori Rardin

Shockey, Ann
11/08/56 - 04/26/70
P - Dick & Connie Shockey

Spellman, Xavier Lane
4/17/2006 - 4/17/2006
M-Veronica Lane
Simpson, Tianca
3/5/1987-4/18/2000
M-Monica Simpson

Stallard, Judy Lynn
02/28/1981 - 04/24/1981
M-Patricia (Stallard) Bass
F-Joe Stallard

Thomas, Destiny Jean
10/1/1990 - 4/24/1998
F-Craig Thomas
B-Braxton and tin
GP-Augie & Betty Thatcher and Marty
& Carol Thomas

Thornton, Jeremiah
8/29/84 - 4/13/01
M - Tim & Sue Thornton
B - Jason
S - Amanda

Tucker, Vince
3/8/1972 - 4/26/2005
M-Glenda Tucker
A-Judith Gude

Violette, Alena
4/30/1989-4/9/2005
M-Joyce Violette

Waller, Lauren Marie
12/12/1990 - 4/16/2000
M - Kristine Colding & Bryan Strahan
B-Christopher
S-Faith
GP-Joyce & Gene Waller

Wallowicz, Michael (Mikey) Kevin
10/23/1981 - 4/28/1990
P - Jim & Judy Wallowicz
B - Jimi Wallowicz
GM-Josie Varselona

Webb, Eric Richard
7/1/1985 - 4/2/1999
P - William & Kathleen Webb
B - David Webb

Williams, Travis Aaron
9/11/1979 - 4/19/2000
P - Bill & Linda Williams
GP - Loretta Ayers, Raymond Ayers &
Edna Williams

Wynne, Adam Charles
10/13/1971 - 4/24/1993
P-Chuck & Gloria Judson
S-Lori Wynne
Father to Morgan Wynne

Young, Billy
7/14/2003 - 4/17/2006
P-Bill & Sandy Young



"If any of you went to the TBPAC to see Jersey Boys, the story of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, you were probably as surprised as I was to find out that Frankie was a bereaved parent. His daughter who had a drug addiction died at age 22. The song Fallen Angel was recorded in her memory!" Beverley Hurley

Fallen Angel

You're home again,
I'm glad you kept the key
Been waiting here,
it seemed a million years to me

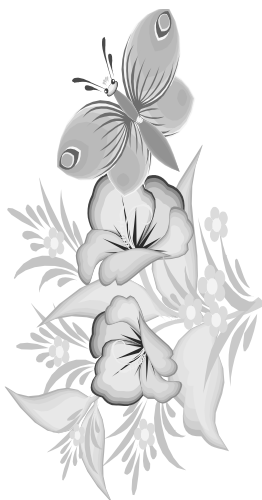
But hush now I know you're all cried out
It's all right inside, I've had no doubt
About your love for me
I can see behind the tears
I'm certain of the way we feel
And given time the hurt will heal

I need you, I think I always will
From time to time you play around
But I love you still
You tried them all,
at ev'rybody's beck and call
Maybe you resist them all
When I tell you how I missed you

Fallen angel, I'll forgive you anything
You can't help the things you do

Home again so won't you close the door
Stay here with me and
We'll forget what's gone before
Just hold me tight
Our love is gonna make it right
Put shadows way beyond recall
The ghost has almost gone

Fallen angel, I'll forgive you anything
You can't help the things you do



Thank you Pam and Mike Harris for graciously speaking at our Candle Light Ceremony on December 9, 2007. Here is what Pam had to say:

Twenty three years, ten months, and five days ago my husband, Mike and I, had one of the happiest days of our lives. Our second son, Eric, was born. Then 19 years, 7 months and 8 days later we suffered the most devastating day of our lives when we were told our wonderful son had died, murdered by another. As most of you here know there is sometimes no way to describe or make others who have not gone through this experience understand the myriad of emotions you feel as you begin your journey down this dark, unknown road of indescribable loss. There we were two people who always seemed to be able to make intelligent decisions at a loss as to where to begin. Somehow we made it through those first days and managed with the help of friends and family to plan and have the memorial service for Eric.

Friends told us about Bereaved Parents and we decided within a month of losing Eric that we needed someone to help us through this trying time. We went to the first meeting we found, which was at the Ruskin Library. When we arrived at the library, much to our surprise, no one was there, but the library called Linda Delk and she came and was our first contact with Bereaved Parents. We knew that night that this was an organization that might help us cope with our grief. It has been 4 years, 2 months and 27 days since Eric left us behind. In that time we have had to deal not only with his loss and our grief, but also the trials of the two who murdered him. Throughout this trying period it has been a comfort to have a place to come to every month where everyone present understands exactly what you are going through.

A Keith Story:

When he was a teenager my wife struck a deal with our youngest son, Keith. She paid him in advance to rake the leaves at a later time. When that time arrived he was reminded of the agreement and sent to the chore.

Later, I went outside. A small amount of leaves had been raked into a pile or two. Keith was standing in the yard, rake in hand looking up as leaves trickled down. "What are you doing, Keith," I asked? "You're supposed to be raking leaves." He replied, "I'm waiting for all the leaves to fall."

Keith went ahead of us into eternity at age 42 in May of 2006.

Today, when most of the leaves have fallen and need to be raked, I look and see that yet others are drifting to the ground. I picture Keith standing in the yard, rake in hand, smiling at me knowing that now I understand what he meant when he answered those years ago.

By Tom Sluder, in loving memory of Keith Joseph Sluder 4/25/1964 to 5/11/2006

Please note - Our new and improved website is now [.com](http://www.bpusatampabay.com) (and not .org)

www.bpusatampabay.com



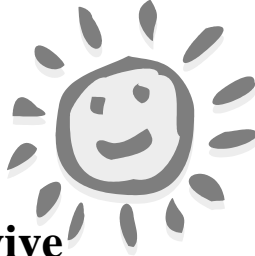
**THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS THAT
HELPED WITH THE 2008 GASPARILLA MARATHON!**

These wonderful people came out on a Sunday morning before most of you were even thinking about getting out of bed and while it was still dark! Afterward, we all went for a nice breakfast and fellowship!

Thanks to Sue and Ben Bowditch, Jackie and George Loadholtz, Bill Schneider, David and Beverley Hurley, Kalissa Gonzalez, Chuck and Glenda LaFaye, Carolyn Aviles, Rita and Tom Zvada, her sister, Sandra Maynard, and son, Charles Cash.

We got free tee shirts and many personal rewards besides an upcoming donation that will help our Chapter expenses for the printing and mailing of our newsletter and various other expenses as all work nationally and locally is done by volunteers!!

We were so whipped when it was over at 9:30 a.m. but we were ready to sign up for next year!!!! Hope you will too!



Helping Survivors Survive

A death by any one of the many self-destructive ways, triggers great amounts of anger and guilt. However, some of those feelings can be balanced by struggling to see that the death was not so much a deliberate, hostile act, but a gesture of utter hopelessness and despair.

Reminders that the person was so driven by emotional whirlwinds that it was impossible to sense any ray of hope can temper, considerably, the emotional impact of self-destructive death.

One of the best responses to such a death that I have ever heard came through a sermon delivered by the pastor of a young man who recently had died a self-destructive death.

With great eloquence his pastor was able to convey tremendous hope through these words:

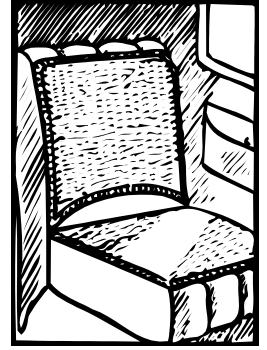
"Our friend died on his own battlefield. He was killed in action fight a civil war.

"He fought against adversaries that were as real to him as his casket is to us. They were powerful adversaries. They took toll of his energies and endurance.

"They exhausted the last vestiges of his courage, and only God knows how this child of His suffered in the silent skirmishes that took place in his soul."

Victor M. Parachin

An Empty Space



Day in, Day out we
falsely think
That life will stay
the same.
We go about our
routine tasks
Till God calls out a
name.

First we love, then experience grief
When a deep loss we face.
Salty tears are the evidence of
A heart with an empty space.

Many years have drifted by
Since we lost our infant son.
The shock was devastating.
My world became undone.

For a time we couldn't accept it
As I still felt his presence near.
Deep denial was my refuge
No sleep ... depression so severe.

Through guidance and empathy we learn
To accept things that cannot be;
And remember the happy times
You shared as a family.

These memories will sustain you.
Hold them close within your heart
And share with other parents
Who also had a child depart.

By and by you'll smile; your head held high.
You'll get back into life's game
And return to your familiar routine
Still knowing things will never be the same.

*By Joann Jones
BP/USA Tampa, Florida*

I have been reading Robin McGraw's Book, "*INSIDE MY HEART*", *Choosing to Live With Passion and Purpose*.

Today I was reading the Chapter where she tells about her Mother's death of a sudden, massive heart attack while she was talking to her on the phone. This really struck me and I thought it might also strike a chord with other Bereaved people.

"You never know when your life will change forever. One moment your existence is tidy and ordered with everything and everyone in its place; then a tornado blows through and life as you knew it lies scattered around you, tattered and broken and making no sense at all. Sometimes you can see it coming and can prepare yourself; other times its over before you know what hit you and all you can do is stand there dazed and shell-shocked, and try to make sense of that new reality you must absorb and accept."

I think she hit the nail on the head. It was certainly true for George and me, and I'm sure for many others.

Submitted by Jackie Loadholtz, mother to Glenn
BP/USA Tampa Bay Chapter



ERIC

MY BRIGHT SHINING STAR

**Eric, the day that you were born,
You became my bright shining star!**

**The twinkle in your eyes,
The sounds of your giggles,
Brightened my life.**

**As you grew,
The cute things you said and did,
Filled my life with light.**

**When you became a young man,
Your kind heart,
Your thoughtfulness and consideration
Warmed my heart.**

**When you left this earth,
Your warmth, light and brightness
Left my life forever.**

**But I know that in the dark skies of night and in my heart
Your bright star will shine on forever.**

I LOVE YOU WITH ALL MY HEART!!!!

Mom

*In Loving Memory of
Joseph "Joe" Dominic Martinez
April 23, 1972 to October 13, 2007*



We have put feelings into words. It's not easy. Not for any of us. I, however, am speaking for the collective group. The ones who still love you and miss you.

I've been designated to write to you, but I'm going to speak for all of us, telling you, with words, how we all feel. As you know with our family, that has never been our strong suit — speaking our minds, that's one thing, but telling each other how we feel — geez, we'd probably have more likely of chance of transmitting them to animals before we told each other how we felt.

That's really not the point. Most of us miss you in our own way. The holidays weren't the same without you either and it showed. We all thought about you, realized the Thanksgiving and Christmas just isn't the same without you hovering around the kitchen, standing just in arms-reach of the food.

I know that Nana misses having you talk to her, misses her son. I know that my mom, your sister, misses having her kid brother to keep an eye on.

I know that Brittany, while not capable of articulating it, knows that something is amiss with the family.

I know that my dad wants the family to stay strong and hold together, to lean on each other more so than we do, but he does miss throwing the football — in your case hurling it with all your strength — with his brother-in-law in the front yard.

And your dad, Nano, despite himself, misses you. There's not really much more I can say about that.

I know Allison, as little interaction as you guys had, misses you as well. She, like all of us, knew that, while abrasive, you had a good heart, that your motives were always good at the core and that you wouldn't hurt those that meant the most to you.

I know that she's upset that you won't be at the wedding.

She's not the only one.

It's not going to feel right, and you probably know this. I mean, you were always there, always there for everything else in not only my life, but for the family. It was the thing you did. You made time for us. I respected that, appreciated that even if I never said it. Though things can't be changed, can't be erased, you'll still be there because you'll be in my thoughts. It would be hard for you not to be.

The bottom line is we all miss you in our own way, and on your birthday, we'll miss you even more. We'll each light a candle in our hearts. We'll each remember how you were there for us, always. And how that you will continue to be there in ways that, once again, we probably won't be able to tell each other.

But we'll make sure to tell you.

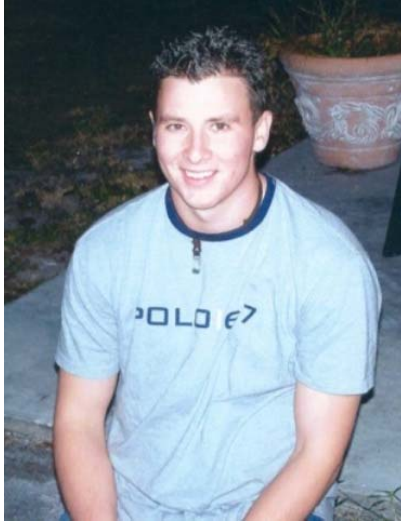
Love, *Michael*

Happy Birthday Joseph!

We love you always and miss you very much!

Love,
Mom, Patty, Mike, Allison, Brittany, Family and Friends

*In Loving Memory Of
Steven Scott Holdren, Jr.
"Scotty"
April 10, 1986 - May 31, 2007*



Happy Birthday To Our Baby

Scotty, you would be 22 this month and there are many things we want to say to you. You were a very special child: smart, handsome, curious, and kind. You never let anything keep you from making us laugh. Even when you were small, you always wanted to help others, and didn't hesitate to put others' needs before your own.

After your high school graduation in 2004, you were lucky enough to be able to indulge your love for travel. By getting a job with Uncle Russell, and going all over the world, you had the opportunity to visit places I will never see. I guess God wanted you to be able to have those experiences, and knew that you needed to get it done early.

Billy and I never dreamed of our life without you. We never imagined the kind of pain we'd feel just trying to exist without the huge piece of our lives that was you. We still wait for you to come home from one of your out-of-town trips, but know in our hearts that it won't happen; you won't come in again.

There's no way we can express how much we love and miss every moment and every day with you. We wait for the days to become easier. You gave us so many wonderful memories to keep us going. You were our world, and always will be.

We love you and miss you!

Mom, Billy, Caesar and Family

THERE I'LL BE

Please don't stand at my grave and weep;
For I'm not there, I'm not asleep.

I'm in the light from stars at night;
In morn, I'm birds in peaceful flight.

I am the soft and gentle rain;
And golden sunlight on the grain.

I'm here in sparkles on the sea,
So please, don't cry; my soul soars free.

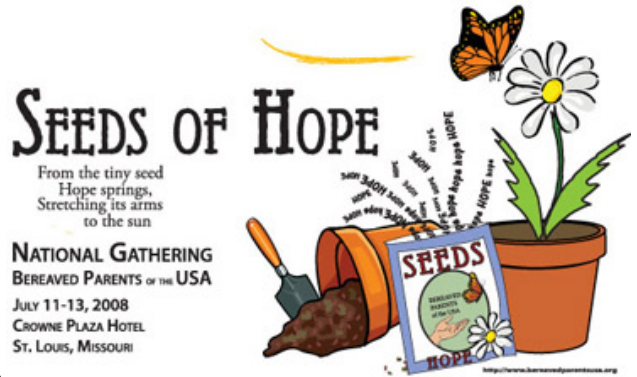
When gentle breezes kiss your cheek,
You'll know I'm there, though I don't speak.

So don't be sad when you can't see;
Just lift your face, and there I'll be.

2008 BP/USA National Gathering

www.bereavedparentsusa.org OR
 www.2008gathering@bereavedparentsusa.org
 618-244-1203 or 304-645-3048

It's time to make plans to attend the BP/USA National Gathering, *Seeds of Hope* on July 11-13, 2008, at the Airport Crown Plaza, St. Louis, Missouri. While each National Gathering may have a different theme, each gathering offers a safe environment where we can share our feelings and concerns and have an opportunity to learn ways of coping from people who truly do understand our pain. This year's National Gathering is hosted by the Southern Illinois Chapter, Mt. Vernon, IL, with assistance from the Lewisburg West Virginia Chapter. The co-chairs for this event are Gene and Martha Honn from the Southern Illinois Chapter and Jack and Betty Ewart from the West Virginia Chapter.



If you have never attended a National Gathering, I encourage you to make *Seeds of Hope* your first one. After attending my first National Gathering in Dallas, Texas in 2001, I was "hooked." While I had support from family and friends, the National Gathering gave me the opportunity to spend an entire week-end with other bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents who were actively searching for tools to help them through this unwanted journey of grief. When you are newly bereaved, you are like a little seed thrown into a deep, dark place. You need nurturing and encouragement to begin to come up out of that place and who better to offer it than those who have walked that walk. By meeting others who have walked this walk, you see that they have somehow found the courage to reinvest in life. Those who are a little further down the road in their grief have acquired tools to help deal with the pain. By sharing coping tools each of us has acquired over the years, you will have the opportunity to help the newly bereaved come up out of that deep, dark place. *Seeds of Hope* will not only offer suggestions about how to handle your grief but the opportunity to meet and start friendships with other bereaved parents, siblings, grandparents and others from all over the United States. I'll look forward to seeing you at the 2008 National Gathering.

REGISTRATION

The Gathering will be from Friday July 11 to Sunday July 13, 2008. Plan to arrive on Thursday, July 10. There will be a get together program on Thursday evening. The opening ceremony begins at 9am on Friday, July 11. The Gathering ends Sunday morning with a special closing program. Registration for the Gathering shall be \$25 for each person with a maximum of \$75 for a family if postmarked by May 15, 2008. After May 15, the registration will be \$35 per person or \$85 per family. **SO GET YOUR RESERVATIONS IN EARLY.** Registrations at the Gathering may be by cash, check or, new this year, credit card.

HOTEL

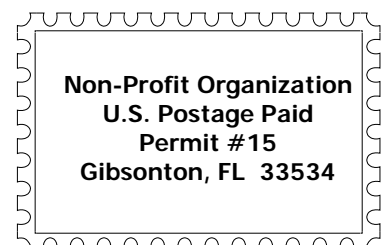
The Crowne Plaza Hotel - St. Louis Airport, 11228 Lone Eagle Dr., St. Louis, MO 63044, 314-291-6700 – Ask for In House Reservations, Tell them that you will be with BP/USA. The Crowne Plaza Hotel features an eight-story atrium with a waterfall as its focal point; its wide-open airy design lets light flood into the Gathering workshop areas. The Hotel has been very generous to discount the room rate to \$75 per night plus tax. Remember that it is your responsibility to make your own reservations by calling the number listed above. The hotel provides doubles, kings, non-smoking and handicap rooms. To reduce the rate further, up to four persons may share the room and the cost. Reservations must be made directly through the hotel. When making your reservations, ask for In House Reservations and inform them that you are attending the BP/USA Gathering so that you will receive the special discounted rate. **RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY JUNE 15, 2008** in order to take advantage of the discounted room rate. Rooms are available, at the same cost, for 3 days before and 3 days after the Gathering. So get those reservations in early!

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, please contact Martha Honn at 618-244-1203 or Betty Ewart at 304-645-3048. You may also contact either of them by e-mail at 2008gathering@bereavedparentsusa.org. Please see the BP/USA national website for registration forms.



The Bereaved Parents of the USA
 P.O. Box 156
 Gibsonton, FL 33534



April 2008

POSTMASTER - Dated Material

Please do not delay.



Please note - Our website is now .com and not .org
www.bpusatampabay.com