



Tampa Bay Chapter

P.O. Box 3226
Tampa, Florida
33601-3226

www.bpusatampabay.org

MEETING INFORMATION

Regular Monthly SUNDAY Meeting
Sunday, December 10, 7:00



**Candle Lighting Service
and Ceremony**



Note: You may still attend the Ceremony, even if you did not send in your Registration Form!
(Note: Park in hospital garage or valet parking may be available)

St. Joseph's Hospital
Medical Arts Building, Auditorium
3001 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
(Note: Park in hospital garage or in small lot adjacent to circle drive next to MAB.)
Call Linda Delk at 813-661-0680
for directions or information.

Regular Monthly DAYTIME Meeting
Riverview/Gibson/Brandon areas
(held the second Friday each month)

Friday, December 8, 10:00 a.m. to noon
Please bring a Holiday snack to share!
First United Methodist Church of Brandon
In the Office Building, Koinonia Room
120 North Knights Avenue, Brandon
Call Kathy Simone at 813-653-1717
for directions or information.

Regular Monthly BRADENTON Meeting
(held the third Monday each month)

Monday, December 18, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
Braden River Baptist Church, 5412 SR 64
I-75 to SR 64 (Exit 220)
Melissa Coxwell at 941-708-7052

Regular Monthly PLANT CITY Meeting
(held the fourth Thursday each month)

Thursday, December 21, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Please bring a Holiday snack to share!
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

Candlelight Ceremony
Sunday, December 10, 7:00 p.m.
St. Joseph's Hospital MAB

NOTE: Parking at St. Joseph's hospital may still be under construction - Park in hospital garage or valet parking may be available. Please allow yourself extra time to walk to the Medical Arts Building so you will not be late or miss out on any part of this memorable program.
We apologize for this inconvenience!

December 2006

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

*Timothy Douglas Lalis
Phillip (PJ) Combs
Michelle Booker*

TIPS FOR HANDLING THE HOLIDAYS

Darcie D. Sims, Ph.D.
Grief Inc.

Published by Big A and Company, 2000

The holiday season is a time of short days and longer nights, of icy winds, cold hands and empty hearts. It can be a time when the PAST and the PRESENT collide. We try to recapture what we once had or blot out bad memories. We try to ignore the empty chair. It is the perfect time to take a nap, but sometimes wishing we could sleep until spring-time comes to lift our spirits doesn't work.

Time moves at its own pace and nothing can speed up or slow down the march of the hours, days, weeks and months across our grieving heart. So, if napping doesn't work for you, there are some things you can do to help ease the foot prints that grief leaves on our heart. So, in this time of icy hearts and frozen feelings:

BE PATIENT WITH YOURSELF. Know that hardly anyone is as happy as you think they might be. We all have our hurts to bear. We are always in a hurry. We want things to BE BETTER NOW. Do what you can this season and let it be enough.

BE REALISTIC. It will hurt, especially if there is an empty chair at the table. Be ready for them. Lay in a supply of tissues (a roll of toilet paper is even more efficient). Anticipation is often far worse than reality. Let those hurting moments come, deal with them and let them go.

BE KIND AND GENTLE TO YOURSELF. Figure out what you SHOULD do, balance it with what you are CAPABLE of doing and them COMPROMISE. Forgive yourself for living when your loved one died.

PLAN AHEAD. Grieving people often experience a lack of concentration. Make lists. Prioritize everything. Decide what is REALLY important to YOU.

REDEFINE EXPECTATIONS of self and others. Be honest in what you expect to be able to do. We live in a world of OUGHTS and SHOULDs and suffer from guilt because we cannot meet our own expectations. Let the OUGHTS and SHOULDs go.

LISTEN TO YOURSELF. Find the quiet space within where all the answers live. As you become aware of your needs, tell family members and friends

ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT. Make a help-on-a-stick sign and stand on the porch, waving it. Someone will notice (but may not stop. Just because you ask for help does not guarantee you will get some, but if you never ask, no one will ever know how much you might need a hug!!)

KEEP SOME TRADITIONS. Choose which ones. Don't toss out everything this year. You can always try changing a routine. Try whatever pops into your head. You can always scrap it if it doesn't work.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF PHYSICALLY. Eat right. Exercise (or at least watch someone else). Gift wrap some broccoli. If nothing else, jog your memory! Take a NAP!

RECONNECT TO YOUR SOURCE. Find whatever renews your spirit and recharge your "batteries." Many find their faith to be a great source of strength while others find moments of solitude, meditation or prayer to be helpful. Surround yourself with the people and things that lift your spirits.

CHANGE SOMETHING. Everything has already changed, so don't be afraid to change some traditions. But don't toss out everything this year. Keep some traditions. You choose which ones.

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Chapter News

November Meeting Report

Our gift giving meetings were, although tender at times, a nice way to get to know each others children better by the reasons given for buying the particular gift. All gifts will be donated to the Salvation Army. We want to than Charles L'Homme for taking care of this. Charles finds this to be healing for him and one way to help him handle the holidays.

Refreshments were brought to the Sunday evening meeting by Debbie's mom, Beverley Hurley; Jamie's parents, Barbara and Tommy Dietrich; Glenn's parents, Jackie and George Loadholtz; Timmy's parents, Elli and Gregg Lalis; and Capt. Christopher Cash, USAF, mom, Rita Zvada. At the Friday meetings Sue Bowditch brought refreshments in memory of her granddaughter Melody Russell and at Plant City Janice Falcone brought refreshments in memory of her granddaughter Michelle Booker.

Monthly Spanish Group LifePath Hospice Bereavement Program. This is a monthly grief support group for Spanish speaking adults. Friday, Dec. 15, LifePath Hospice Tampa Office, 11 a.m.

Kathy's Place, A Center for Grieving children, is a community of trained volunteers who provide a safe and compassionate place for children to grow through grief and bereavement. We seek to help children process their emotions, thoughts, and memories. These goals are met through the usual activities of childhood such as play, arts and crafts and conversations. Activities include meeting other children and families who've experienced a similar loss, learning new ways to increase communication, and participating in group projects. Volunteers are trained to facilitate this process by designing activities to meet these goals while allowing each child to be the author of his/her own process. Some activities are with peer groups and some are designed for families. Caregivers are supported as they build a larger community to meet the needs of their bereaved child.

The Kathy's Place meetings are held twice a month on Friday evenings at the Sterling Building, 730 S. Sterling Ave. Tampa 33609. Please visit our website <http://www.aplace4hope.org>, and if you would like more information on our program please contact us at (813) 541-2672 or by email at kathys-place1@hotmail.com.

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) 654-1381
Ron Ellington (Suicide/Grandparent)	(727) 410-2308
Serena Graves (Sibling Contact)	(727) 239-2471
Violeta "Cookie" Fernandez (Se Habla Espanol)	(813) 996-4281
Crisis Center	211

Bereaved Parents/USA National Office

Post Office Box 95, Park Forest, IL 60466
Phone: (708) 748-7866
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Love Gifts

Candlelight Donations

Our special thanks to those sending donations to help make our Candle Light Remembrance Service a special evening for our children:

Becky & Mike Frederick
In loving memory of their grandson and son
Mark Hunter Frederick
6/10/1998-6/26/2004

Mark Anthony Frederick
12/4/1974-3/9/2006

Jeanne & Larry O'Neil
In loving memory of their son
Clark Dean O'Neil
9/1/1962-10/24/2004

Rita Zvada
In loving memory of her son
Capt. Christopher Cash, USAF
9/13/1977-8/23/2004

Diane Tower
In loving memory of her son
Geoffrey A. Powers
1/23/1983-7/1/2005

Mike & Pam Harris
In loving memory of their son
Eric Michael Harris
2/4/1984-9/12/2003

George & Jackie Loadholtz
In loving memory of their son
Glenn Edward Loadholtz
11/25/1969-2/15/2005

George & Jackie Loadholtz
In loving memory of their son
Glenn Edward Loadholtz
11/25/1969-2/15/2005

Stanley & Adrienne Marting
In loving memory of their son
Brian James Marting
6/9/1979-7/18/1993

Charles & Joan Pittman
In loving memory of their daughter
Cynthia Marie Pittman
1/25/1978-2/23/2003

Rebeckah Mitchell
In loving memory of her daughter
Brendolyn Joyce Baker
1/1/1948-11/9/1990

Janice Robertson
In loving memory of her daughter
Kristi Lee Robertson
12/15/1969-7/29/1994

Alice E. West
In loving memory of her son
Douglas W. Ellis
1/9/1962-12/17/1983

Fred & Jan Raynaud
In loving memory of their son
Jamison Liberty Raynaud
12/11/1980-2/19/2005

John & Joan Morrow
In loving memory of their son
Mark Thomas Morrow
5/19/1998-12/7/2005



Our Children . . . Remembered

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

December Birthdays

Baker, Jennifer
12/13/1973 - 10/15/1995
P-Terry & Susan Baker

Barnes Hannah D. M.
12/28/94 - 12/28/94
P - Alfred & Sabrina Barnes

Dukes, Steven
12/15/1957 - 7/16/1998
P-C.W. & Betty Dukes

Frederick, Mark Anthony
12/4/1974-3/9/2006
P-Becky & Mike Frederick
Son- Mark Hunter Frederick

Gonzalez, Miriam
12/10/1948 - 7/26/1995
P-Fernando & Paula Lesprier
S-Maria & Aida

Goolsby, Melissa
12/28/1974-3/2/2005
M Wanda Tindale

Hall, Heather Elizabeth
12/10/94 - 03/06/96
p - Ken & Jackie Hall
B - Jason Gabriel Hall

Hastings, Nicholas
12/27/1985 - 12/3/2000
M - Candice Hastings

Hidalgo, Christopher
12/14/1989 - 7/5/2004
M-Tammy Hidalgo

Hill Jr., Richard J.
12/20/57 - 4/28/01
M - Cora Billi Hill
B-Roger Hill
S-Rhonda & Rosalyn

Horton, Ryan
12/21/1980 - 1/23/2005
M-Sue Horton

Lingefelt, Fiona
12/20/1989 - 10/15/2000
P - Karen & Douglas Lingefelt
B-Alexander & Andrew

Lovett, Sandra Sandy
12/3/1968 - 10/4/1997
M - Barbara Bryant

Montagano, Tony
12/02/91 - 01/02/01
P-Luli and Jim Montagano
S-Alessandra Montagano
GP-Henry and Eloisa Valenzuela

Midalgo, Christopher
12/21/1989=7/5/2004
M Tammy Midalgo

Murphy, Mark Lawrence
12/22/1968 - 2/21/2000
M - Rosalie Baum
B - John Murphy

Nemitz, Robyn Michelle
12/28/82 - 06/16/98
P - Debbie & Bill Nemitz
B - John Nemitz
GP - Laura Nemitz, William Barbish
A & U -John & Linda Goodman &
Marty & Joyce Nemitz

Odom, Randell
12/14/62 - 5/27/00
M - Barbara Hendrix

Patet, Nathan Gabriel
12/18/88 - 06/10/90
P - Moritza & Jeff Patet
S - Mallory and Gina Patet
GP-Gus & Lourdes ARenas and Don Patet

Pitts, Joseph David
12/8/1971 - 7/16/1998
P - Ruth & Richard Pitts

Potter, Shane Rhys
12/9/1984=12/8/2004
M-Glinda Granell & late Skip Potter
S-Brook Potter & Desire'e
Gunderson
GP-Conzalo & Elna Granell

Racke, Sabrina D. Wallace
12/2/60 - 3/12/97
P-Arnold & Louise Wallace
B-Chris Wallace
Children-Jamie and Jennifer

Robertson, Kristi Lee
12/15/1969 - 7/29/1994
M - Janice & Joe Robertson
S - Kathy Sanchez & Karen Demeria
GM-Mildred Trigg

Ruiz, Marcus Nelson
12/29/1996 - 11/12/2000
P - Aleida & Nelson Ruiz
S - Illana

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

Stone, Danny
12/05/74 - 03/17/94
P - Dan & Janet Stone
B - Josh & Andy Stone

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

Williams, Paul X.
12/2/1986-12/24/2005
P-Amber & Daniel MacDonald
S-Molly Williams
B-Daniel Williams
GP-John & Rosemarie Binder



*...that their
light may
always shine.*

Light a candle for all children who have died.
Sunday, December 10, 2006
7 PM Around the Globe

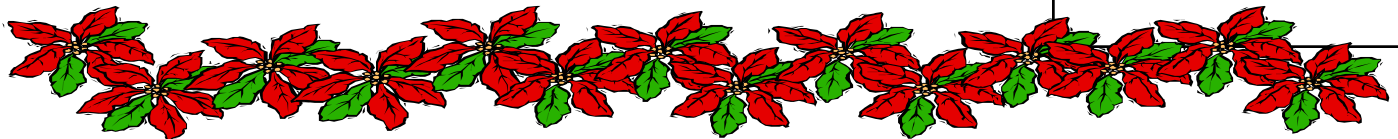
THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING ®

*If you do not attend our
Candle Light Ceremony, please
be sure to light a
candle at home!*

Our Apologies

*The following dates were
incorrect from the November
Birthday and Anniversary list:*

Jamie Rachel Dietrich
11/20/1977 - 11/17/2004
P-Tommy & Barbara Dietrich



December Anniversaries

Barnes Hannah D. M.
12/28/94 - 12/28/94
P - Alfred & Sabrina Barnes

Bishop, Krystal Lee
8/1/1988 - 12/24/2001
P-Pam & Rick Bishop
S-Angie Valente & Missy Bishop
B-Greg Bishop
BM-Marylynn Eddy

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

Booker, Michelle
3/25/1987 - 12/1/2004
Janice Falcone and Bonnie Booker

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

Clements, George R.
03/25/1972 - 12/9/1996
M-Sherrie Clements
S-Carey & Cory Clements

Daly, Cole
9/9/1983 - 12/17/2001
M-Katie Brock

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

Delk, Melissa Ann
11/13/72 - 12/09/77
M - Linda Delk
B - Louis Delk
S - Meronda Brown

Donnarumma, Sophia Marie
9/1/2000-12/23/2004
GM-Pat Donnarumma
P-Benjamin & Diane
Donnarumma
S-Olivia

Douglas, Christopher
11/4/1977 - 12/22/1997
M - Laren & Michael
S - Stacy & Leigh
B - Clinton

Ellis, Douglas William
01/09/62 - 12/17/83
M - Alicia Ellis West

Hastings, Nicholas
12/27/1985 - 12/3/2000
M - Candice Hastings

Hinchey, Ronald
11/17/1974 - 12/10/1999
P - Ronald & Donna Hinchey
S - Tracy Foster

Knight, Matthew A.
9/1/1982 - 12/28/2001
P-Ron & Sandy Knight

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

O'Berry, Michael Sean
09/13/94 - 12/15/97
P - Mike & Valerie O'Berry
B - Christopher O'Berry
GM - Linda Hoffman
A - Joyce Weil
U - Mike Kasrich

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

Potter, Shane Rhys
12/9/1984=12/8/2004
M-Glinda Granell & late Skip Potter
S-Brook Potter & Desire'e
Gunderson
GP-Conzalo & Elna Granell

Ramirez, Arthur, Jr.
6/10/1951 - 12/30/1997
M-Helen Ramirez

Schlechty, Michael
2/5/59 - 12/4/01
P - Nancy & Vernon Schlechty
Children - Michael Leann & Morgan
Lynn
B - Mark and Julie
S - Amy

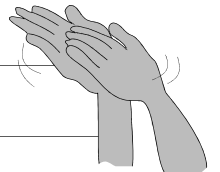
Shearer, Shane
08/03/73 - 12/05/89
M - Linda Shearer
SF - Keith Gregory
S - January Shearer

Thompson, Kimberly Karlin
5/5/1976 - 12/6/1999
P - Sam & Ingrid Thompson

Weber, Barbara Jean
6/4/1953 - 12/14/1994
P - Weldon & Jean Weber
S - Kristi, Teresa, & Pamela

Williams, Paul X.
12/2/1986-12/24/2005
P-Amber & Daniel MacDonald
S-Molly Williams
B-Daniel Williams
GP-John & Rosemarie Binder

Thank You!

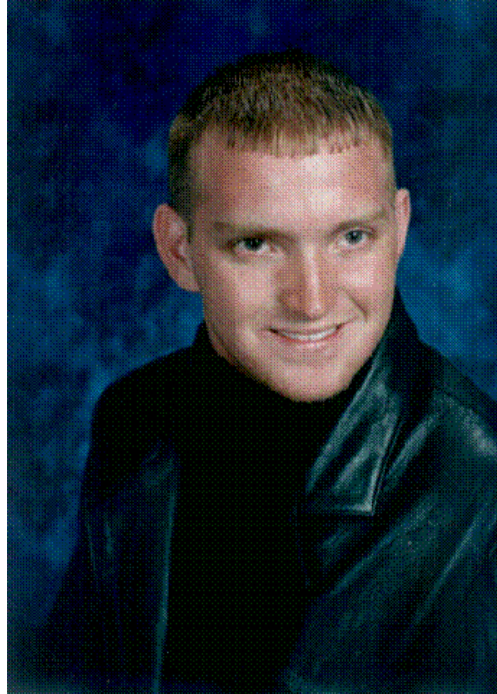


We want to extend a big **Thank You** to Verizon for their check in recognition of our hardworking Dave Simone putting in hours of service with BP/USA in memory of his son Benjamin Arthur Simone!!

Thank you Dave for all your hours of hard work! We really appreciate you and thank you for filing out the paperwork to get this wonderful donation to us. You share your talents with us by putting together the wonderful Picture Presentation of our children at our Candle Light and at the Annual National BP/USA Gathering! Dave is on our Steering Committee and he helps facilitate the Dad's group. Dave is our Wonderful Webmaster and he and his wife Kathy take especially good care of our library.

I know that is just the beginning of describing all the time and work Dave Simone does for BP, but, Dave, please know that we appreciate you!!

*In Loving Memory of
Phillip (PJ) Combs
March 24, 1986 - June 12, 2004*



This will be our 3rd Christmas without PJ here to celebrate with us. It hasn't gotten any easier.. I can remember when PJ was 6 yrs old and his brother, Travis was 3 yrs. old they went to the back of our property and cut down a 2 ft tree. They were so proud of that tree. We put the tree in their bedroom & decorated it for Christmas. Those memories are so special and will never be forgotten.

PJ always like to do his Christmas shopping on Christmas Eve. He would pick out the most unique gifts & it was always a big surprise to see what he had picked out.

Last Christmas I was at PJ's place putting up a small tree. I felt something on my back & it startled me at first. When I turned around there was a grey & white kitten that stayed right by my side while I put the tree up. I took the cat home & my son, Travis & I named him Toby after PJ's favorite singer Toby Keith. That was December 12, 2005, the year and half anniversary of losing PJ.

Toby was a great comfort to Travis & me, Toby stayed until the day the drunk driver was convicted of DUI Manslaughter and we never saw Toby again. I believe it was PJ's gift to us & it was very special. It is hard to put into words the emptiness we feel without PJ, one thing I do know is our family is not complete without PJ.

Travis, is graduating from High School Class of 2007 and played on the High School Football Team making it to Captain of the team. PJ would be so proud of him because he had a great impact on teaching Travis respect, trust, loyalty, responsibility and most important Love.

TIMOTHY DOUGLAS LALIS

JULY 29, 1996 to JULY 11, 2001

MERRY CHRISTMAS TIMMY !!!



There is not a day that goes by that we don't think of you!

WE MISS YOU SO MUCH

Love you, Mommy, Daddy, Andrew and Klaus



**In Loving Memory
Of Our Daughter
Michelle Booker**



It will be 2 years since we lost you on December 1st. Our memory has not faded and neither does the pain of not having you here. We all miss you and love you so much. Here are some messages from just a few of the people you touched by just having known you...

*Shelby, I miss your face. Your laugh, and Your love, which you gave so freely to me. I miss talking to you and us revealing our Deepest thoughts to one another. I miss Feeling your hair and how soft and long it is. I miss you flopping down on me and kissing me Too hard. As if to say, "I love you, can you feel it". I could feel it Shelby and I would give anything To feel it again.
Love your Mom.*

*My sweet Baby Girl, There is so much I wish I could Say to you. I dream of you often and think of you every minute of each day, I miss your Smile and kisses. Oh how I wish I could kiss you goodnight and tell you have sweet dreams like I use too. I think of you and still feel so very sad , But more and more I smile thinking of you in heaven an Angel watching over us.
Love your Father*

Michelle, seems like it was just yesterday that I got the call that you were gone. Some things in life time will never heal, "that something in my life is you". Love Aunt Nani

*What stands out for me is that Michelle never Forgot to tell me she loves me. I still have a note She left me to tell me.
Love Grandma Nichols.*

*Shell, I could never express to anyone how much I miss you and wish you were with me everyday. You were my best friend and still in my heart and dreams, we shared so much together I wouldn't take that back for anything in the world. I miss waking up to every morning and laughing at you for sucking your thumb and making funny faces when we were thinking the same thoughts all the stupid things we did and got in trouble for I still would do it all again just to be with you, riding in the car and singing our favorite songs that we kept on repeat. I'm so grateful for spending the precious time we had together God could have never given me a greater friend then you. I love you always shell!!!
Love Cassie (BFF)*

*The most memorable moments with Michelle was her laughter. She would laugh at things that nobody else laughed at. Like when I was being serious with one of the kids. I guess she thought I looked funny or something and we would all start laughing. When I would sit down at the piano and start playing and singing. She would sing with me as loud as she could sing, she would put her whole heart into it. Michelle had a song in her heart, and laughter in her soul. I would always call her Shell,. She truly lived, loved, and laughed with her whole being. When Shell went to be with the Lord-This song came to me Come unto me all ye children. In loving memory of Michelle E. Booker my niece.
Written by Pam Anders*

I used to love it when Michelle & Nicole would ride up front with me in the van and sing as loud as they could. They would laugh and have a great time. Love Aunt Becky

*There are so many things we remember about Michelle. Her beautiful smile and the light in her eyes when she was having a good time. Her love of shopping for clothes. I can visualize her in my mind with so many of her actions. She was very adamant when she told her Grandfather what kind of socks to wear with his tennis shoes. Now, when he wears them, we think of her. For the holidays, when we have ham, we think of her since it was the first thing she wanted when she arrived for a family get-together at a holiday. How she teased her older cousin and how much she loved everyone. We miss her so much and think of her always. She was so loved. There is a void in our hearts that cannot be filled.
Michelle's Grandma and Grandpa*

*I miss you and remember how fun we had that summer we spent at the beach, jumping and diving at the waves.
Love you and miss you.
Nicole*

(Continued from Page 1)

SCREEN ALL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES:

Will it be the holidays without it?
 Why do you do this activity? Tradition, habit, obligation?
 Do YOU have to do this, or can others do it for you?
 Do you LIKE doing it?
 How could this activity be done differently

LEAVE THE WORD "OUGHT" OUT OF THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.

HOLD ON TO YOUR WALLET AND CHARGE CARDS. You can't buy away grief, but you might be tempted to try.

BUY YOURSELF A SMALL GIFT. Use someone else's charge card. Whose? Remember all those people who said to call "if you ever needed anything"?.....Give them a call now! (buy yourself a small treat for one of those really hard days and enjoy it without guilt).

UNDERSTAND THAT HEARTACHES WILL BE UNPACKED as you sift through the decorations, but so, too, are the warm, loving memories of each piece. Don't deny yourself the gift of healing tears.

GIVE YOURSELF THE GIFT OF EMOTIONS. Put the motion back into the emotions. Toss a Nerf brick when you're angry or pound a pillow. Go outside and yell while you shovel snow. Find a way to express the intensity of your feelings in a PERSONALLY NON-DESTRUCTIVE WAY.

REALIZE YOU AND YOUR GRIEF ARE UNIQUE. Everyone grieves differently, yet we often use our differences as weapons. We misinterpret words and actions and may assume that no one else is grieving the "right way". Remember that, just as each snowflake is unique and special, so is each person. Your grief is yours and what works for you may not help someone else. Give everyone the gift of TOLERANCE and allow everyone to grieve in his own way.

SHARE YOUR HOLIDAYS with someone, anyone! Ride the ferry, visit a soup kitchen or nursing home, spend an evening at the bus station. There are lots of lonely people who could use your love and caring.

BUY A GIFT FOR YOUR LOVED ONE. Give it away to someone who would otherwise not have a gift. It is the giving, the exchanging of love that we miss the most. When you share love, it grows.

WORK AT LIFTING DEPRESSION. Take responsibility for yourself. We cannot wait for someone else to wrap up some joy and give it to us. We have to do that for ourselves. Think of things you enjoy and give yourself a treat. (ONE cookie will NOT cause mounds of fat to be deposited on your hips, a dozen, however, might so be careful!)

HANG THE STOCKINGS, PLACE A WREATH ON THE GRAVE. Do whatever feels right for you and your family.

LIGHT A SPECIAL CANDLE. Not in memory of a death, but in celebration of a life and a loved shared. NEVER FORGET THAT ONCE SOMEONE LOVED US AND WE LOVED BACK. NO ONE CAN DENY THAT GIFT EXCHANGE!

LEARN TO LOOK FOR JOY IN THE MOMENT. Get a pair of rose-colored glasses and change the way you look at things. Joy happens when we look for it!. Learn to celebrate what you do have instead of making mental lists of what you're missing.

FIND THE GIFTS OF YOUR LOVED ONE'S LIFE. Think of all the "gifts" that your loved one gave to you ... joy, safety, laughter, companionship, etc. List these "gifts" on strips of paper and keep them somewhere close to you. Some may put them in a gift box while others may decide to place them in the stocking. Some may decorate the tree with them or simply keep them in a memory book or in a secret place. But, wherever you place them, know these small strips of paper hold treasures far beyond our capacity to understand. They hold tangible evidence that someone lived. It is a reminder that we did exchange gifts and that we still have those gifts, even if the giver has gone.

LIVE THROUGH THE HURT SO THAT JOY CAN RETURN TO WARM YOUR HEART!

Take a nap! Hide in the closet. Run through the snow or weed a garden. Whatever works for you is your gift to you this holiday season. Treat yourself kindly and with the same compassion you extend to others. Be gentle this holiday season and may its gifts of love be forever in your being. Love has woven a fabric of memory for you. Find that and wrap yourself in the warmth of love given and received.

Whatever holidays these are for you, may they be manageable and may you find the love you remember.

MAY LOVE BE WHAT YOU REMEMBER THE MOST!!

How Can They Move On?

By: Traci Morlock
 BP/USA Bereaved Sibling
 St. Louis, MO

How can they move on? Every day I realize that while my brother's death may have touched many people's lives, they seem to be able to just pick up where they left off and continue with their lives. For me, it has been so much harder.

I learned this week, that last year, my brother's girlfriend had gotten married. While I am very happy for her to have finally been able to love again, my happiness is also filled with a little jealousy. I think of my brother at some point every day. Does this mean that she has forgotten him? I have asked myself this question all week. I hope that she hasn't and at least remembers the good times that they had sometimes. I find it hard to think of her with someone else, but she was so miserable for so long, she deserves a little happiness. I was also told that she is pregnant and is having her baby soon. When I heard this I almost cried. I think that was harder than finding out that she was married. Then a real jealousy kicked in. I thought, "Hey, what about Sean's baby?" He'll never know the joy of being a parent.

After mulling this around for a while, I realized that everyone must move on. Sometimes I feel as if I can't go on another day because I feel so much pain. That pain is not so strong as it was two or three years ago, but it does come back to visit now and then. When Sean first died, a few of his friends came over a lot. Over the past few years, that began to happen less and less until his friends stopped coming at all. One of his friends still comes by or at least calls my mom at Christmas. Another puts presents on his grave occasionally.

I know that a lot of people cared about my brother, but I think that knowing him for 19 years and being as close as we were has made it all the harder for me. I know that he watches over our family and is always with us. I know in my heart that moving on is not the same as forgetting. I hope with my heart that all who knew Sean still spare at least one thought for him once in awhile. While I wish every one of his friends much happiness in their lives, I hope that they will never forget.

THE 9th CHRISTMAS

All these years I said to myself, "How can I go on?" Especially on Christmas Day. I cried many a river full of tears, I stayed long hours in my room, I felt that nothing mattered anymore. But I knew I had to put a smile and go on for the family.

But As the years passed I began to see that you are with me all the time, in everything I do. You live in my heart, you live in my mind for you are my memories. Now on the days that I easily cry, I hold my hand to my heart and know that you can feel my love.

So every Christmas I put your ornament on the tree, your present specially wrapped underneath, your favorite chocolate cherries there, and light a candle, and know that you are part of us always. So my only Son who has given me so much pleasure, you have shown me with the help of our Lord that you will always be here, right inside our hearts.

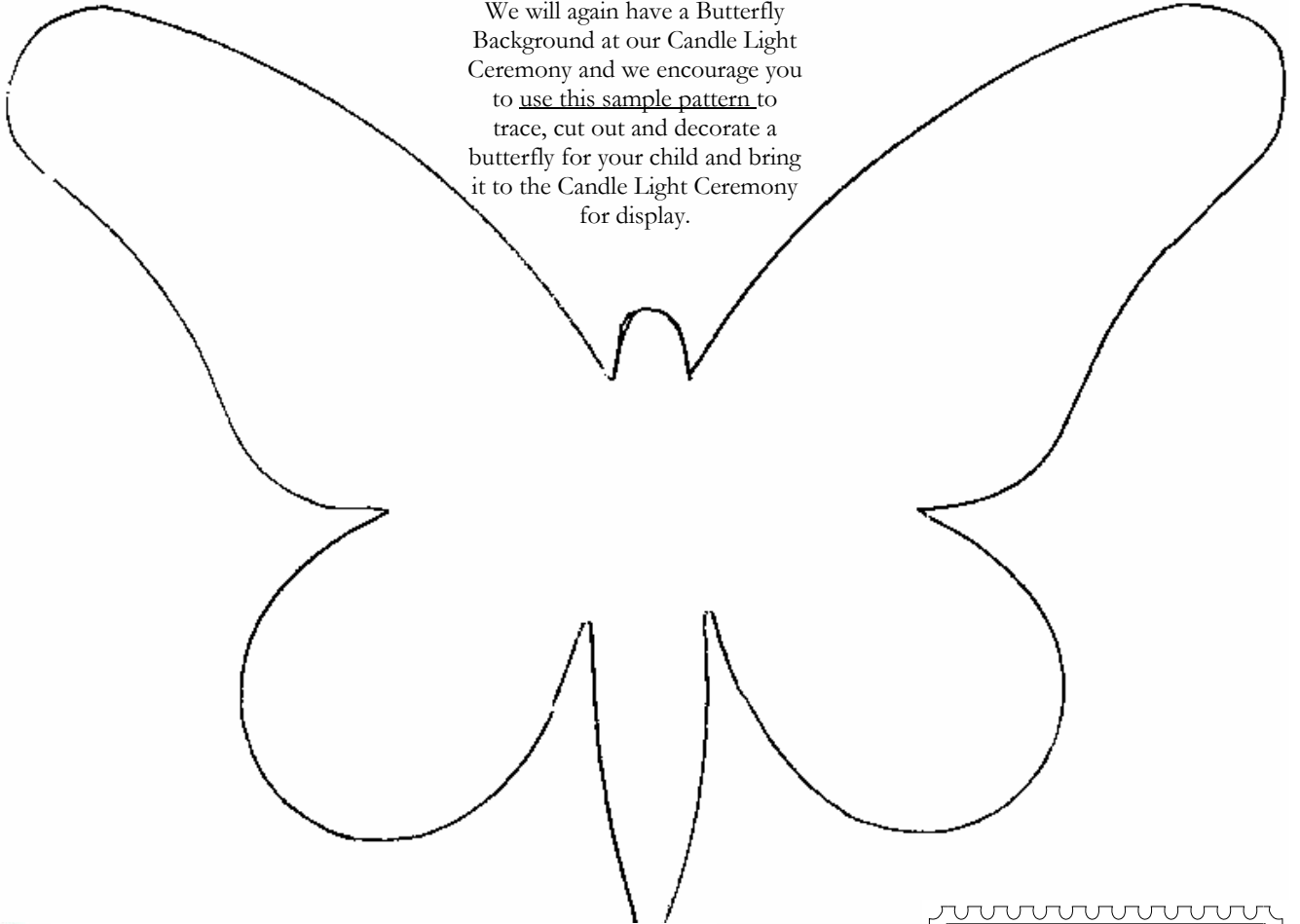
Love You Always,
Mom

(Written by Cathy Webb, in memory of her son Richard Pispitos)

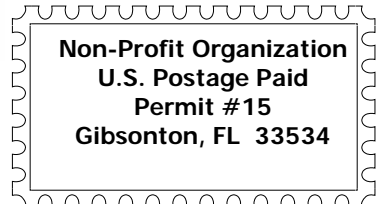
REMINDER:
Candle Light Ceremony
Sunday, Dec. 10, 2006, 7 p.m.
St. Joseph's Hospital
Medical Arts Building Auditorium
Note: You may still attend the Ceremony and light a candle for your child even if you did not send in your Registration Form!
Friends and Family are welcome!

BUTTERFLY BOARD

We will again have a Butterfly Background at our Candle Light Ceremony and we encourage you to use this sample pattern to trace, cut out and decorate a butterfly for your child and bring it to the Candle Light Ceremony for display.



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



December 2006
POSTMASTER—Dated Material
Please do not delay.



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