



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, February 8, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Special Guest Speaker—see below!

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, February 13, 10:00 a.m. to Noon

Special Guest Speaker—see below!

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

(held the fourth Thursday each month)

Thursday, February 26, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Special Guest Speaker—see below!

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:

Special Guest Speaker—see below...

For our February sharing meetings, we will have a representative from Suncoast Kid's Place to discuss

how parents can **help surviving siblings cope with the incredibly difficult grieving process** following a traumatic loss, especially when young children and teenagers are involved.



Sunday
March 1, 2009

We need volunteers to have fun and help our Chapter earn a donation!
You will receive a souvenir Gasparilla Distance Tee Shirt and the opportunity to help our Chapter raise funds for the printing and mailing of the newsletter,

library books, annual candle light ceremony, and much more.

Please join and help our other BP members in this event.

Call Charles L'Homme after 5 p.m. at 813-689-2215

February 2009

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

Kimberly Ann "Kimie"

| 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 |
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| FEBRUARY 2009 | | | | | | |

VALENTINE LOVE -- NEW MEANING FOR BEREAVED PARENTS

Though winter's delicate, lacy snowflakes may remind us of the lace-trimmed hearts of February's valentines, the "mourning" heart seems frozen in time. The bitter winds of loneliness blow mournfully through our souls.

Death has tapped us on the shoulder, introducing his brother, Grief, who has moved into our hearts to take up unwelcome residence. Worn and exhausted by our pain, we have little energy to evict the intruder. It's hard for us to remember that the sun still faithfully shines behind the clouds that have obscured our vision.

"Love" is apparently the thought of the season, and we are reminded of its tenderness at every turn. But a piece of the fiber of our lives has been torn away, and love seems a vague and unfulfilled promise that belongs only to others.

Hearts and flowers, lace and love, romantic verse and melody seem to have abandoned us as we grope in the darkness of our beloved's absence. Will the pain ever end? Will the hope and joy and renewal once again warm the frozen places in our hearts?

Gradually, as the hurt begins to soften, the thawing relief of healing slowly begins to melt the icy grip of our pain; hope does begin to "spring eternal". Roses, traditional in February's favorite holiday, remind us that summer will return.

It's unlikely that we will ever again perceive the usual symbols of love in quite the same way as before, but in many ways our concepts of genuine love will be stronger, richer and less assailable. Frivolous and shallow affection are absent from our thoughts. Deeper commitments and more demonstrative attention have become our new marching orders.

In costly lessons, we've learned firsthand how fragile and fleeting life can be, and we are now resolute in our determination to announce to our remaining dear ones the importance of our bonds with them. We abandon the intimidation of "limits" such as the archaic notions that "men" mustn't cry or say "I Love You" or that we're too busy just not to pay attention to someone's needs.

As little by little, our pain softens and recedes, and we learn that suffering is but for a season, we also learn that LOVE doesn't die. In our emotional lives, Valentines can now take on a new significance as precious reminders of the love that still exists on both sides of life. Love lives within our hearts and even Grief cannot steal it away. Love is our bridge over the rainbow.

Andrea Gambrell
~ reprinted from Bereavement Magazine
www.bereavementmagazine.com

Chapter News



ANGEL OF HOPE UPDATE www.angelofhopetampabay.com

Angel of Hope monthly meeting

Please call Beverley Hurley 813-832-3175 for info!
Next meeting February 2 and March 2.

Angel of Hope Annual Spring Tea

Saturday, April 25, 2009!

9:30 * am to 12:30 p.m.

(*Doors open at 9:00a.m. to browse raffle and silent auction items.)

Quorum Hotel, 700 N. Westshore!

(Corner of Cypress and Westshore)



We are extremely happy to have local WFTS TV News Personality, Lissette Campos, as our celebrity MC. Our guest speaker will be Millie Nohren, the local author of the Hope Sandwich as well as a special local professional singer, Talesha Hogan. We will also have entertainment by the talented dancing group the McGinley Academy of Irish dancers!!

We always serve choice Starbucks teas, coffee, and a delicious Brunch along with having a wonderful raffle and silent auction!

Reserve your table or seat today for this entertaining and exciting event!

Individual Seats \$35 or Table Hostess \$280

Corporate Sponsorships also available!

All proceeds benefit the Angel of Hope!

Please contact Gina Casal, (813) 495-7539

GinaCasal15@tampabay.rr.com or

Julie Leyde (813) 784-6929

vleyde1@verizon.net for information or tickets!

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) 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 (Death of an Only Child) | (813) 234-4705 |
| Serena Graves (Sibling Contact) | (813) 810-7169 |
| Violeta "Cookie" Fernandez (Se Habla Espano) | (813) 996-4281 |
| CRISIS CENTER | 211 |

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

Angel of Hope Memorial Bricks

Please order your engraved memorial brick in memory of your child, grandchild, sibling, niece or nephew.



Deadline for bricks to be placed in the initial Angel of Hope dedication must be ordered by 2/28/2009!

Love Gifts

Frank and Robbie Edwards
In loving memory of their grandson
Alec Michael Williams
5/17/1996 - 7/27/1996

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!

ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL CEREMONY

Our annual Candle Lighting Remembrance Ceremony was held Sunday, December 14, 2008, and it was lovingly shared by those of us who have a special bond. Many extended family and friends were in attendance to share in this event and give their support to us which is very important in our lives and as acceptance of our losses.

The Steering Committee and I wish to thank all of those who gave of themselves to honor their children by helping us to make this Ceremony so beautiful. I am hesitant to list each person as I would be saddened if I failed to mention just one of you wonderful people who helped out in the many jobs it takes to make this evening a success.

We wish to thank our speakers, Rita Zvada and Barbara Dietrich, for sharing their stories. Our thanks to Ron Ellington and John Morrow for their devotion to our special readings. We also had the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful voice and talents of Talesha Hogan. Thanks to you Talesha and to your guests and accompaniments.

David Hurley did another wonderful job of presenting our children's pictures in a beautifully loving presentation. I want to thank all of you for sharing your beautiful children with us.

A special thank you to our reception and boutique helpers for their time and effort to make our boutique and reception such a great success. I hope you noticed the beautiful arrangements Maritza Patet did as decorations for the reception area. Thank you again ladies!

Thanks to Tommy and Barbara Dietrich, for again supplying the Punch for our reception!

As always we appreciate all of the parents who brought items for the boutique and dishes to share to complete the evening with a wonderful reception.

Thank you again to St. Joseph's Hospital and staff for all your help and cooperation.

OUR SINCERE THANKS TO ALL OF YOU FOR MAKING THIS CEREMONY SO BEAUTIFUL AND MEANINGFUL IN REMEMBRANCE OF ALL OF OUR CHILDREN!
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!



Our Children . . . Remembered

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

February Birthdays

Baker, Holly K.
02/11/84 - 11/15/96
M - Evonne M. Baker

Blanchard, Eric Anthony
2/19/1976 - 8/3/1998
P - Barbara & Wayne Blanchard
S - Lisa, Tammy, Dawn
B - Chris & Michael
Daughter - Samantha

Blazowih, Anthony "Tony"
2/20/1984-4/5/2006
M-Marianne & Daniel,
SR.Blazowich
B-Daniel, Jr.
S-Jennifer

Bridgmon, Matt
2/11/1978-11/04/2006
M-Jean Br4idgmon

Brown, Joshua Aaron
2/3/1982-5/8/2008
M-Tami Porter

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

Caldwell-Faught, Thomas E.
2/9/1997 - 5/24/2003
M-Shannon Caldwell

Carter, Cassandra D. "Casie"
2/22/1982 - 9/28/1999
P-Ted & Gayle Carter
B-Justin Carter
GP-Luna Carter

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

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

Harris, Eric Michael
2/4/1984 - 9/12/2003
P-Mike & Pam Harris
B-Mark
GM-Joan & Verna Harris

Head, Tyler Wade
2/21/1995 - 7/15/2004
M-Tammy Hill
F-Jerry Toloff
GF-German Toloff

Hernandez, Rebecca
02/10/89 - 01/28/91
P - Regla & Pedro Hernandez

Jackson, April Dawn
02/16/77 - 01/28/96
P - Dan Jackson

Parker Richard Wm.
2/5/81 - 2/5/81
P - James & Kim Parker
B - James D. Parker II

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

Smith, Dominique
2/26/1999 - 2/26/1999
P - Troy and Latanya Smith

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

Victa, April Melody
2/20/1976 - 9/17/1998
P-Ron & Suzie Giles

Wisner, James R.
2/20/1982 - 2/24/1999
P - Wayne & Sharen Wisner
S - Crystal Wisner

Woofter, Kimberly Ann "Kimie"
2/24/1970 - 12/25/2006
P-Julie & Steve Woofter
S-Angela Huntley
B-Donny Killian

SOMEDAY

By Steven L. Channing

*Someday, it won't hurt so bad and
I'll be able to smile again,
Someday, the tears won't flow quite
as freely whenever I think of what
might have been,
Someday, the answers to "why" and
"what if" won't be quite as impor-
tant,
Someday, I'll be able to use what
your death has taught me to help
others with their grief,
Someday, I'll be healed enough to
celebrate your life as much as I now
dwell on your death,
And someday, maybe tomorrow, I'll
learn to accept the things I cannot
change...
But, for today...I think I'll just be
sad.*

February Anniversaries

Asci, Jason
8/19/1979-2/7/2008
F-Brian Asci

Burney, Trevin Sean
06/04/78 - 02/04/97
M - Georgia Burney
F - Willie Burney
S - Renae & Janae Burney
B - Arkiva Burney
N - Robbie & Marquize Burney

Castellano, Lina
9/15/1966 - 2/20/2004
P-Sam & Jean Castellano

Engdahl, Andrew
07/15/87 - 02/05/94
P - Rick & Vicky Engdahl
S - Stephanie Engdahl
B - Joey Engdahl

Hadley, Katrina
11/17/1961 - 2/4/2006
M-Grace Therman

Harris, Charlotte Marie
1/23/2004 - 2/3/2004
P-Tony & Debra Harris

Hutchcraft, Sharon
8/21/1935 - 2/12/1997
M-Lois Hutchcraft

Jacobson, Nathan
11/9/1994-2/16/2008
P-Amy Jacobson & Pete Vogel

Lane, Matthew Alexander
6/22/2001 - 2/13/2003
M-Mary Ann Muschick
S-Nikol
B-Devvin
GP-Hieu & David Muschick

Loadholtz, Glenn
11/25/1969 - 2/15/2005
P-George & Jackie Loadholtz
S-Gwen Walkowlak

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

Nadir, Peter
4/6/1971 - 2/8/2003
M-Barbar Nadir
S-Sue McFowan
Parker Richard Wm.
2/5/81 - 2/5/81
P - James & Kim Parker
B - James D. Parker II

Parrish, Randy
08/22/57 - 02/10/97
M - Juanita Bodiford
B - Dough Parrish

Pittman, Cynthia Marie
1/25/1978 - 2/23/2003
P-Charles & Joan Pittman

Quincannon, Mark Milton
10/5/1981 - 2/17/1996
P - Alana & Joe Quincannon
S - Emi l y & Shannon
GP - Walter Milton
GM - Margaret Quincannon

Short, Kimberley
10/21/1969 - 2/11/1993
P - Terrance & Sue Short

Smith, Dominique
2/26/1999 - 2/26/1999
P - Troy and Latanya Smith

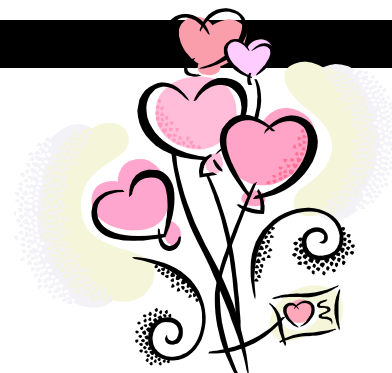
Supple, Bart Patrick
07/25/59 - 02/14/94
P - Bart & Toni Supple

Thompson, Phillip John "P.J."
5/26/1966 - 2/7/1993
M-Mary Thompson

Wells, Aaron
05/11/81 - 02/11/87
P-Paul & Carol Wells
B-Steven Wells
S-Teresa Amundrud & Jessica
Minnick

Widoff, Craig
2/2/1951-4/27/2002
M-Lucille
Daughter-Andrea
B-Preston
S-Pamela Saxon

Wisner, James R.
2/20/1982 - 2/24/1999
P - Wayne & Sharen Wisner
S - Crystal Wisner



*T*ime is measured differently after a child dies. We tend to think about life either "before our child died" or "after our child died". The anniversary of our child's death becomes the dreaded focal point of our yearly calendar. But after awhile, we are able to remember the good times and we begin, once again, to celebrate our child's life, no matter how brief. Here is a calendar of our children's birthdays and anniversaries so that we can support each other during the dark days and share in the celebration of each precious life.

AFTER THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Even though the holiday season was painful for all of us, we did have some plans to make and tried to keep busy, but January and February are really "let down months". Maybe some of the same pain and depression seeps into us almost like the loneliness after the funeral when everyone goes back to their normal lives. Let's all try to think positively about these two months. Make a new friend, try new hobbies or write your feelings down in a journal. Maybe some of us could now do things we have always wanted to do, but were afraid of trying. For instance, taking college courses, sewing lessons, or something silly as long as it makes YOU happy. Each of us knows in our hearts that our beloved children would have wanted only for our happiness. So keep this in mind as we go into our beautiful winter months and look forward to the new life in spring.

~ Joan Williams

A Wish Upon A Star

by Darcie D. Sims, Ph.D., CHT, CT, GMS
Louisville, KY

*Star Light,
Star Bright.
First star I see Tonight.
Wish I may,
Wish I might,
Have the Wish I Wish Tonight.*

Did you ever wish upon a star? Did you ever stand outside, on a clear night and feel the darkness enfold you like black velvet, the night breeze kissing your cheeks? Did you ever gaze up at the starry quilt tossed over the Heavens? Did you ever see a shooting star and wonder where it came from and where it was going? Did you ever search for a special star and wish on it? Did you ever believe in wishes? I did.

Life was once simple. It was made up of day and night, light and dark, black and white, yes and no. There weren't so many choices then. There weren't so many questions left unanswered or sentences left unfinished or songs never sung.

Love was easy back then. It was warm and gentle, nurtured by the never-ending sun's light and blessed by a moon that always cast a silvery reflection. Dreams came easy then and so did laughter. Can you remember those times in your life when the days were without end, the night gentle and joy ran free with the wind?

It was a long time ago, in another time, another world, another place. We flew kites and launched balloons. We collected grasshoppers and chased fireflies. We tried to capture raindrops and tried to find the end of the rainbow. Once, I even managed to stand in a rainbow's light! I thought I was blessed. I had been touched by the rainbow's hue!

Dreams came quickly and we were young and foolish and carefree in the summertime of our lives. We made dandelion crowns and wove daisy chains. We toasted in the summer sun, turning over and over, leaving white tan lines and sun streaked hair.

We made angels-in-the-snow in the wintertime and fought great battles in snow forts and put maple syrup on snowballs for cheap snow cones. It was everything we dreamed of, an endless wave, an endless river, an endless day...

Life was full and rich, although we were not. We were filled with love and dreams and hope. We believed then. joy came into our lives, just as it did into yours. And we thought our hearts would burst with the magic. We caught the sunlight and gave it a name. We fell in love with love. And love fell in love with us. It was a perfect time, at least in the remembering place. Everyone has had a dream space, a remembering place where the memories are far kinder than perhaps reality would tell.

But then, we learned you can't paint a rainbow on the wall and expect it to stay. You can't hold a butterfly too tightly and set it free again. The dream came to pieces and we were shattered. No longer a dream, we became a nightmare and the sun grew cold and the music died. I no longer looked at the stars. There was no rainbow for me anymore. All the dreams were broken and the puzzle was scattered. How long ago that was-or how few days have passed since that moment when the world came to a stop, held its breath and then ... died. Those are the memories that come to me now. The pain is, perhaps, a bit less. It lasts a bit shorter, but the scars lie deep within the soul, carried across time-forever.

It was a long time before I realized the sun still got up every day, and so did I. It was a looong time before I understood that while my life's fabric had been damaged terribly, it was still being woven, even if the threads were twisted and broken. One day became one week and then, one month and then one year, then many years and now, now I stand at the edge of all time, still carrying that pain and grief and sorrow with me.

Oh my, how long has it been since my spirit felt like dancing in the moonlight? How long has it been since I dared to dream or wish on a star? Too long; too long. And now my bones ache sometimes. Sometimes my step is a bit slower and sometimes I can still feel the pain.

And so, you and I, the grieving of the world, stand now, on the curve of time, trying to decide whether to stop there in the past or go forward, into the unknown. Perhaps that choice is really not ours to make, but we can decide what we will bring with us into the new day. What will you carry with you, from this time and place? What will you preserve for always? What bits and pieces of your yesterdays will you keep for your tomorrows? Will you bring with you all the hurt and pain and bitterness of your loved one's death? Or will you begin to let go of some of the anger, the hurt, and the anguish in order to make room for hope to grow?

Will you search deep into your memory and even farther into your soul to find the magic of your loved one's life and bring that forward into now? The fabric is mending, left with tiny stitches, and perhaps a bit lumpy, but we can learn to weave again. And the stars are still shining. I guess they never stopped. I think we just quit looking....

Now, as I recount the past years, I realize that it has been fall and winter and spring and summer many times since I stopped wishing. The seasons turned, all without my direction, effort or concern. Someone else turned the season's wheel and the days moved on and on. I hadn't been in charge after all! Someone else's hand had been holding mine all this time.

So, now, as we turn another page of the calendar, I want to look for my special star. There are more stars now whose names I know, and I now find it comforting to know I am blanketed by a starry quilt made of love and memories. I did get my wish, and so did you. It just didn't stay long enough! But, oh, I choose now to remember the light, not to dwell in the darkness. Once, I stood in a rainbow's glow and was granted happiness. I know its name and there is a star for each miracle I have known.

So, look skyward tonight and find your special star. And instead of embracing the emptiness, cherish the space that love always fills. We didn't lose the love just because the light went out on this earthly plane.

No light that was born in love can ever be extinguished.

*Star Light
Star Bright
First Star I See Tonight
Wish I May, Wish I Might
Remember the Love and Hold the Light
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star
Now I know Just Who You Are.....*

~reprinted with permission from Grief Digest, Centering Corporation, Omaha NE
402-553-1200
www.griefdigest.com

REFLECTIONS: BRIGHTER TEETH AND LIGHTER GRIEF

By Dennis Klass, former
Past Adviser to BP/USA

If we can only find the right brand of stuff, we can solve our problems in just one washing, brushing, scrubbing spoonful or easy application according to the television commercials. Life is full of troubles, the television tells us.

We have ring around our collars; our whites are not white and our colors are not bright; Prince Charming won't kiss Sleeping Beauty because she has bad breath; we have headaches; our nasal passages are clogged and, after a hard day branding cattle, all we get is light beer. But that's okay because just when we think our trouble is going to get us down, we learn that its possible to get a good night's sleep, kill Johnson grass with no carry-over, fight germs while still having bright teeth and spell relief. And all of our troubles go away before the next program.

Wouldn't it be nice if there were a bereaved person spray? Just spray it on and everyone will know what to say to make us feel good. We will pass places and days that used to hurt as if nothing were ever wrong. We will remember the cheery times and blot out the ugly rings around the collars of our minds.

Some people think that going through grief should be an easy, one-step miracle process. Send back the label and proof of purchase if not completely satisfied. If I can buy a pill that absorbs 47 times more stomach acid, I should be able to find a way to grieve that will absorb 50% more of the acid in my heart.

I sincerely wish that loving a dear one were in the same league with getting light beer after a hard day on the range. But it is not something we can get over or make go away. Losing a loved one is a change in our lives that we must go through. We cannot cure our grief, go around it or wish it away. New life, hope and a profound and deeply satisfying way of living is on the other side of our grief. But first, we must go through grief. We must walk that lonesome valley.

LET US THINK OF THINGS WE LOVE:

- Our child - whom we loved - still love - and always will love - here in our hearts as long as we live.
- Our families - hurting like us - lonely - needing each other - needing us.
- Our true friends - listening - trying to help - waiting to lighten our load, but not knowing how - not always understanding, but there.
- Our memories - of wonderful times gone by - some that make us laugh - some that make us cry - but all part of the fabric of our lives and of our love for each other.
- Our quiet times - to get away by ourselves and think - to read - to note again the world around us -to let peace enter.
- Our Bereaved Friends - who are there - who know - who understand when others do not. "Love makes the world go round" and when our world comes to a sudden grinding, heart-shattering stop, love is the glue that keeps us from falling off.

THIS MONTH OF FEBRUARY, I WISH YOU LOVE.

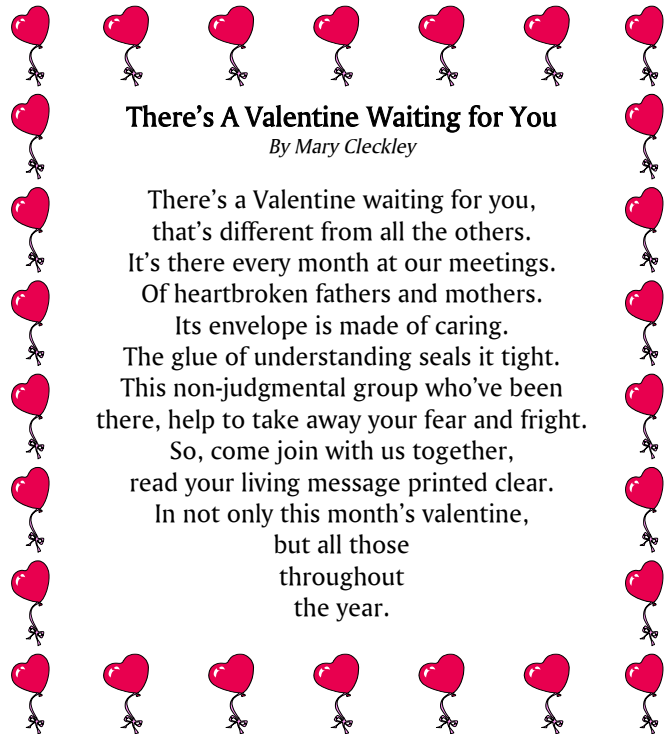
~ Fran MacArthur

A Beginning

~ Susan Borrowman

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 instant that your heart is broken...and it is a beginning.



There's A Valentine Waiting for You

By Mary Cleckley

There's a Valentine waiting for you,
that's different from all the others.
It's there every month at our meetings.
Of heartbroken fathers and mothers.
Its envelope is made of caring.
The glue of understanding seals it tight.
This non-judgmental group who've been
there, help to take away your fear and fright.
So, come join with us together,
read your living message printed clear.
In not only this month's valentine,
but all those
throughout
the year.

**I held my child's hand
for a short while,
but I will hold their heart
forever.**

THINK OF ME

Death is nothing at all.

I have only slipped away into the next room.

I am I, and you are you.

Whatever we were to each other, that we still are.

Call me by my old familiar name, speak to me in the easy way you always did.

Put no difference into your tone, wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.

Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together.

Play, smile, think of me.

Pray for me.

Let my name be the household name it always was.

Let it be spoken without the shadow of a ghost in it.

Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was.

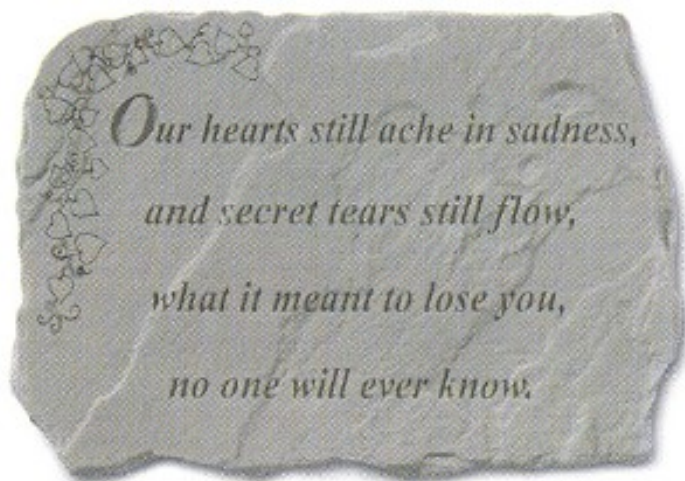
What is death but a negligible accident?

Why should I be out of your mind because I am out of your sight?

All is well, nothing is lost.

One brief moment at all will be as it was before.

Think of me.



Bereaved Parents of the USA 2009 National Gathering *Light My Way*

Friday through Sunday, July 10,11,12, 2009

At Crowne Plaza LaGuardia Airport Hotel
104-04 Ditmars Blvd., E. Elmhurst, New York

Hotel Reservations 1-888-233-9527 or website www.cplaguardia.com

The Crowne Plaza LaGuardia Airport Hotel, New York has given BP/USA a generously discounted daily room rate of \$115, w/tax \$133.88 that 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 a Complimentary Shuttle to LaGuardia Airport, Queens Mall, and the 7 Train (minutes to Manhattan).

Gathering Registration—On Line Registration is available.

Workshop and Speaker's Bios are posted as well. Check it out!

For more information, please see BP/USA National Website at www.bereavedparentsusa.org

A Pair of Shoes

Author Unknown

I am wearing a pair of shoes.

They are ugly shoes.

Uncomfortable shoes.

I hate my shoes

Each day I wear them, and each day I wish

I had another pair.

Some days my shoes hurt so bad that I do not think

I can take another step.

Yet, I continue to wear them.

I get funny looks wearing these shoes.

They are looks of sympathy.

I can tell in others eyes that they are glad they are my shoes and not theirs.

They never talk about my shoes.

To learn how awful my shoes are might make them uncomfortable.

To truly understand these shoes you must walk in them.

But, once you put them on, you can never take them off.

I now realize that I am not the only one who wears these shoes. There are many pairs in this world.

Some women/men are like me and ache daily as they try and walk in them.

Some have learned how to walk in them so they don't hurt quite as much .

Some have worn the shoes so long that days go by before they think about how much they hurt

No woman/man deserves to wear these shoes .

Yet , because of these shoes I am a stronger woman/man.

These shoes have given me the strength to face anything.

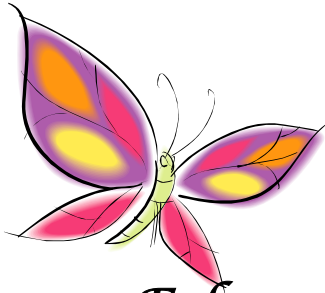
They have made me who I am.

FROM PEANUTS AND CHARLIE BROWN

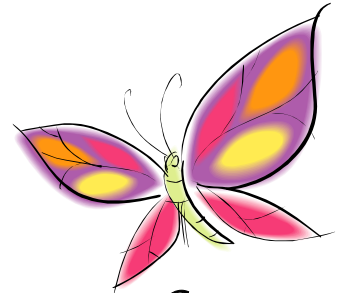
"I HAVE A NEW PHILOSOPHY. I AM ONLY GOING TO DREAD ONE DAY AT A TIME."

**"DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE WORLD
COMING TO AN END TODAY.
IT'S ALREADY TOMORROW
IN AUSTRALIA."**





Kimberly Ann "Kimie"



February 24, 1970 to December 25, 2006



I Remember

*It's so hard to believe two years have come and gone.
Our family has suffered the ultimate loss, losing a child.*

I Remember

*Our hearts are heavy,
There is emptiness in our soul,
We are an incomplete family without you.*

I Remember

*We will always love and miss you.
Death deals a stinging blow to all of us.
Without faith all hope is lost.
Death will be swallowed up in the victory of eternal life.*

*Love,
Your mother,
Your sons, Michael & Dustyn,
Your sister Angela & family
Your brother Donny & family*



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.

From your Hinsdale Illinois BP/USA Newsletter editor...

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.



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

February 2009

POSTMASTER - Dated Material

Please do not delay.



Passed Away

**So many words I want to say
of all these times together, all
these yesterdays.**

**All your smiles, your laugh, and all those
funny things you would say.**

**Oh how you helped me and protected me
in so many ways.**

**Now I can't believe you were taken away
on that fireworks filled, Independence Day.
God called you home, you just couldn't stay
to be with us, to love, to laugh, to just be
you in your own special way.**

My heart is broken now and will be always.

**Now at times it's hard to pray
I just don't know what words to say
I miss you so much everyday.**

**I long to hear your voice , anything that
you could say.**

**In Heaven I know you'll get to stay.
And I know when its my time, it will come, the day
I will see you again and know you won't
be taken away.**

**Since I lost you, the pain affects me in so many ways
I loved you then and now today.**

**Bubba, I hope you know I miss you and will love
you always.**

**Written by Patricia Littlechild
in memory of her brother
Will Littlechild**

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.

*Celeste Hardy
Hinsdale, Illinois BP/USA*

