



## 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)

Sunday, December 14, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.



January 11, 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, December 12, and January 8, 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 Thursday each month—

December meeting will be a candle light ceremony  
held Sunday, December 21, 7:00 this month only)

Our Plant City Group is planning to have a small candle light  
event. Anyone who wants to have their child's picture dis-  
played during the ceremony, please mail a picture to Janice  
Falcon, 38848 Pretty Pond Rd., Zephyrhills, FL 33540

And Thursday, January 22, 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

Our next meeting will be January 5, 2009

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



#### DECEMBER 14, 7 P.M. Annual Candle Light Ceremony & Children's Worldwide Candle Lighting

Mark your calendar and invite family and friends to at-  
tend our annual Candlelight Remembrance Service at St.  
Joseph's Hospital. You may still attend even if you did  
not return your Registration Form. Please call Beverley  
Hurley at 832-3175!

#### DON'T FORGET



Annual Candle Light Ceremony  
Sunday, December 14, 7:00 p.m.  
You may still attend even if you did  
not send in your Registration Form.  
Please call Beverley 832-3175!

## December 2008/January 2009

*This month's newsletter lovingly sponsored by  
the families of:  
Captain Christopher Cash  
Elliott Ruys*

| 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  |     |     |     |
| DECEMBER 2008 |     |     |     |     |     |     |

| 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  |
| JANUARY 2009 |     |     |     |     |     |     |

## New Year

By Sascha Wagner



The New Year comes  
When all the world is ready  
For changes, resolutions—  
Great beginnings,  
For us, to whom  
That stroke of midnight means  
A missing child remembered,  
For us, the New Year comes  
More like another darkness.  
But let us not forget  
That this year may be the year  
when Love and hope and courage  
Find each other somewhere  
In the darkness  
To lift their voices and speak:  
Let there be light.

Chapter News

Candlelight 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:

In Remembrance of **Austin Ryan Dixon**  
Donated by Robert & Carrie Dixon

In Remembrance of **Debbie Hester**  
Donated by Wilbur and Wanda Butler

In Remembrance of **Joseph Antinora**  
Donated by Susan Antinora

In Remembrance of **Christoopher Cash**  
Donated by Rita Zvada

In Remembrance of **Michael McKaughan**  
Donated by Michael & Darlene Lack

In Remembrance of **Kristi Lee Robertson**  
Donated by Janice & Joe Robertson

In Remembrance of  
**Baby, Jodi and Robin Pegram**  
Donated by Susan Pegram

In Remembrance of **Joseph Martinez**  
Donated by Josie Martinez

In Remembrance of **Jozsef Varga**  
Donated by Carmen Varga

In Remembrance of **Brian Collum**  
Donated by Diana Reams

In Remembrance of **Anthony Montagano**  
Donated by Henry and Eloisa Valenzuela

In Remembrance of **Eric Harris**  
Donated by Mike and Pam Harris

In Remembrance of **Brendolyn Joyce Baker**  
Donated by Rebeckah Mitchell

In Remembrance of **Arthur Ramirez, Jr.**  
Donated by Helen Ramirez

In Remembrance of **Sumara Henry**  
Donated by Cindy Henry

In Remembrance of **Wendy M. Price Rainey**  
Donated by Shelia Farmer

In Remembrance of **Geoffrey Ware Rayburn**  
Donated by Sue Moss

Wishing you  
A season filled with peaceful  
memories carried forever  
in your heart.

A sincere "thank you" from  
All the Tampa Bay Chapter  
Committee Members!

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 |
| Sue Bowditch (Adult Child)                            | (813) 661-9334 |
| Theresa Farmer (Homicide)                             | (813) 994-0707 |
| Traci Cooley (Drowning)                               | (813) 300-6877 |
| 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<br>(Death of an Only Child) | (813) 234-4705 |
| Serena Graves (Sibling Contact)                       | (813) 810-7169 |
| Violeta "Cookie" Fernandez<br>(Se Habla Espano)       | (813) 996-4281 |
| <b>CRISIS CENTER</b>                                  | <b>211</b>     |

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

Bereaved Parents of the USA (BP/USA) does not charge fees or dues. Our funding comes from Love Gifts to the chapter. These offset the cost of printing and mailing our newsletter each month, library books, and our annual candle light ceremony. BP/USA is a national non-profit organization therefore; all donations to the chapter are tax deductible as allowed by law.



# 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<br>12/13/1973 - 10/15/1995<br>P-Terry & Susan Baker                             | Horton, Ryan<br>12/21/1980 - 1/23/2005<br>M-Sue Horton<br>Lingefelt, Fiona<br>12/20/1989 - 10/15/2000<br>P - Karen & Douglas Lingefelt<br>B-Alexander & Andrew          | 12/8/1971 - 7/16/1998<br>P - Ruth & Richard Pitts  |
| Barnes Hannah D. M.<br>12/28/94 - 12/28/94<br>P - Alfred & Sabrina Barnes                       | Lovett, Sandra Sandy<br>12/3/1968 - 10/4/1997<br>M - Barbara Bryant   | Potter, Shane Rhys<br>12/9/1985-12/8/2004<br>P-Late Glinda Granell & Skip Potter<br>Robertson, Kristi Lee<br>12/15/1969 - 7/29/1994<br>M - Janice & Joe Robertson<br>S - Kathy Sanchez & Karen Demeria<br>GM-Mildred Trigg |
| Dukes, Steven<br>12/15/1957 - 7/16/1998<br>P-C.W. & Betty Dukes                                 | Midalgo, Christopher<br>//12/21/1989-<br>M-Tammy Midalgo  | Rucys, Elliott<br>12/19/2007-1/19/2008<br>P-Pete & Libbie Rucys<br>S-Sydney  |
| Durazzo, Richard<br>12/5/1971-6/8/2006<br>P-Diane & Paul Durazzo                                | Montagano, Tony<br>12/02/91 - 01/02/01<br>P-Luli and Jim Montagano<br>S-Alessandra Montagano<br>GP-Henry and Eloisa Valenzuela  | Ruiz, Marcus Nelson<br>12/29/1996 - 11/12/2000<br>P - Aleida & Nelson Ruiz<br>S - Illana   |
| Forrester, Jedadiah Everett<br>12/28/1980-8/17/2007<br>M-Deborah Forrester                      | Murphy, Mark Lawrence<br>12/22/1968 - 2/21/2000<br>M - Rosalie Baum<br>B - John Murphy  | Sasnett, Debbie Powell<br>12/14/1956 - 03/31/2000<br>P-Jackie & Billy Powell<br>B-Debbby & Tony<br>S-Penny   |
| Frederick, Mark Anthony<br>12/4/1974-3/9/2006<br>M-Becky Frederick<br>Son-Mark Hunter Frederick | Nemitz, Robyn Michelle<br>12/28/82 - 06/16/98<br>P - Debbie & Bill Nemitz<br>B - John Nemitz<br>GP - Laura Nemitz<br>A & U -John & Linda Goodman & Marty & Carol Nemitz | Waller, Lauren Marie<br>12/12/1990 - 4/16/2000<br>M - Kristine Colding & Bryan Strahan<br>B-Christopher<br>S-Faith<br>GP-Joyce & Gene Waller   |
| Gonzalez, Miriam<br>12/10/1948 - 7/26/1995<br>P-Fernando & Paula Lespier<br>S-Maria & Aida      | Patet, Nathan Gabriel<br>12/18/88 - 06/10/90<br>P - Moritza & Jeff Patet<br>S - Mallory and Gina Patet<br>GP-Gus & Lourdes ARenas and Don Patet<br>Pitts, Joseph David  | Williams, Paul X.<br>12/2/1986-12/24/2005<br>P-Amber & Tracy MacDonald<br>Sibs-Molly & Daniel Williams<br>GP-John & Rosemarie Binder   |
| Goolsby, Melissa<br>12/28/1974-3/2/2005<br>M-Wanda Tinsdale                                     |   |  |
| Hidalgo, Christopher<br>12/14/1989 - 7/5/2004<br>M-Tammy Hidalgo                                |   |  |

## December Anniversaries

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Barnes Hannah D. M.<br>12/28/94 - 12/28/94<br>P - Alfred & Sabrina Barnes  | Ellis, Douglas William<br>01/09/62 - 12/17/83<br>M - Alicia Elli West<br>B-Harry Jr. & Edward Ellis                                       | Thompson, Kimberly Karlin<br>5/5/1976 - 12/6/1999<br>P - Sam & Ingrid Thompson   |
| Bishop, Krystal Lee<br>8/1/1988 - 12/24/2001<br>P-Pam & Rick Bishop<br>S-Angie Valente & Missy Bishop<br>B-Greg Bishop<br>BM-Marylynn Eddy               | Hinchey, Ronald<br>11/17/1974 - 12/10/1999<br>P - Ronald & Donna Hinchey<br>S - Tracy Foster  | Weber, Barbara Jean<br>6/4/1953 - 12/14/1994<br>P - Weldon & Jean Weber<br>S - Kristi, Teresa, & Pamela                              |
| Bliss, Lindsay Rebecca<br>4/26/1977 - 12/1/1991<br>P - Jim & Mary Beth Bliss<br>S - Shannon Bliss  | Knight, Matthew A.<br>9/1/1982 - 12/28/2001<br>P-Ron & Sandy Knight<br>GM-Doris I. Knight   | Williams, Paul X.<br>12/2/1986-12/24/2005<br>P-Amber & Tracy MacDonald<br>Sibs-Molly & Daniel Williams<br>GP-John & Rosemarie Binder |
| Booker, Michelle Elizabeth<br>3/25/1987 - 12/1/2004<br>P-Michael & Bonnie Booker<br>B-Justine & Dillon Booker<br>GP-Betty Nichols and Ed & Janice Falcon | Lespinasse, Bryan<br>3/8/1991 - 12/27/2004<br>M-Margarett Lespinasse  | Woofter, Kimberly Ann "Kimie"<br>2/24/1970 - 12/25/2006<br>P-Julie & Steve Woofter<br>S-Angela Huntley<br>B-Donny Killian            |
| Daly, Cole<br>9/9/1983 - 12/17/2001<br>M-Katie Brock   | Marejean, Vince<br>6/19/1969-12/2/2004<br>M-Geri Mattea   | Zorn, Wayne<br>7/15/1964 - 12/30/2006<br>M-Charlotte Zorn  |
| Darby, Marc Steven<br>3/25/1986 - 12/12/1998<br>P - Steve & Lori Darby<br>S - Cody, Austin, Benjamin Darby<br>GP - John & Linda Darby                    | Myers, Patrick<br>9/16/1993-12/27/2006<br>M-Kelly Myers   |  |
| Delk, Melissa Ann<br>11/13/72 - 12/09/77<br>M - Linda Delk<br>B - Louis Delk<br>S - Meronda Brown  | Morrow, Mark<br>5/19/1978 - 12/7/2005<br>P-John & Joan Morrow   |  |
| Donnarumma, Sophia Marie<br>9/1/2000 - 12/23/2004<br>P-Benjamin & Diane<br>S-Olivia<br>GM-Pat Donnarumma   | O'Berry, Michael Sean<br>09/13/94 - 12/15/97<br>P - Mike & Valerie O'Berry<br>B - Christopher O'Berry<br>GM - Linda Hoffman               |  |
| Douglas, Christopher<br>11/4/1977 - 12/22/1997<br>M - Laren & Michael<br>S - Stacy & Leigh<br>B - Clinton  | Pegram, Robin Sue<br>03/13/73 - 12/05/93<br>P - Earl & Susan Pegram<br>S - Jodi Pegram<br>B - Scooter & Craig Pegram<br>GM-Betty Jennings |  |
|  | Ramirez, Arthur, Jr.<br>6/10/1951 - 12/30/1997<br>M-Helen Ramirez   |  |
|  | Shearer, Shane<br>08/03/73 - 12/05/89<br>M - Linda Shearer<br>SF - Keith Gregory<br>S - January Shearer                                   |  |

*From the Hinsdale Illinois BP/ USA Newsletter editor, Celeste Hardy...*

### Grief Triggers

It occurred to me that a good part of traveling our journey is spent managing “grief triggers”. In the beginning, after our child’s death, life itself is a trigger. Just breathing and going through the motions of everyday life triggers the gut-wrenching sadness and emptiness of life without our child.

Then as time goes on we start to notice that not every minute of the day is consumed by grief. We start to spend time crawling out of the pit of darkness into the light. We start to realize that we CAN live and that while even though we think of our child all the time we recognize the situations that “trigger” our grief. It may be seeing another child who reminds us of ours or discovering a picture of our child or a note or a video. At first these triggers completely take us off guard and throw us back in the pit.

But after awhile, we learn how to “manage” these triggers. Some of us avoid them altogether, such as not going to the cemetery or putting away the pictures. Some of us purposely look for the triggers because now we are strong enough to handle the emotion. Some of us cautiously make sure we always have a way out of a situation that might throw us into the grief pit. There is no one right way to manage the triggers of grief. Our journey is as individual as we are.

Lovingly lifted from the Hinsdale Illinois BP/USA Dec 2008-Jan 2009 *A Journey Together* Newsletter with their kind permission.



*During the holiday season, whether you celebrate Christmas or Hanukkah, it is our prayer that each of you find peace in your heart, joy in your families and hope in the future.*





# Our Children . . . Remembered

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

## January Birthdays

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| Baker, Brendolyn Joyce Butterfly<br>1/1/1948 - 11/9/1990<br>M - Rebeckah Mitchell<br>SF - Daniel Mitchell<br>B - Daniel Leroy Mitchell<br>S - Sharolyn Mitchell, Rhondolyn<br>Shedrick, Lerolyn Capehart, and<br>Angelyn Capehart | Harrill, Jason<br>1/23/1984-6/12/2006<br>P-David & Bonnie Harrill<br>S- Michelle "MiMi"   | Pispitos, Richard John<br>01/23/72 - 09/14/98<br>P - Catherine Webb & Philip Finkelstein<br>S - Michelle Webb<br>GP-Anne & Owen Beglane   | St. Martin-Hamm, Sydney Chanel<br>1/9/1997 - 7/21/2003<br>M-Joy St. Martin & the late Rusty Hamm<br>GP-Ramon & Rita Hamm                  |
| Clark, Deborah Denise<br>1/19/1969 - 3/23/2002<br>M-Ethel Helms<br>S-Valencia Clark<br>B-James Jr. & Jerel<br>GP-Luella Buford & John L.Clark   | Harris, Charlotte Marie<br>1/23/2004 - 2/3/2004<br>P-Tony & Debra Harris  | Pittman, Cynthia Marie<br>1/25/1978 - 2/23/2003<br>P-Charles & Joan Pittman   | Stoeltzing, William (Bill) W.<br>01/02/57 - 05/09/02<br>P - Bill & Elvira Stoeltzing<br>S - Cecille Parido<br>Father to Eaton & Brent     |
| Diaz, Alexandra<br>01/28/98 - 01/28/98<br>P - Llz & Joaquin Diaz  | Hassler, Andy<br>1/16/1981-5/14/2008<br>P-Denny Hassler   | Powers, Geoffrey A.<br>1/23/1983 - 7/1/2005<br>M-Diane Tower<br>Sisters-Lana & Nikki Powers   | Thornton, Teresa E.<br>01/12/66 - 09/24/81<br>P - Ken & Mirta Thornton<br>S - Lisa Buckner<br>B - Nick Thornton<br>GP-Tony & Berneda Pino |
| Durcan, Andrea Lynn<br>01/15/1991 - 03/31/1991<br>P - David & Dixie Durcan<br>S - Lindsey & Lauren Durcan<br>GP-Marie B. Corcoran   | Hughes, Jessica Alexis<br>1/13/86 - 5/11/02<br>F - Michael Hughes   | Rodriquez, Edwin (Eddy) Jr.<br>1/11/1971 - 7/28/1993<br>M-Bertha Dominquez  | Weatherly, Haley<br>1/14/1993-8/4/2008<br>M-Cindy Weatherly   |
| Ellis, Douglas William<br>01/09/62 - 12/17/83<br>M - Alicia Ellis West<br>B-Harry Jr. & Edward Ellis  | Jones, Sherry<br>1/18/1971 - 4/27/2000<br>M - Brenda Copeland   | Rogers, Jason R.<br>01/08/78 - 03/21/90<br>P-James Roy & Elaine Rogers<br>B-Justin & Jacob Rogers<br>GP-Arthur & Ethel Fernandez  | Wilds, Matthew Leland<br>01/12/74 - 01/13/95<br>P - Steven and Karen Catlin<br>B - Daniel Scott Wilds                                     |
| Feierstadt, Keith<br>01/13/75 - 01/16/94<br>P - Donna & Sy Feierstadt<br>B - Robert Feierstadt  | Langford, Todd Allen<br>01/05/78 - 04/27/01<br>P - Fred & Janice Langford<br>B - Robbie Langford<br>S - Kathy Peterson<br>G/P - Betty Williams & H.P & Ruby<br>Langford | Russell, Karron Michelle<br>1/20/1967 - 9/12/2000<br>P - Ben & Sue Bowditch and<br>Children - Brytani, Derak & Melody<br>Sisters - Catherine,Roben & Laurie<br>Bobby Jr.& Scott<br>GP-Cathren Dickerson and Jimmy &<br>Kay Senseney |   |
| Gonzalez, Tarik<br>1/16/1976-10/12/2007<br>M-Susan Zapata<br>GM-Jacqueline Rodriguez  | Lowe, Anna<br>1/30/1994-9/30/2007<br>M-Beth Lowe<br>GM-Ann Lowe   | Schneider, Adam<br>01/29/71 - 10/23/75<br>P - Bill & Georgia Schneider  |   |
|   | Parker II, James Donald<br>1/21/1979 - 3/24/1998<br>P - James & Kim Parker<br>B - Richard Wm. Parker<br>S-Jackie Wise<br>GP-Don Parker & Richard Salisbury              |   |   |



## January Anniversaries

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Brady, Mark A.<br>09/27/57 - 01/03/89<br>M - Margaret Brady<br>S -Margaret J. Bruner<br>B - Hayward L. "Bubba" Brady, Jr.<br>GP-Wallace & Josephine Bagley and Wm. &<br>Cinderalla Brady | Montagano, Tony<br>12/02/91 - 01/02/01<br>P-Luli and Jim Montagano<br>S-Alessandra Montagano<br>GP-Henry and Eloisa Valenzuela                             |
| Branly, Susan<br>12/2/1953-1/10/2001<br>M-Pat Branly   | Matthew, Miulli,<br>11/27/1987-1/14/2005<br>P-Jim & Kathy Miulli   |
| Celesty, Shaun<br>11/16/1980-1/3/2008<br>Vick & Paula Celestey   | Parrish, Scott Douglas<br>8/9/79 - 1/1/02<br>P - Doug Parrish and<br>P - Karla & Rick Brown<br>S-Sabbrina Lee Shannon<br>GP - Juanita Bodiford & Ada Smith |
| DeRoche, Cameron Gaines<br>04/11/89 - 01/25/95<br>P - Peggy & Karl DeRoche<br>S - Mary Amber DeRoche   | Rios, Larry<br>11/8/1983-1/10/2007<br>M-Consuelo Rios  |
| Diaz, Alexandra<br>01/28/98 - 01/28/98<br>P - Llz & Joaquin Diaz   | Rivera, Damian Elijah<br>11/19/2001 - 01/10/2002<br>M-Nicole Rivera  |
| Feierstadt, Keith<br>01/13/75 - 01/16/94<br>P - Donna & Sy Feierstadt<br>B - Robert Feierstadt   | Robinson, Ashley Lauren<br>05/20/94 - 01/16/96<br>P - Sara & Tim Robinson<br>S - Morgan Ashley Robinson  |
| Harris, Joshua<br>- 1/22/2004<br>P-Charles & Debra Harris  | Rucys, Elliott<br>12/19/2007-1/19/2008<br>P-Pete & Libbie Rucys<br>S-Sydney  |
| Hernandez, Rebecca<br>02/10/89 - 01/28/91<br>P - Regla & Pedro Hernandez   | Thompson, Timothy A.<br>10/27/70 - 01/07/93<br>P- Bettie & Richard Thompson  |
| Horton, Ryan<br>12/21/1980 - 1/23/2005<br>M-Sue Horton   | Walker, Nick<br>11/12/1983 - 1/11/2001<br>M - Denise Walker<br>GM - Shirley Walker   |
| Jackson, April Dawn<br>02/16/77 - 01/28/96<br>P - Dan Jackson  | Wheeler, Clifford Denmark<br>11/1/1979 - 1 /18/1996<br>M-Donna Wheeler<br>B-John, James & Duane<br>GP-Lynn & Marcel Baker                                  |
| Lane, Jim<br>9/7/1966 - 1/2/2005<br>M-Carol Lane   | Wilson, Joe<br>3/24/1966-1/12/2005<br>P-Paul & Jan Wilson  |
| May, Philip<br>8/1/1975 - 1/1/2000<br>P-Deryl & Jennifer May   | Wilds, Matthew Leland<br>01/12/74 - 01/13/95<br>P - Steven and Karen Catlin<br>B - Daniel Scott Wilds  |
| McCranie, Clarissa<br>8/1/1971-5/5/20017<br>F-Carlos Nogueira  |  |

### A LETTER TO MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS,

*The following idea for a letter to family and friends could be used either in its entirety or just in part to your own family and friends. It is written looking for understanding during the holidays but could be could be modified for use at any time of the year.*

Dear Family and Friends:

Thank you for not expecting too much from us this holiday season.

The absence of our child when the "whole family" gathers seems to accentuate our incomplete family. It is difficult to cope with the "spirit" of the holidays on the radio, TV, in the newspapers and stores. We will need the patience and understanding of our family and friends to help us through the holidays as best we can.

Our family traditions may be too painful for us to continue this year. We may want to change the way we spend Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Hanukkah. Please understand this and maybe some time in the future we will have these traditions again. Whatever our thoughts are for coping with the day, please take our feelings into consideration when you make your plans.

Please allow us to talk about our child, if we feel a need. Perhaps the single most helpful thing you can do for us is to include our child in the holidays. We want to hear his/her name, to have you recall fond memories of their lives, to know that you, too, are feeling their absence and remembering them with love.

As we work through our grief, we will need your patience and support, especially during these holiday times and the "special" days throughout the year. Thank you for not expecting too much from us this holiday season.

Love...  
a bereaved parent/family

Karron

You silently stole away  
on that calm quiet day.  
We didn't get a chance to say goodbye,  
You were gone and all we can do is sit here and cry.

We were left wondering what happened,  
what really went on,  
The sad thing is, that day you were all alone.

Did God come and did your grandfather too, to  
help you along the way so that things would  
be easy for you?

Thirty three years of love and harmony  
and in just one day, all that was taken away from me.

Now we have your daughter in our care,  
Please Lord, help me, hear my prayer.  
Let us show her the world in the right way,  
Help us guide her along this day.

May we share the love and memories of a mother, sister  
and daughter the we miss so terribly.

We just wish you could be here with us again,  
to watch your eyes light up, to see your grin. To tell  
those jokes we all loved,  
to hear you say how much  
you loved the Lord above.

May God watch over you until we can see you smile,  
hopefully it will only be for a little while.

I hope you can hear us and see as we go through our day  
knowing we love and miss you in every way.

You are our precious child and we miss you.

Our hearts has holes that no one can ever fill  
but with the memories of you, maybe part of that hole  
can heal.

Take care, know you are in our hearts and minds everyday  
and also know that your son, daughter, dad, sisters and  
brothers,  
wish you had never gone away.

Mom

By Sue Bowditch  
4/5/2005



Ornaments of Grief

When astronaut James Irwin returned from space, he described what it was like: “The Earth reminded us of a Christmas tree ornament hanging in the blackness of space...that beautiful, warm, living object looked so fragile, so delicate, that if you touched it with a finger it would crumble and fall apart. Seeing this has to change a man, has to make a man appreciate the creation of God and the love of God.”

Death forces us to look at a loved one through the empty black space of our grief. Alone and in despair, we naturally seek something that is familiar: a memory of happier times, a memory of our loved one: Planet Earth. The memory hangs in the darkness like a shiny bright ornament. Such “ornaments” can be seen only from a distance, mirroring the soul and reflecting the deepest regions of the heart. As the pain eases and grief subsides, the warm, loving memories multiply until the darkness disappears behind a sea of jewel-tone “ornaments.”

Like astronauts gazing at earth, we find comfort in memories. These special “ornaments” that hang in the darkness of our souls are fragile, too, as earth is fragile. Anger can break them; depression can hide their luster.

Hang your “ornaments” for everyone to see by placing photo albums of a loved one on the coffee table. Light a memory candle and place a blue ornament on the tree bearing your loved one’s name. Fill the house with the sounds of your loved one’s favorite music.

Take time out from the holiday rush to enjoy memories of the past, and work on next year’s “ornaments.”

Margaret Brownle, From Bereavement Magazine, November/December 2002

CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS

By Donna Corrigan



When it comes to anniversaries and holi-  
days for bereaved parents, Charlie  
Brown was probably right. The antici-  
pation exceeds the actual event.  
Whether you are facing your first holi-  
day season without your beloved child  
or you have survived many celebrations,  
these can be difficult days. There is no  
way to turn back the clock to the “before my child  
died,” neither can we jump into a month where we  
won’t be faced with happy, intact families. Thanksgiv-  
ing, Christmas, Hanukah, New Years Eve, they are a  
fact of life.

If possible, simplify your plans, but do have a plan. As  
you focus on the parts of these holidays that are impor-  
tant to you and your immediate family, you might find  
it is time for a change. Remember, you don’t always  
have to do it the same way, with the same people.

Because we know how important this time is, our chap-  
ter has two special December events. Some parents en-  
joy buying gifts for needy children (Dec 5<sup>th</sup> Love Never  
Dies). Others plan to come to our Candlelight Celebra-  
tion on Dec 14<sup>th</sup> with their extended families.

Are you planning your own family observance at your  
home, at the cemetery, or maybe at their favorite restau-  
rant? Bake their favorite cookies and take them to a  
homeless shelter (or eat them all yourself!) One child’s  
neighbors lined the street with luminaries. There are  
many ways of remembering.

You may find that your family and friends aren’t able to  
help you at this time however. That hurts.

However you decide to observe these holidays, remem-  
ber, they will soon be part of the past. Try to not give  
them too much power over today.

Lovingly lifted from the Hinsdale Illinois BP/USA  
Dec 2008-Jan 2009 A Journey Together Newsletter  
with their kind permission.



**Please remember these families and our BP/USA friends in your prayers as they have each recently had another child die !**



**DARBY, Cody Nicholas**, 20, went to be with God and his beloved brother, Marc, October 27, 2008. Our precious, beautiful son, what a gift he was to us and all who knew him. Cody was an angel on Earth to Marc. Never ashamed but proud of his handicapped brother, Cody suffered much in silence for years, trying to cope with Marc's passing. In the end, all he could see was that alcohol could help him cope with his pain, but it only caused more pain for his family, who loved him so deeply. Cody loved fishing and loved the water, and was beginning to be a great gardener. He had a special place in his heart for children, the elderly, and the handicapped. Many times he was seen jumping to open a door for someone in need. He was preceded in death by his older brother, Marc, and his buddy, Grandpa Bob Hastings. Cody is survived by his Dad and Mom, Steve and Lori Darby of Colorado Springs, Colo.; and his two younger brothers, Austin and Benjamin.



**SLUDER, THERESA ELAINE**, 47, departed this life after a long term coma November 17, 2008, surrounded by her loving family. She was preceded in death by her sister, Kathryn, and her brother, Keith. She is survived by her parents, Thomas and Judith Sluder of Dover; one son, Brandon Stocksdales, and one daughter, Brandy Stocksdales, both of Sarasota; two grandchildren, Romeo Baldwin and Thalina Jenkins; one brother, Thomas Sluder III; her nephews, Keith II and Israel; and her niece, Miranda.

Steve and Lori Darby, Cody's parents, recently moved to Colorado Springs and were looking forward to Cody's visit at Christmas and had hopes that he would want to move there with them.

### Cry Not For Me

When I shall die and leave behind  
this earth I love,  
These trees,  
This sky,  
The ever pounding sea,  
The yearly hope of spring,  
Cry not for me.  
My soul has wings and in its  
Freedom Sings.

This is from the funeral service of Tom and Judy Sluder's daughter Theresa. Tom and Judy nursed Theresa as she was in a coma following surgery for the past four years. Theresa was preceded in death by her siblings Kathryn (see Tom's writing below) and Keith. Tom and Judy have one surviving child, Thomas III.

## An Ode To Kathryn Elizabeth Sluder

Today is Friday, July 11, 2002. This morning at 10:30 AM, I went to Hopewell Funeral Home, located south of Plant City, Florida on State Road 39 below Highway 60.

I met with Michael.

The purpose of my visit was to pick up two containers of the remains of Kathryn Elizabeth Sluder. She died on Saturday, March 16th and was cremated Sunday, March 24, 2002.

Michael gave me the packages and a Certificate of Cremation.

I left his office and took the cartons to the car. I opened the truck and placed them securely in a plastic storage bin.

I thought and said to myself, "Life is full of strange twists and turns, when Kathryn was a newborn baby, I drove to the hospital and picked her up to bring her home.

today I picked up her ashes, to bring to our home."

Judy, Israel and I plan to scatter them later when we work out the details.

I brought the boxes into our house. Kathryn is at home, in our thoughts and hearts and in eternity with God our Father, forever and forever.

*Tom Sluder*



## Chanukah

THERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS that we include Johnny in our Chanukah celebrations. Some are subtle and other more overt. When we light the Menorah, we use a blue taper as the extra candle. The color blue represents Johnny to us. Just as the extra candle gives of itself to light each of the eight other candles without giving up its own light. We give Johnny and each other of love without diminishing ourselves.

After the meal and before we exchange gifts and play games, we say the Kaddish (mourner's prayer). This prayer demonstrates our faith in God-despite our loss. It insists that we focus on hope rather than despair, and our determination to pass on loving memories of Johnny from generation to generation.

Shalom!

*Bereaved parent, San Diego*

# In Loving Memory of Elliott Rucys



Birth Date: 12/19/07

Death Date: 1/18/08



**P**lease know how much you have touched our lives  
Even though you were here for such a short time.

**E**ven though we can not hold you  
You are never far from our hearts.

**A**s an Angel now you fly so high.

**C**aring for you every second as if you were here.

**E**lliott, with every breath we take we will love you forever.

*We miss and love you so very much it hurts.*

*Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday Elliott  
Merry Christmas Elliott*

*Love, Mom, Dad, and Sydney*





*In loving memory of  
Captain Christopher Cash*



“The Family of Christopher Cash wishes you and your family a most happy and holy holiday season filled with love and memories of today and all your yesterdays.”



## December 14, 2008 Candle Lighting Remembrance Ceremony

*Bereaved Parents of the USA  
Tampa Bay Chapter  
Cordially invites you to attend our  
Annual Candle Light Ceremony at  
St. Joseph's Hospital, Medical Arts Bldg.  
Sunday, December 14, 2008  
Program: 7:00 p.m. Doors open 6:30 p.m.*

Bereaved Parents of the USA, Tampa Bay Chapter will hold its annual Candlelight Remembrance Ceremony at 7 p.m. on Sunday, December 14. The ceremony will be held in The Medical Arts Building (MAB) Auditorium at St. Joseph's Hospital in Tampa. This day is also the Worldwide Candle Lighting event (created and shared by TCF) where candles will be lit around the world in memory of all children that have died in every time zone starting at 7:00 p.m. Please join us in this beautiful tribute to our children. Any bereaved parent or family member and friends are invited to participate. For those of you who are newly bereaved, we encourage you to attend. This service can make handling the holiday season a little easier.

**KEEPSAKE VOTIVE** - Each family who attends will light a candle in honor of their child and take the candle home to light throughout the holidays.

**RECEPTION** - We will have a reception following the ceremony and we invite you to bring, if possible, your child's favorite food (i.e. vegetables, chips, snack, sandwiches, etc.) to share with others.

**PICTURE PRESENTATION** - A Special Slide Picture Presentation of our beautiful Children! If you are planning to attend our Candle Light Ceremony, mail a picture of your child, and include their full name as you want it displayed on the slide presentation and also the birth and death dates, to: David Hurley, 3805 W. San Juan Street, Tampa, FL 33629

NOTE: Due to time restraints, only pictures of children whose parents are attending the Ceremony will be shown. Thank you for your understanding.

**BUTTONS** - We have the equipment to make picture buttons. Bring a picture no smaller than 3" x 5". Buttons are round and measure approximately 2.25" in diameter. Your picture will be cut and become the button! Cost per button is only \$3.00.

**BOUTIQUE** - There will be an Angel/Butterfly Boutique to purchase holiday items or gifts. All items are donated and all proceeds benefit your local BP/USA Chapter. To donate items, please call Sue Bowditch at 813-661-9334!

**PARTICIPATION FORM** - If you did not send in your form, you may still attend.

*Thank you! See you December 14, 7:00 p.m.!*

## Bereaved Parents of the USA 2009 National Gathering

### *Light My Way*

Friday through Sunday, July 10 -12, 2009

**At Crowne Plaza LaGuardia Airport Hotel**

104-04 Ditmars Blvd., E. Elmhurst, New York

Reservations 1-888-233-9527 website [www.cplaguardia.com](http://www.cplaguardia.com)



**Hotel Accommodations** - The **Crowne Plaza LaGuardia** Airport Hotel, New York has given BP/USA a generously discounted daily room rate of \$115, w/tax \$133.88, and it will be honored July 7-15, 2009, three days before and after the Gathering. Please make your own reservations directly with the hotel at 1-888-233-9527. Deadline to register at this discounted rate is June 16 – don't miss out! Be sure to tell them you are attending the BP/USA Gathering! The hotel provides **Complimentary Shuttle** to LaGuardia Airport, Queens Mall, and the 7 Train (minutes to Manhattan).

**For more information, please see BP/USA National Website at [www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)**

DEALING WITH HOLIDAY HEARTACHE IN A SEASON OF JOY

~ Alice J. Wisler ~

Christmas decorations in September and holiday music in October were not what my friend Alexandra needed. Alexandra's 6-year-old died four months ago, and her heart is still raw. She's been wondering how she'll cope without her daughter over the holidays -- just last year a time of joy and celebration.

Years ago, I anticipated the holidays would be tough. I'd wake on those cold mornings after Daniel died in February1997 and be grateful it was still months until his August birthday and even more months until Christmas. I dreaded living both days without my son. As those who had lost loved ones let me know, you have to live through it.

Christmas came. I did live through it. It continues to happen, as do the other significant days of the year. Here are 11 tips I've used and continue to use to survive the holidays. Some are my own suggestions and some are borrowed from the many who walk the path of grief.

1. Know you will survive. It will not be easy, but others have done it and you will, too.
2. Find someone you can talk to or meet with during the holiday season. Perhaps this person can give you helpful ideas that have worked for her.
3. Don't think you have to do the "traditional" activities of years past. Your energy level is low. If no one in your household minds, skip putting up the tree or spending hours making holiday cookies.
4. Spend the holidays with those who will let you talk about your loved one. You will need to recall memories, if you choose to do so. Your stories about your loved one are wonderful legacies. Tell them boldly again and again.
5. If going into the mall or stores brings too much pain, shop for gifts online or through mail-order catalogs. Thinking everyone is happily shopping at the malls while your heart is crushed is terribly tough.
6. Getting away from the house worked for my family. The first Christmas without Daniel we went to a nearby town and lived in the Embassy Suites. The kids enjoyed the indoor pool and breakfast buffets.
7. Create something to give to those who have helped you throughout the year. I made some very simple tree ornaments with "In Memory of Daniel" stamped on them and gave them to friends that first Christmas.

8. Decorate the grave. Sometimes being busy with decorating the grave gives a feeling of doing something for a child we can no longer hold.
9. Do something in memory of your loved one. Donate to a charity. Volunteer. My oldest daughter Rachel and I volunteered at the Hospice Tree of Remembrance and shared memories of Daniel as we spent this time together.
10. If your bereavement support group has a special candle-lighting service, attend it. Doing something in memory of your loved one with others who understand the pain can be therapeutic.
11. Spend time reflecting on what the season is about. Everyone around you may be frantic with attending parties, services, shopping and visiting relatives. Give yourself permission to excuse yourself from them. Light a candle in your favorite scent. Record some thoughts in a journal. One day you will wake up and it will be January 2. The holidays will have ended. You will have made it.

If you are like me, you will find that surviving the tinsel has made you stronger, and although you may cry, somewhere within you, you will feel that core of new steel.

*(Alice J. Wisler is the author of the new novel, "Rain Song." Visit her Web site for more articles: <http://www.alicewisler.com>)*  
Printed in THE DURHAM NEWS, 11/8/08



Volunteers Needed

Sunday, March 1, 2009

- Please help us to pass out water and Gatorade to the runners in the Gasparilla Classic Marathon and help earn a nice donation for our Chapter. These funds help our chapter to print and mail our newsletters, pay for P.O. Box fee, postage, library books and brochures to help the newly bereaved in our community by educating them about their grief journey.
- Please call **Charles L'Homme after 5 p.m. at 813-689-2215** to volunteer and receive a Free Gasparilla Marathon Tee Shirt and get front row seats for the race!!



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

**December 2008/January 2009 2008**  
POSTMASTER - Dated Material  
Please do not delay.



**DON'T FORGET**  
**Annual Candle Light Ceremony**  
**December 14, 7:00 p.m.**  
You may still attend even  
if you did not send in your Registration Form.

