



# Tampa Bay Chapter

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

## MEETING INFORMATION

### *Regular Monthly SUNDAY Meeting*

(held the second Sunday of the month)  
March 13, 6:30 p.m. See below for a  
scheduled special program

*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, March 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 PLANT CITY Meeting*

(Normally held the fourth Monday each month)

Monday, March 28, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

South Florida Baptist Hospital  
301 N. Alexander Street, Plant City  
in the Community Conference Room  
Call Janice Falcon at 813-779-9353  
for directions or information.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### YOU DO NOT WANT TO MISS!!

The Presentation by a guest speaker Dr.  
Kim Lockwood has been cancelled due  
to illness in his family.



### *Angel of Hope Annual Spring Tea*

Saturday, April 30, 2011  
9 a.m. - Noon - \*Doors open at  
8:30am.

Wyndham at Westshore (formerly Quorum Hotel)  
700 N. Westshore Blvd. in Tampa.

Join us for a celebrity MC, fun entertainment,  
great food & fantastic raffles!

Seats are \$35 per person.

Table of eight may be hosted for \$280.

Corporate Sponsorships (table of 8)

Silver Tea Set Sponsor- \$3,000; Fine China Tea

Set Sponsor- \$2,000; Crystal Tea Set Sponsor-  
\$1,000;

Linen Sponsor- \$350.

Please contact Lourdes Arenas to register in  
advance and **before April 9<sup>th</sup>** (813) 416-2536

**Hurry and get your tickets!!**

Call Gina Casal (813) 495-7539 to donate raffle items!

Tickets may be purchased on line at  
[www.angelofhopetampabay.org](http://www.angelofhopetampabay.org)  
We now accept Paypal on line!

## March 2011

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	31		
<b>MARCH 2011</b>						

## To Those in Need

Do endless nights weigh on your soul  
and eyelids with an awful dread  
that you will never sleep again?  
Does night give way to day before  
sweet sleep's gray numbness spreads  
its silken net around your mind?  
Or do you sleep as one who's drugged,  
with blank and dark and desperate heavi-  
ness of heart? Come, those of you in need,  
take courage from the lives of those who've  
known such nights before and who have  
conquered them.  
Bereavement groups are here  
for you to lean on and to learn from.  
Together we shall rediscover hope.

*Shirley Cognard Ottman  
The Slender Thread  
Recovering*

## A Little Time for Spring



Find a little time for Spring.  
Even if your days are troubled.  
Let a little sunshine in -  
Let your memories be doubled.  
Take a little time to see  
All the things your child was seeing  
And your tears will help your heart  
Find a better time for being.

*Sascha Wagner  
Des Moines, IA*

## Chapter News



### ANGEL OF HOPE UPDATE

[www.angelofhopetampabay.com](http://www.angelofhopetampabay.com)

Located at :

*Riverside Park*

*201 Riverhills Drive, Temple Terrace*

Mailing Address:

*P. O. Box 2573*

*Lutz, FL 33548*

*813.495.7539*



### Angel of Hope Annual Spring Tea

**Saturday, April 30, 2011**

*9 a.m. - Noon - \*Doors open at 8:30am.*

*Wyndham at Westshore (formerly Quorum Hotel)*

*700 N. Westshore Blvd. in Tampa.*

*Join us for a celebrity MC, fun entertainment,  
great food & fantastic raffles!*

*Seats are \$35 per person.*

*Table of eight may be hosted for \$280.*

*Corporate Sponsorships (table of 8)*

*Silver Tea Set Sponsor- \$3,000; Fine China Tea Set*

*Sponsor- \$2,000; Crystal Tea Set Sponsor- \$1,000;*

*Linen Sponsor- \$350.*

*Please contact Lourdes Arenas to register in  
advance and before April 9<sup>th</sup> (813) 416-2536*

***Hurry and get your tickets!!***

Call Gina Casal (813) 495-7539 to donate raffle items!

Tickets may be purchased on line at  
[www.angelofhopetampabay.org](http://www.angelofhopetampabay.org)

## Love Gifts

Donated by Janice Falcon

In loving memory of her granddaughter

**Michelle Elizabeth Booker**

3/25/1987-12/1/2004

Donated by Tom & Judy Sluder

In loving memory of their daughter

**Kathryn Elizabeth Sluder**

8/31/1966 - 3/16/2002

Donated by Dawn & Lee Cepero

In loving memory of their daughter

**Caylee Marie Cepero**

9/3/2000-3/8/2005

Donated by Sandy Boehning

In loving memory of her granddaughter

**Caylee Marie Cepero**

9/3/2000-3/8/2005

### 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.

### Refreshments

Some of us like to remember our child's birthday or the anniversary of his or her death by bringing a cake or cookies to the meeting that month. We would appreciate having you bring a special treat to any meeting. You may also want to bring and share a picture of your child. Thank you!

### Telephone Friends

Need to talk? Having a bad day? 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

Sue Bowditch (Adult Child) (813) 390-9734

Theresa Farmer (Homicide) (813) 994-0707

Traci Cooley (Drowning) (813) 464-4525

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

Charles L'Homme (Accidental Death) (813) 335-7628

Debbie Nemitz (Long Term Illness) (813) 907-1441

Barbara or Tommy Dietrich  
(Death of an Only Child) (813) 340-9120

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

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

**CRISIS CENTER 211**

### 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.

Contact Tommy or Barbara Dietrich at (813) 234-4705 or visit one of our three monthly sharing meetings to return a book, arrange a donation or inquire about an available title.

### Sponsor A Newsletter Page

Anyone can sponsor a page in this newsletter in memory of their child. The price for a full page is \$55 which includes one black and white scan of one 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.

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

### Electronic Newsletter

The Newsletter is available electronically. To receive it by Email, send your name and email address to: [bee.hurley@gte.net](mailto: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!

### Address Change

If you have an address change, the Postal Service will NOT forward! They return to us—FOR A FEE, SO **PLEASE** LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE A NEW ADDRESS.

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



## Our Children . . . Remembered

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

### March Birthdays

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

Booker, Michelle Elizabeth  
3/25/1987 - 12/1/2004  
P-Michael & Bonnie Booker  
B-Justine & Dillon Booker  
GP-Betty Nichols and Ed & Janice Falcon

Buchanan, Sierra Lan  
03/07/96 - 05/25/96  
P - Kim & Bryan Buchanan  
S - May Linh Buchanan

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

Combs, Phillip J.  
3/24/1986 - 6/12/2004  
P-Lisa Pyche' & Phil Combs  
B-Travis Combs  
GP-Thomas & Sharon Pyche'

Cooley, Malena Rose  
3/23/1998 - 9/4/2000  
P - Scott & Traci Cooley  
B - Nolan  
S - Madelyn & Olivia

Cowen, Chad  
3/31/1973 - 6/7/1997  
P - Mary "Pete" & Mike Cowen  
S - Tiffany Larson

Darby, Marc Steven  
3/25/1986 - 12/12/1998  
P - Steve & Lori Darby  
S - Cody, Austin, Benjamin Darby  
GP - John & Linda Darby

Dixon, Austin Ryan  
03/18/97 - 05/18/98  
P - Carrie & Robert Dixon  
S-Sara Ryan Dixon

Ellington, Timothy  
03/06/62 - 05/25/91  
F - Ron Ellington

Fernandez, Karen Irene  
03/08/68 - 08/23/88  
M - Violeta "Cookie" Fernandez  
B-Rik Fernandez

Griffis, Julia Rose  
03/05/92 - 03/05/92  
P - Bruce & Kathy Griffis

Gugliotta, Dan & Nadine  
3/26/1976 - 10/14/2003  
P-Dan & Nadine Gugliotta  
Son-Jason

Howard, Christopher L.  
3/27/1975 - 5/18/2000  
M-Cay Pelaez

Landrum, Mark  
03/03/79 - 06/24/94  
M - Joan Landrum Adams-Hilliard  
F - Steve Landrum  
B - John Landrum

Lavin, Kevin Joseph  
03/24/80 - 03/30/95  
P - Kathy & Mike Lavin  
S - Maggie & Kaitlin Lavin  
Gdm - Catherine Lavin

Lespinasse, Bryan  
3/8/1991 - 12/27/2004  
M-Margarett Lespinasse

Mink-Miller, Deborah  
3/26/1965 - 9/27/1991  
M-Diane Mink  
S-Renee Mink Crosby

Pegram, Robin Sue  
03/13/73 - 12/05/93  
P - Earl & Susan Pegram  
S - Jodi Pegram  
B - Scooter & Craig Pegram  
GM-Betty Jennings

Prescott, Alexandria  
3/25/1990 - 6/28/2017  
Stephanie & Tracy Knox

Rainey, Wendy Michelle Price  
3/7/1968-9/27/2006  
M-Shelia Farmer (Lassiter)  
B-Peter Price  
S-Emily Furst

Rayburn, Geoffrey (Jeff) Ware  
3/2/1970 - 10/15/1995  
P-Robert and Sue Moos  
B-Bobby Moos  
S-Amy Rayburn  
GP-Richard & Jeannette Roberson and Josephine Rayburn

Rogers, Dayna Andrew  
3/12/1973 - 11/27/1994  
M - Linda Heatherly  
S - Misty Walker & Amber Roger

Simone, Benjamin Arthur  
3/29/1975 - 10/10/1997  
P - David & Kathy Simone  
S - Dawn Figueroa

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



### March Anniversaries

Banda, Selena  
7/6/2002 - 3/4/2004  
P-Richard & Susan Banda

Byda, Hanna Douglas  
7/25/2005— 3/19/2010  
P-Erica Buhrke & Fred Byda

Cepero, Caylee Marie  
9/3/2000 - 3/8/2005  
P-Dawn and Lee Cepero  
B-Corbin  
S-Kennedy  
GP-Sandy Boehning

Clark, Deborah Denise  
1/19/1969 - 3/23/2002  
M-Ethel Helms  
S-Valencia Clark  
B-James Jr. & Jerel  
GP-Luella Buford & John L.Clark

Collum, Brian H.  
5/11/1965 - 3/7/2005  
M-Diana Reams  
B-Reid Collum

Durcan, Andrea Lynn  
01/15/1991 - 03/31/1991  
P - David & Dixie Durcan  
S - Lindsey & Lauren Durcan  
GP-Marie B. Corcoran

Ferrera, Crista J.  
8/23/1975 - 03/11/1997  
P - Nelson & Guisela Ferrera  
B - Paolo Ferrera  
GM - Magda Alvarez  
Aunt - Mirta Diaz  
Uncle - John Ferrera

Gallian, John Charles  
8/8/1963 - 3/21/1998  
M-Virgian Gallian  
S-Paige Mask

Gochenaour, Laci  
02/15/91 - 03/23/98  
P - Kelli & Chris Gochenaour  
S - Jacee & Riley Gochenaour  
GP - Ronald & Clarine Barton  
M - Pat Dukes

Gould, Richard J.  
9/26/1981 - 3/3/2001  
M-Cindy Phelps-Wise  
F-Ralph Gould  
B-Ryan, Bryan & Mark  
S-Karen

Griffis, Julia Rose  
03/05/92 - 03/05/92  
P - Bruce & Kathy Griffis

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

Lavin, Kevin Joseph  
03/24/80 - 03/30/95  
P - Kathy & Mike Lavin  
S - Maggie & Kaitlin Lavin  
Gdm - Catherine Lavin

Marchetti, Katie  
8/4/1989 - 3/4/2006  
P-Vin & Laura Marchetti  
B-Andrew Marchetti

Nichols, Shannon Jr.  
10/5/1979 - 3/29/2004  
M-Terrena Nichols  
F-Shannon Nichols  
S-Brandy & Melissa Nichols

Pfister, Megan Lynn  
5/2/1990 - 3/3/1999  
P - Frank & Stephanie Pfister

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

Rivera, Erick  
6/4/1988-3/21/2010  
P-Maricela & Jose Rivera

Robertson, Ty Kristan  
2/4/1979 - 3/29/2003  
P-Jim & Teresa Farmer  
S-Toni-Danielle Robertson  
B-Chris Farmer  
GM-Wanda Warren  
Children-Taylor Morris, Trystan & Jordan Robertson

Rogers, Jason R.  
01/08/78 - 03/21/90  
P-James Roy & Elaine Rogers  
B-Justin & Jacob Rogers  
GP-Arthur & Ethel Fernandez

Rose, Kailyn Dyann  
8/22/2000 - 3/4/2003  
M-Evelyn E. Rose

Sasnett, Debbie Powell  
12/14/1956 - 03/31/2000  
P-Jackie & Billy Powell  
B-Debby & Tony  
S-Penny

Sluder, Kathryn Elizabeth  
8/31/1966 - 3/16/2002  
P-Tom & Judy Sluder  
Son-Israel  
S-Theresa  
B-Tom III & Keith  
N/N-Brandon & Brandy, Keith II & Miranda

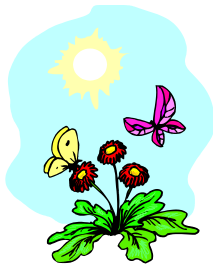
Tarez, Kami  
7/1/1980 - 3/1/2006  
M-Leigh Tarez

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



*If we have omitted your child, misspelled your child's name, or listed incorrect dates, please accept our apologies and call Beverley Hurley at (813) 832-3175 to correct the information. Call any of our telephone friends if you are having a hard time on these days. We truly understand your pain; for we, too, remember our own children.*

*What the caterpillar  
thinks  
is the end of the  
world,  
the butterfly knows  
is only the beginning!*



**"HOPE FOR THE DAY"** from SilentGrief.com  
<http://www.silentgrief.com>

February 21, 2011

It's OK to do strange things, anything that gives your heart a sense of peace, as long as you don't hurt someone. Whether you're running down the beach, standing in the shower, or riding in your car screaming at the top of your lungs. Releasing balloons with notes attached, talking to an empty chair, wearing their clothes, baking a cake for their birthday, signing their name on cards, decorating their grave with things they loved, or collecting angels in their memory — it's OK.

No excuses are necessary. You have learned to do what your heart needs, and that is a big step.

By Elaine E. Stillwell, M.A., M.S.

It happens so gradually that most often we don't realize it is taking place. We wake up one morning with the sun shining brightly and we smile and welcome the day. We go through twenty four hours without crying. We join in on a conversation and there is laughter minus any guilt. And we realize that we have finally reached our new destination.

The journey wasn't easy. In fact, we experienced every storm and hardship imaginable. We had many setbacks along the way. But, finally we have found that new place that we can call home. It is different from what we knew as our happiness before, but there is a joy here, too, and we know that we can peacefully settle in and call this new land our home.

Yes, without really know it, we have settled into our new place. There will be setbacks and reminders of our loss, but the pain will no longer take precedence over all that we think and do. Instead, we will have gentle and fond remembrances, and we will shift most of our thoughts to loving gratitude for today. And, most importantly, we will know that the dark side of our grief is no longer our landscape. Instead, we can live in the quiet, serene beauty of hope and peace. -Clara Hinton

## *Monumental Journey of the Heart*

*July 29-31, 2011*

*Sheraton Reston Hotel,  
Reston, Virginia*



*Located just 25 minutes from downtown Washington, DC near Dulles Hotel rate \$99 per room (plus taxes), up to 4 people per room. Rate honored 3 days before and 3 days after the Gathering. Call 1-800-561-9186 to make your reservation or visit [www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/BereavedParents](http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/BereavedParents).*

*Thursday night "Kick Off" Program, plan to come early, you don't want to miss this exciting event!*

*Outstanding Speakers and Workshops, Sibling Program! Meal Package only \$149.00 for seven meals.*

Donations are being sought from individuals and chapters for the Butterfly Boutique, Raffles, Silent Auction and Table Favors. Contact Jodi Norman at [bpusa.nova@yahoo.com](mailto:bpusa.nova@yahoo.com) if you are able to help.

If you are interested in presenting a workshop fill out the on-line application [www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org) or print out an application and mail to:

P.O. Box 7675, Woodbridge, VA 22192.

Deadline for workshop applications is March 15, 2011.

For more information contact Jodi Norman, Gathering Chair at 703-910-6277 or e-mail: [bpusa.nova@yahoo.com](mailto:bpusa.nova@yahoo.com).

# LIFE AFTER LOSING MY SON

*By Brian Ascii, Tampa Bay BP/USA*

My name is Brian and I am a bereaved parent. Jason died February 7, 2008. Before I tell you how he died, I'd like to tell you how he lived. Jason was born August 19, 1979. He was a typical young boy by anyone's standards. He was very social, athletic and was well liked. He had a mischievous side like any boy (shooting the VCR with a BB gun then saying "I have no idea how that happened") but never mean. A classic over achiever, he was an A-B student in school and was driven at everything he did. During high school, he had a short drinking career but gave it up altogether before graduating. He took a job with a construction company but soon decided that he couldn't live the life he wanted working for someone else.

He started his own construction company. In a short period of time he established himself as a reputable contractor and worked exclusively for architects. At 25 he owned his own home, new cars, snow mobiles, a ¼ mile drag car and had two beautiful children, AJ and Adriana. Jason and I vacationed together every year, both with and without the children. He had the world, or so it seemed. He started doing drugs. Recreationally at first. Then it spilled into the first and last part of the week. In no time he had lost his business and all the things he had worked so hard to achieve. After a little encouragement, he entered rehab. After completing the inpatient program, he started to put his life back together. He was six months clean when he relapsed. It only took once. Jason died of an overdose of heroin February 7.

After Jason's death, I carried a lot of shame because he died of an overdose. Based on my own stereotype I was ashamed to tell anyone how he died. After becoming educated about the disease, the shame seemed to just fall away. What I learned was that anything that alters your mind is a drug. From alcohol, to pot, prescription medications, to street drugs. It's all the same. A way to escape. Until I learned that, and accepted it, I couldn't grieve Jason's death in a healthy way. In the end, Jason made a bad choice. As we all do. The difference is that it cost him his life. We've all made mistakes. God knows I've made more than my share. But Jason's mistake was just that, A mistake, An accident. It doesn't make it less painful or much easier to accept. But that's what it was. There is no one to blame, no one to sue, no one to go after for retribution. Sure it would be easier to point a finger of blame and be a victim, but that isn't how it was. As much as I love my son then and now, it was his bad choice not anyone else's that took his life.

Tragically, he left behind two beautiful children now 10 and 7. He'll never get to see his babies graduate high school, do parent teacher conferences, watch his children play sports, or even get married. It's up to the surrounding family to tell them about their dad, to tell them stories about when he was young, to tell them how very much they meant to him. Jason has many great qualities. He would help anyone in need and always went the extra mile. Seldom did a bad word come out of his mouth about someone else. His philosophy was, if you don't have anything good to say, then don't say anything. He practiced what he preached. He was a good young man, better than I, I'm afraid. He was more patient, and had a kind heart. His children were his life when he wasn't working. He always had a smile on his face when he was with his children, even if they were giving him a hard time.

They say that you grieve to the degree you loved someone. If that's the case then I will be grieving for the rest of my time here on earth. It's Ok now. I still have bad days but far fewer than I used to have. It's been just under three years since Jason died. When he first passed, I took every picture down and packed away any reminder of Jason in my house as it was too painful. Today, all the pictures are back up. Sure some days they are painful to look at, but others not so much. But now I can think of Jason and celebrate his life, not morn his death in every thought. I chose to remember the first 27 years of Jason's life, not remember him for the last year. There were far more happy years. That's how I chose to remember my son Jason.

One of Jason's favorite ways to call me was to say "Has anyone told you they loved you today, Dad?..... I do" That's what I chose to remember. Looking back at some of my choices, knowing what I know now. I would not have moved to Florida. Would that have stopped the inevitable with my son? My guess is no. But it would quiet just a few of the voices in my head and ease some of the guilt I still carry and probably will for the rest of my life. Thanksgiving this year marks three years since I've seen my son. I'm ashamed that I didn't get up to see him more. But as all of us think, our children will always be there. They'll outlive us. But in truth, not Always. Jason used to always say "Dad, you live your life your own way, not by anyone else's rules" That may be, but I also have to live with my choices. We all pay a price for decisions and choices that we have made. Hind sight is 20/20. I miss my son every day. And yes, I would love to have one more conversation with him. But in reality, it wouldn't be to tell him anything profound, just to re-iterate how much I love him, How proud I was, and am, of him. Last but certainly not least, how much he has and continues to impact my life. I know that when I leave this earth, my son will be waiting for me there. I look forward to seeing him again, and telling him all the things I've learned and gone through in his absence. Don't misunderstand what I'm saying. I don't want to die, but we all do. But I am looking forward to seeing him again and catching up. My relationship with my son is very special. It could never be replaced by someone or something else. But the roles I gave him in my life now need to be given to others living.

I know that I am responsible for my own happiness for the remainder of my time here on earth. It's not someone else's responsibility. So part of my journey through the rest of my life is simple. Get to know me again. Find the things that make me happy and live them. Jason would want it that way. Easy task? Not a chance. But is anything really worth having in life, easy? My guess is no.

Thanks for listening!

Brian Ascii

# Our Credo

We are the parents whose children have died. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life. We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a haven where all bereaved families can meet and share our long and arduous grief journeys.

We attend monthly gatherings whenever we can and for as long as we believe necessary. We share our tears, confusion, anger, guilt, frustrations, emptiness, and feelings of hopelessness so that hope can be found anew. As we accept, support, comfort and encourage each other, we demonstrate to each other that survival is possible.

Together we celebrate the lives of our children, share the joys and triumphs as well as the love that will never fade. Together we learn how little it matters where we live, our color, our affluence, or what faith we uphold as we confront the tragedies of our children's deaths. Together, strengthened by the bonds we forge at our gatherings, we offer what we have learned to each other and to every more recently bereaved family.

We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA.  
We Welcome You.

## A Beginning

One day you wake up and realize that you must have survived it because you are still here, alive and breathing. But you don't remember the infinitely small steps and decisions you took to get there. Your only awareness is that you have shed miles of tears on what seems to be an endless road of sorrow.

One day – one glorious day – you wake up and feel your skin tingle again, and you forget just for an instance that your heart is broken...and it is a beginning.

~Author Unknown

## Found?

Have we found you, dear soul?  
 "We love you," I shouted to the sky  
 And saw a shooting star  
 "We love you," your friends laugh and cry  
 And found a feather on the morrow.  
 "We love you," your sister dreamed  
 And awoke shivering with sorrow  
 At a mystical, remembered encounter.  
 Are you here, beautiful one?  
 Have we found you in our dreams, in a rainbow,  
 In a feeling of warmth across our shoulders,  
 In a voice in the ear, in memories of snow,  
 In a shadow of flight on the land, with no bird aloft?  
 Have we found you, are you comforting our grieving  
 With the serendipitous discovery of a poem so fitting,  
 Or asking forgiveness for your sudden leaving?  
 Have we found you, dear soul?  
 Or are you truly gone, sweet boy,  
 Like the candle's brief brilliant flame  
 And are now only a transcendent joy?

Lynn Marti Avant  
 Ames, Iowa  
 Lovingly lifted from **Central Savannah River Area Chapter Newsletter, March 2010**



Address Correction Requested



March 2011  
 POSTMASTER - Dated Material  
 Please do not delay.

The Bereaved Parents of the USA  
 3805 San Juan Street  
 Tampa, FL 33629

