



Tampa Bay Chapter

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

www.bpusatampabay.org

March 2007

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

PHILLIP (PJ) COMBS

MEETING INFORMATION

Regular Monthly SUNDAY Meeting

Sunday, March 11, 6:30 to 8:30

(We normally have short separate break out sessions for
Fathers and Mothers)

St. Joseph's Hospital

Medical Arts Building, Auditorium

3001 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

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, March 9, 10:00 a.m. to noon

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, March 19, 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 of the month)

Thursday, March 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.

We understand how difficult it is to attend your first meeting. Feelings can be overwhelming; we have all experienced them and know how important it is to take the first step. Our stories may be different, but we are alike in that we all hurt deeply. We can not take your pain away, but we can offer friendship and support. Bring a friend or relative to lean on if you wish! We need not grieve alone! See you next month.

Upcoming Events

Angel of Hope meeting, Monday,

April 2, 7:00 p.m.,

NEW LOCATION—I-HOP Restaurant,

11710 Morris Bridge Road,

Temple Terrace, FL 33617

Angel of Hope, Crop for Hope

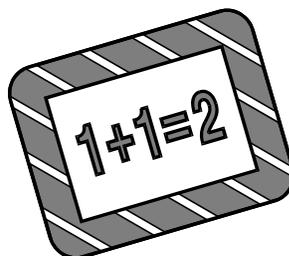
Saturday, March 17

(See details Page 2)

Angel of Hope, Spring Tea

Saturday, April 28

(See details Page 2)



How Many Children Do You Have?

Mary Cleckley, Atlanta, GA

Shortly after my son died, I realized that this question was going to be bothersome. Each time someone asked me about the number of children, I struggled with the answer. I soon decided I was not going to let this become a problem. I thought about how I felt about my choices of answer and chose the one that met my needs in the beginning. I had a surviving daughter, but I knew for me to say "one" would seem a denial on my part that my son had lived, and that wasn't right for me.

In the beginning, when I still needed to tell people that my son had died, I would tell in detail about his accident when the question about how many children came my way. As the months passed and I had told the story enough times, I found that it wasn't necessary to go into detail any more. My needs had changed, and I rethought my answer.

Now, when I am asked how many children I have, I answer, "I had two children. The criteria I used in determining if I go any further is whether the person asking is going to be a continuing part of my life. If so, they need to know about my son, and I tell them. Otherwise, we will be constantly dancing around that fact. Better, I think, to have it out in the open. It then loses its ability to interfere with the relationship.

If, on the other hand, the person asking is simply passing through my life, then I feel no need to go any further than, "I had two children." Seldom does anyone catch the had instead of have, and pursue it. If they do, or if they ask follow up questions about ages or professions, I tell them first that my 26 year old son was killed in an accident. Then I tell them about my daughter who is alive and doing well. This gives them a choice. They can either acknowledge my son's death and ask questions, or they can ignore that and ask about my daughter. I am comfortable either way. If they are embarrassed, I see that as their problem. Just to show you how different we all are, however, my husband feels comfortable answering, "We have one child." That is what is right for him and is what he should say.

You decide what is right for you - then say it. That way you defuse that powerful question and it loses its ability to traumatize. Don't let it be a problem.

Chapter News

ANGEL OF HOPE UPDATE www.angelofhopetampabay.org

Efforts to bring an Angel of Hope Memorial Garden to the Tampa Bay Area were announced at the 2003 BP/USA Annual Candle Light. We agreed to have a monthly committee meeting (unless a holiday weekend)! Please call Beverley Hurley for more information 813-832-3175. We are still working on fund raisers and need your help!!



SPRING TEA

Our annual Spring Tea will be held **Saturday, April 28, 2007**, at the Comfort Inn at 275 and Busch Blvd. We are now taking table reservations for you and your friends. We will have a guest speaker, entertainment, door prizes and a raffle! New this year—a Fashion Show! More information to follow! Please call Jackie Loadholtz 813-929-0585.

*Please join us at our next **Crop for Hope:**
Saturday, March 17th, 2007
10 am.-2 pm.*

*Children's Board of Hillsborough County
(Historic Ybor- Corner of Nebraska & Palm Ave.)
1002 E. Palm Avenue, Tampa, FL 33605
Please send your \$15 registration fee to:
3815 Olde Lanark Dr. ; Land O' Lakes FL 34638
no later than: Saturday, March 10th !!!*

**(Checks should be written to Angel of Hope)*
Please contact Gina Casal*

*if you have any questions regarding this event.
H. (813)746-4796 C. (813)495-7539*

GinaCasal15@tampabay.rr.com

We hope to see you there!!!

Cartridge Buy Back Program to benefit the Angel of Hope!

Please bring your empty inkjet and laser toner cartridges to any of our Angel of Hope or BP/USA meetings. Barbara Dietrich has volunteered to collect these and turn them in for a refund to benefit the Angel of Hope or call her at 813-340-9120.

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 (813) 996-4281
(Se Habla Espano)

CRISIS CENTER 211

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

Love Gifts

Tommy & Barbara Dietrich
Purchased a punch fountain to be used at our events
In loving memory of their daughter
Jamie Rachel Dietrich
11/20/1977-11/17/2004

Thomas Sluder
In loving memory of his daughter and son
Kathryn Sluder
8/31/1966-3/17/2002
Keith Sluder
4/25/1964-5/11/2006

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.

Sponsor A Newsletter Page

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

Additionally, sponsorship pages will be posted on our Website for 1 year. Simply click on "How we remember."

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

Chapter Library Book Reminder

Have you got a Bereaved Parent of the USA Library book at home? If you have finished reading it, please return it to our library so other bereaved parents can benefit from its words and wisdom. Because of our limited budget, it is normal to only have one copy of any one title, so it is important to have the books returned promptly.

Contact Dave or Kathy Simone at (813) 653-1717 to return a book, arrange a donation or inquire about an available title. Or, visit the Sunday monthly meeting where the library is always set up at these meetings.





Our Children . . . Remembered

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

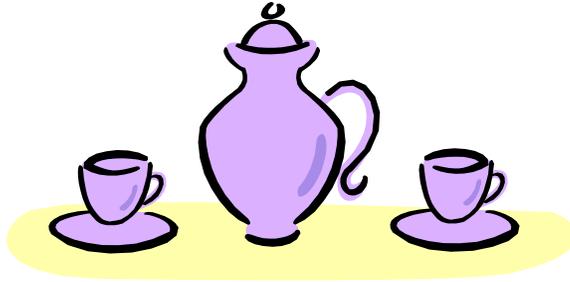
March Birthdays

Berry, Michelle 3/8/1967 - 4/2/2003 P-Joanne & Lawrence Ouellette B-Russ,David,Scott & Joe S-Denise Volo Son-Bobby	Cuena, Daisy 03/19/27 - 1992 M - Gladys Garcia	Hutchcraft, Bruce 3/1/1948 - 1/13/2001 M-Lois Hutchcraft	Rainey, Wendy Michelle Price 3/7/1968-9/27/2006 M-Shelia Farmer S-Emily Furst and Pete Price GP-Charles & Sybil Jones and Pete and Faye Price
Booker, Michelle Elizabeth 3/25/1987 - 12/1/2004 P-Michael & Bonnie Booker B-Justine & Dillon Booker GP-Betty Nichols and Ed & Janice Falcon	Darby, Marc Steven 3/25/1986 - 12/12/1998 P - Steve & Lori Darby S - Cody, Austin, Benjamin Darby GP - John & Linda Darby	Landrum, Mark 03/03/79 - 06/24/94 M - Joan Landrum-Hilliard F - Steve Landrum B - John Landrum	Rayburn, Geoffrey (Jeff) Ware 3/2/1970 - 10/15/1995 P-Robert and Sue Moos B-Bobby Moos S-Amy Rayburn GP-Richard & Jeannette Roberson and Josephine Rayburn
Buchanan, Sierra Lan 03/07/96 - 05/25/96 P - Kim & Bryan Buchanan S - May Linh Buchanan	Dart, Tracy 3/11/1970-6/13/2006 M-Sue Milson	Lavin, Kevin Joseph 03/24/80 - 03/30/95 P - Kathy & Mike Lavin S - Maggie & Kaitlin Lavin Gdm - Catherine Lavin	Rogers, Dayna Andrew 3/12/1973 - 11/27/1994 M - Linda Heatherly S - Misty Walker & Amber Roger
Clark, Kellen William 3/16/82 - 4/15/02 F - Bill Clark	Durazzo, Jill 9/8/1964-3/13/1980 P-Diane & Paul Durazzo B-Richard	Lawrence, Charles E. 03/23/1965 - 06/22/2001 P-Dave and Terry Lawrence S-Carolyn & Cindy C-Ashley, Christina & Stephanie W-Nicky	Shields, 3/14/1982-9/28/2005 M-Sydney Shields
Clements, George R. 03/25/1972 - 12/9/1996 M-Sherrie Clements S-Carey & Cory Clements	Ellington, Timothy 03/06/62 - 05/25/91 F - Ron Ellington	Lespinasse, Bryan 3/8/1991 - 12/27/2004 M-Margaret Lespinasse	Simone, Benjamin Arthur 3/29/1975 - 10/10/1997 P - David & Kathy Simone S - Dawn Figueroa
Cloer, Terry "T.C." Jr. 03/28/74 - 05/24/91 P - Nadine & Terry Cloer, Sr. S - Judy Cloer	Fernandez, Karen Irene 03/08/68 - 08/23/88 M - Violeta "Cookie" Fernandez B-Rik Fernandez	Mink-Miller, Deborah 3/26/1965 - 9/27/1991 M-Diane Mink S-Renee Mink Crosby	Simpson, Tianca 3/5/1987-4/18/2000 M-Monica Simpson
Combs, Phillip (PJ) 3/24/1986-6/12/2004 P-Lisa & Phillip Sr. B-Travis GP-Sharon & Tom Pyche	Griffis, Julia Rose 03/05/92 - 03/05/92 P - Bruce & Kathy Griffis	Misita, Randall J. 3/15/1966-10/14/1987 P-Tony & Bernie Misita S-Angela Pegram, Robin Sue 03/13/73 - 12/05/93 P - Earl & Susan Pegram S - Jodi Pegram B - Scooter & Craig Pegram GM-Betty Jennings	Speck, Taylor Jordan 03/27/98 - 03/27/98 M - Charlene Speck
Cooley, Malena Rose 3/23/1998 - 9/4/2000 P - Scott & Traci Cooley B - Nolan S - Madelyn & Olivia Cowen, Chad 3/31/1973 - 6/7/1997 P - Mary "Pete" & Mike Cowen S - Tiffany Larson	Gugliotta, Dan & Nadine 3/26/1976 - 10/14/2003 P-Dan & Nadine Gugliotta Howard, Christopher L. 3/27/1975 - 5/18/2000 M-Cay Pelaez	Price, Jacob 3/4/2002 - 8/15/2002 M-Charlann Price	Stanley, Gregory 3/2/1982-10/6/2004 M-Darlene Stanley
	Husk, Stacy 03/10/70 - 05/02/90 F - Michael Husk		Tucker, Vince 3/8/1972 - 4/26/2005 M-Glenda Tucker A-Judith Gude

March Anniversaries

Aaron, Brittany 4/24/1999 - 3/4/2001 P - Tom & Kim Aaron S - Jessica	Gallian, John Charles 8/8/1963 - 3/21/1998 M-Virgian Gallian S-Paige Mask	Marchetti, Katie 8/4/1989 - 3/4/2006 P-Vin & Laura Marchetti B-Andrew Marchetti	Rogers, Jason Roy 01/08/1978 - 03/21/1990 P-James Roy & Elaine Rogers B-Justin & Jacob Rogers GP-Arthur & Ethel Fernandez
Banda, Selena 7/6/2002 - 3/4/2004 P-Richard & Susan Banda	Gochenaour, Laci 02/15/91 - 03/23/98 P - Kelli & Chris Gochenaour S - Jacee & Riley Gochenaour GP - Ronald & Clarine Barton M - Pat Dukes	Mendoza, Jennifer 9/26/1986 - 3/3/2005 F-Joey Mendoza	Rose, Kailyn Dyan 8/22/2000 - 3/4/2003 M-Evelyn E. Rose
Cepero, Caylee Marie 9/3/2000 - 3/8/2005 P-Dawn and Lee Cepero B-Corbin S-Kennedy GP-Sandy Boehning	Goolsby, Melissa 12/28/1974-3/2/2005 M-Wanda Tindale	Nichols, Shannon Jr. 10/5/1979 - 3/29/2004 M-Terrena Nichols F-Shannon Nichols S-Brandy & Melissa Nichols	Sasnett, Debbie Powell 12/14/1956 - 03/31/2000 P-Jackie & Billy Powell B-Debbie & Tony S-Penny
Clark, Deborah Denise 1/19/1969 - 3/23/2002 M-Ethel Helms S-Valencia Clark B-James Jr. & Jerel GP-Luella Buford & John L.Clark	Gould, Richard J. 9/26/1981 - 3/3/2001 M-Cindy Phelps-Wise F-Ralph Gould B-Ryan, Bryan & Mark S-Karen	Parker II, James Donald 1/21/1979 - 3/24/1998 P - James & Kim Parker B - Richard Wm. Parker S-Jackie Wise GP-Don Parker & Richard Salisbury	Sluder, Kathryn 8/31/1966-3/17/2002 F-Tom Sluder
Collum, Brian H. 5/11/1965 - 3/7/2005 M-Diana Reams B-Reid Collum	Griffis, Julia Rose 03/05/92 - 03/05/92 P - Bruce & Kathy Griffis	Pfister, Megan Lynn 5/2/1990 - 3/3/1999 P - Frank & Stephanie Pfister	Speck, Taylor Jordan 03/27/98 - 03/27/98 M - Charlene Speck
Durcan, Andrea Lynn 01/15/1991 - 03/31/1991 P - David & Dixie Durcan S - Lindsey & Lauren Durcan GP-Marie B. Corcoran	Hall, Heather Elizabeth 12/10/94 - 03/06/96 P - Ken & Jackie Hall B - Jason Gabriel Hall	Racke, Sabrina D. Wallace 12/2/60 - 3/12/97 P-Arnold & Louise Wallace B-Chris Wallace Children-Jamie and Jennifer	Stone, Casey Taylor 02/07/94 - 03/08/94 P - Lynn & Todd Stone S - Haley Stone
Ferrera, Crista J. 8/23/1975 - 03/11/1997 P - Nelson & Guisela Ferrera B - Paolo Ferrera GM - Magda Alvarez Aunt - Mirta Diaz Uncle - John Ferrera	Kerby, Kristen Elizabeth 10/21/1979 - 3/31/2002 P-Larry & Vickie Kerby S-Kimberley B-Mark	Regis, Chad 4/7/1971 - 3/22/2005 P-Ray & LaRae Regis GP-Bea Forbes	Stone, Danny 12/05/74 - 03/17/94 P - Dan & Janet Stone B - Josh & Andy Stone
Frederick, Mark Anthony 12/4/1974-3/9/2006 P-Becky & Mike Frederick GP-Becky & Mike Frederick	L'Homme, Ryan 4/16 /81 - 3/23/00 P - Charles & Teresa L'Homme S - Cortney L'Homme	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	Tarez, Kami 7/1/1980 - 3/1/2006 M-Leigh Tarez
	Lavin, Kevin Joseph 03/24/80 - 03/30/95 P - Kathy & Mike Lavin S - Maggie & Kaitlin Lavin Gdm - Catherine Lavin		Todd, Joan 4/22/1960 - 3/12/2004 M-Mary McCord
			Wolf, Jacqueline Deanne 2/15/1984 - 3/16/2000 P - David & Debbie Wolf





Dear Friends,

The Angel of Hope Committee is working to bring an Angel of Hope Memorial Garden to the Tampa Bay Area. This Garden will be a place of peace and solitude for parents whose children have died to give them a message of HOPE!

Our Third Annual Spring Tea will take place on Saturday, April 28, 2007 at the Comfort Inn, at 820 Busch Blvd. and I-275, from 10 am to 12:00 pm. This year's Tea will have a fashion show, entertainment, a raffle, and a silent auction.

We are currently looking for individuals to serve as table hostesses or hosts. Table hostesses have a great time planning a theme for their table, decorating the table and inviting seven of their friends to join them for a morning of fun and entertainment. Table hostesses will purchase tables for \$175.00, and then they can invite their friends to join them at the table. Each individual chair costs \$25.00; table hostess may collect this cost from their friends or choose to pay the full amount themselves. It is up to you.

Corporate Tables may be purchased for a minimum donation of \$200.00. The corporate name will be listed in the program with signage on the table as well.

Please consider hostessing a table for this wonderful event. If you are interested please call Julie Leyde at 813-949-5970 or Gina Casal at 813-746-4796 for more information.

Sincerely,

Julie Leyde and Gina Casal, Tea Chairpersons
Angel of Hope Committee

Four-leaf Clover Poem

Author: Ella Higginson

*I know a place where the sun is like gold
and the cherries bloom forth in the snow;
And down underneath is the loveliest place,
Where the four-leaf clovers grow.*

*One leaf is for **FAITH**,
And one is for **HOPE**,
And one is for **LOVE** you know;
And **GOD** put another in for **LUCK**:
If you search you will find where they grow.*

After the worst loss of all, one parent finds.....

The Courage To Move On

By Ann Hood

Published: February 4, 2007, Parade Magazine



The first time I picked up knitting needles was on a beautiful October morning in 2002, six months after my 5-year-old daughter, Grace, died from a virulent form of strep. Learning to knit wasn't just a way to distract me during the long months of grieving. It also was an attempt to redefine myself. Once Grace was born, I became the mother of a little girl. That meant I combed her fine blond hair and taught her the ABCs; that we lay together on the sofa, singing along to her favorite movie, *Oliver!* I had a vision of a future in which Grace grew up and my role changed: I would shop with her for lipstick, teach her to ride waves in the ocean and share my favorite books with her. Once, when asked what she wanted to be when she grew up, Grace said: "I want to write books like my mommy, except I'll write mine in nail polish."

When your child dies, that imagined future dies too. Unable to grasp what had happened, I could no longer make sense of words. I couldn't read. I couldn't write. I needed to find something new. Yes, for distraction, for meditation, but also to put me on a path that was not all wrapped up in the person I had been. I needed something without Grace's fingerprints on it.

This is the part of grief that I did not yet know. Like most of us, I knew the common things: how hard each birthday and anniversary would be; how my husband, Lorne, and I might not sleep or eat very much; how we should try to talk about our pain. Grief brings an emptiness with it, like someone punched a hole in you. My arms and my lap ached from the emptiness Grace had left behind.

After the death of someone we love, we are forced to figure out who we are now. It is difficult to reach the point where you realize that moving forward doesn't mean leaving behind the person you've lost. I remember how upset I became when we had to buy a new car shortly after Grace died. A part of me wanted to keep everything exactly as it had been. I even resisted painting the living room. Each small change seemed to make our daughter disappear a little more.

Then, that same October when I learned to knit, my husband began redoing the cracked asphalt sidewalk in front of our house. Every weekend, as the leaves changed from green to gold and then began to fall, he dug and measured and planned an intricate herringbone pattern. When the sidewalk was finished, he began work on the driveway, removing the sharp gravel and replacing it with cobblestones. By the following fall, Lorne had relined our small city yard with beach stones and circular patterns of cobblestone and brick. By the garden, he laid the stones in a heart shape for Grace.

This physical labor distracted him. It helped the long weekends to pass, and he found a new passion. Our yard, our driveway, our front walk—all of it had changed. And it was beautiful. One warm spring evening, I looked around our exquisite yard. When we moved to this house, Grace had dubbed it "our happy house." That night, I smiled—remembering and believing that, even with changes, it was indeed still our happy house.

How to move on. Part of the work of grieving is to channel our emotions and energy into activities that help us redefine ourselves. Some people turn to creative pursuits. For me, it was knitting. The soft clicking of the needles helped me to relax. Some people reach out and help others by volunteering. And some, recognizing that life is precious and short, fulfill their dreams.

To help yourself heal, do what moves you. Or do what matters. Adopt a cat. Visit Spain. Ride a bike. Help the homeless. Be a mentor. And in each new activity, remember the loved one who brought you there. Then, take those first tentative steps into the rest of your life.

Ann Hood is the author of "Somewhere Off the Coast of Maine." Her new novel, "The Knitting Circle" (W.W. Norton), is just out.

LifePath Hospice and Palliative Care

offers its 15th annual

Camp Circle of Love

*a weekend camp for children
who have experienced the loss of
a loved one*

May 4 – 6, 2007



HOW TO REGISTER

Call LifePath Hospice at (813) 877-2200 to register your child for camp. Camp Circle of Love is open to any child between the ages of 6 and 16 who has experienced the death of a loved one.

Remembering

By Elizabeth Dent

Go ahead and mention my child,
The one that died, you know.
Don't worry about hurting me further.
The depth of my pain doesn't show.
Don't worry about making me cry.
I'm already crying inside.
Help me to heal by releasing
The tears that I try to hide.
I'm hurt when you just keep silent,
Pretending he didn't exist.
I'd rather you mention my child.
Knowing that he has been missed.
You asked me how I was doing.
I say "pretty good" or "fine."
But healing is something ongoing.
I feel it will take a lifetime.



March the Month of In Between

In Between Winter
And In Between Spring

Your Death has Left me
Feeling In Between
In Between This World
And In Between the Next

Since you died
Nothing's the same
I no longer feel like I Belong
Yet I haven't Wings for Heaven
Tho I have No Heart for Earth

So I'm Somewhere with March
I'm Somewhere In Between

By Naomi Holzman © 1993
Volusia/Flagler, Florida

PANACHÉ

by Keith Swett

(Keith will be a speaker at the
2007 BP/USA National Gathering)

Joy is public but pain is always private. We do not comprehend the pain of another.

Good friends commented that they wished that woman would get over her dead baby. They're not bad people. They certainly didn't realize they were offending my wife and me. After all, we had lost an adult son; and my wife rarely speaks Matt's name. I, on the other hand, tell humorous stories about Matt to reinforce Shakespeare's message almost daily.

Because I laugh, people don't see the void in my life. You see I realize that there will never, never be any new stories. Never is beyond my comprehension; I realize that I won't tell new stories today, not tomorrow, not the day after. Then my comprehension stops.

So how much does it hurt? It hurts as much as the first day but not as often. It hurts so much that I forget whom I am talking to at a wrestling tournament. People think I'm senile, but Matt wrestled here and I'm seeing matches that are ten years old.

It is January, a couple of days after Matt's death or maybe four years and a couple of days. But time is suspended and I'm lost.

Theo has no idea how much he reminds me of Matt. Most days I could watch him forever. The way he runs, and works, and laughs take me back to '97. Both Theo and Matt refuse to grow up. They'll be 12 forever.

I usually ignore physical pain, refusing to be sensible and therefore limited. Sometimes the shoulder or hip wins and for several days nothing moves. I crawl down inside myself and wait for it to be better.

Most days I laugh at life and taunt the pain that would be my master. Some days pain wins. If I don't seem to be myself maybe I'm not with you at all. I'm sledding at the lake park, climbing trees, singing at the library, watching Grease. I'll be back soon. I just need to visit Matt awhile.

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS THAT HELPED WITH THE GASPARIILLA MARATHON!

These wonderful people came out on a 53 degree damp Sunday morning with high winds and while it was still dark! We were so cold when it was over at 9 a.m. but we were ready to sign up for next year!!!! Hope you will too!

Thanks to Sue and Ben Bowditch, Tammy Hill, Charles L'Homme, Jackie and George Loadholtz, Bill Schneider, and David and Beverly Hurley. We also had wonderful help from the college & career ministry, Ekklesia, from New Beginnings Christian Church (www.newbeginningsctampa.org) in South Tampa. Attending were sponsors Bethany Jett and Terri Snodgrass, along with Natalie Snodgrass, David Snodgrass, Jason Seals, Sara Lamb, John Lamb, and Justyn Shirey.

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



*HAPPY 21st BIRTHDAY
PHILLIP (PJ) COMBS*

March 24, 1986 to June 12, 2004



*Today my son, PJ would have turned 21 years old.
Why was he taken so young?
No one can answer that.
I think about PJ everyday
and miss him more and more
as time goes on.
PJ will live forever in my heart.
And one day we will all be together again.*

*Happy Birthday honey
we all love & miss you very much.*

LOL , Mom & Travis

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.

Thoughts For Springtime?

Would it be easier,
if spring were not so lovely?

Would it be easier,
if robins did not sing?

Would I be stronger,
if the trees were barren
or if a cloak of grey hid everything?

Could I be braver,
if the days were faded
and if the sun remained remote and cold?

I hear the whispers
Of a new beginning.
The earth is new.
Why is my grief so old?

by Sascha Wagner



2007 National BP/USA Gathering July 13, 14 and 15, 2007

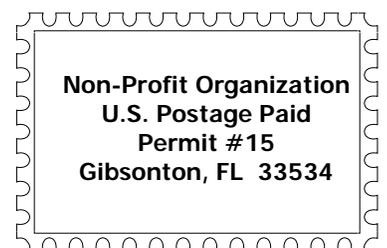


Please join us for the 12th Annual BP/USA National Gathering July 13 to 15, 2007 being held in Downer's Grove, Illinois at The Doubletree Guest Suites Hotel (620 971 2000) just a taxi ride from either Chicago airport (approx \$35 PER taxi). We have reasonable room rates of \$89 for 2, \$99 for 3 or more at the hotel, with free parking. All rooms are suites. Meal package available, which is not-dividable, is \$118. The hotel provides a free shuttle to the commuter trains which makes sightseeing in the city very manageable. Call the hotel and make your room reservations and be sure to tell them you are with the BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA GATHERING.

Registration forms available on the BP/USA National website at www.bereavedparentsusa.org. If you have questions about the BP/USA Gathering, please call Donna Corrigan, Gathering Chairperson at 630 279 6148 or email Bpwindsofhealing@aol.com ! Thank you!



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



March 2007

POSTMASTER - Dated Material
Please do not delay.

