



# Tampa Bay Chapter

P.O. Box 3226  
Tampa, Florida  
33601-3226  
[www.bpusatampabay.com](http://www.bpusatampabay.com)

## MEETING INFORMATION

### Regular Monthly SUNDAY Meeting

(held the second Sunday of the month)  
**Sunday, March 9, 6:30 p.m.**  
St. Joseph's Hospital  
Medical Arts Building, Auditorium  
3001 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Call Beverley Hurley at 813-832-3175  
for directions or information.

### Regular Monthly DAYTIME Meeting

Riverview/Gibson/Brandon areas  
(held the second Friday each month)  
**Friday, March 14, 2008**  
**10:00 a.m. to Noon**  
The Greater Brandon (new building)  
330 Pauls Drive, Ste. 100  
Brandon, Florida 33511  
Please call Linda Delk at 813-661-0680  
for directions or information.

### Regular Monthly BRADENTON Meeting

Call for dates and location!  
Melissa Coxwell at 941-708-7052

### Regular Monthly PLANT CITY Meeting

(held the fourth Thursday each month)  
**Thursday, March 27**  
**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

Please call Beverley Hurley 813-832-3175 for info!  
Next meeting 7:00 pm March 3, and April 7, 2008  
*Perkins on Bearss Avenue, just west of I-275*

### Angel of Hope Annual Spring Tea

Saturday, April 26, 2008!  
New location-**Quorum Hotel**  
700 N. Westshore Blvd. and Cypress Street  
Wonderful guest speaker, entertainment, fashion show,  
silent auction, raffle, and of course a delicious brunch  
with Starbucks tea or coffee!  
Please contact Gina Casal,  
[GinaCasal15@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:GinaCasal15@tampabay.rr.com) (813) 495-7539 or  
Julie Leyde [vleyde1@verizon.net](mailto:vleyde1@verizon.net) (813) 784-6929  
for information or tickets!

### SUNDAY, APRIL 27—FREE GRIEF WORKSHOP

AND ENTERTAINMENT WITH SPECIAL  
GUEST SPEAKER, ALAN PEDERSEN  
St. Joseph's Hospital Medical Arts Building

### Saturday, May 2-4, Camp Circle of Love

A weekend camp for children who have experienced  
the loss of a loved one. The registration deadline is  
April 18. To apply and register for camp, please call  
LifePath Hospice at 813-877-2200, space is limited.

March 2008

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

*Anna Elise Lowe  
Michelle "Shelby" Booker  
Caylee Marie Cepero  
Brian Harold Collum*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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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		MARCH 2008			

## If Only Our Children Were Easter Eggs

If only our children were Easter eggs,  
Hidden safely in the grass  
We could search for them and  
pick them up  
And hold them within our clasp.

We'd have a heavenly Easter  
egg hunt,  
All with baskets in our hands,  
Searching with a broken heart,  
Only we can understand.

"Oh, look I found your child  
over here."  
"Hey, did anyone find mine?"  
They are so beautifully colored,  
And they sparkle and they shine.

These aren't your usual Easter eggs  
They each have their own  
special glow  
That comes from way down  
deep within,  
Only a grieving parent would know.

We gather up our special eggs  
With excitement all around,  
For the gift that we've been given,  
For the treasure we have found.

We all now stare with wonderment  
At our children that have died.  
We want to hold them once again,  
And release them from inside.

But we all begin to realize  
We have to crack their beautiful  
shell  
The one that makes them sparkle  
and glow,  
The one they have earned so well.

We know we can't destroy  
their beauty  
And take them from their place.  
So we give them an understanding  
kiss  
As a tear runs down our face.

One by one we take our baskets  
With our beautifully colored eggs,  
And place them gently in the grass  
As we turn and walk away.

We look back in amazement  
As our eggs begin to sing.  
We see them flutter and move about  
"Look, our eggs all now have wings."

Then the Golden Egg begins to  
speak,  
"Your children are safe with me.  
You'll be with them when the  
time is right,  
Together for all eternity."

We stand there in a circle of love,  
As we look up to the sky,  
Watching our radiant eggs take flight  
Knowing our children didn't die.

*Written in memory of  
Lucas Christopher Ross  
1979-2001*

*Loving lifted from  
Living with Loss Magazine  
Spring 2008  
[www.livingwithloss.com](http://www.livingwithloss.com)*



## Chapter News



### ANGEL OF HOPE UPDATE

Please check out our NEW improved website at [www.angelofhopetampabay.com](http://www.angelofhopetampabay.com)  
Angel of Hope, P.O. Box 2573, Lutz, FL 33548

### Angel of Hope monthly meeting

Please call Beverley Hurley 813-832-3175 for info! Next meeting March 3 and April 7, 2008 at Perkins on Bearss Avenue (at 275)!

### Angel of Hope Annual Spring Tea

**What:** The TAMPA BAY, committee will hold its fourth annual SPRING TEA EVENT to benefit the construction of an Angel of Hope Memorial Garden to be placed in the soon to be constructed park in Temple Terrace along the Hillsborough River for the whole Community to appreciate!

We are extremely happy to have song writer and singer, Alan Pedersen, as our Keynote Speaker and Entertainer. We will also have entertainment by the talented singing group The Academy. You will also enjoy our new fashion show! We will serve choice Starbucks teas, coffee, and delicious Brunch along with having a wonderful raffle and silent auction!

**Where:** Quorum Hotel, 700 N. Westshore Blvd. (and Cypress Street),  
**When:** Saturday, April 26, 2008, 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Who:** The entire Tampa Bay community is invited to this event. Tickets are available NOW and must be arranged in advance:

\* Table hosts/hostesses will make a donation of \$240.00 per table. Table hosts/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.

\* Individual chair donation is \$30.00.

\* Corporate Tables may be obtained for a minimum donation of \$300.00. The corporate name will be listed in the program with signage on the table as well.

\* We are also looking for persons or corporations to make donations to our raffle/silent auction (i.e. gift certificates; handmade items; gift baskets; etc.)

**Why:** Our Angel of Hope garden is a memorial to a our children, gone but forever remembered, not only by parents and step-parents, but by grand parents, brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces, and dear caring friends. This memorial will be a gathering place for hope and healing. We are bringing the Angel of Hope Memorial Garden to our Tampa Bay community and it will be placed in the new Temple Terrace Park along Hillsborough River. The angel currently stands in 74 cities nation wide with many more proposed sites. The statue is cast in bronze and will have memorial bricks with our loved ones names placed surrounding the angel.

**Contact:** Please consider hosting a table for this wonderful event. If you are interested please mail a check to Angel of Hope, c/o Jackie Loadholtz, 7536 Berna Lane, Land O'Lakes, FL 34637, 813-929-0585 ([jsl621@msn.com](mailto:jsl621@msn.com)) or call Julie Leyde at 813-784-6929 or Gina Casal at 813-495-7539 for more information.

Tickets must be purchased in advance and before April 10<sup>th</sup>.

### 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) 300-6877

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

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

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

**CRISIS CENTER** 211

## Love Gifts

Violeta "Cookie" Fernandez  
In loving memory of her daughter  
**Karen Irene Fernandez**  
03/08/68 - 08/23/88  
*Happy 40th Birthday Karen!*

James and Elaine Rogers  
In loving memory of their son  
**Jason Rogers**  
01/08/1978—3/21/1990

Charles & Teresa L'Homme  
In loving memory of his son  
**Ryan L'Homme**  
4/16 /81 - 3/23/00

Janice Falcon  
In loving memory of her granddaughter  
**Michelle Elizabeth Booker**  
3/25/1987 - 12/1/2004

Ron Ellington  
In loving memory of his son  
**Timothy Ellington**  
03/06/62 - 05/25/91

Teresa Farmer  
In loving memory of her son  
**Ty Kristan Robertson**  
2/4/1979 - 3/29/2003

### 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.

### Chapter Library Books

If you have finished reading a BP/USA Library book, please, please return it to our library. There is no time limit for how long you can have a book, but the longer you borrow a book, the less opportunities other bereaved parents have to read it. We also gladly accept book donations in memory of your child.

Contact Tommy or Barbara Dietrich at (813) 234-4705 or visit the any monthly meeting to return a book, arrange a donation, or inquire about an available title.

### A Special Way To Remember Your Child: 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 color or black and white 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.

The newsletter page will also be posted on our new and improved website for one year on the *Our Children* page!

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

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

### LifePath Hospice Bereavement Program:

GRUPOS DE APOYO NUEVOS COMIENZOS  
PARA ADULTOS- Para Mas informacion, llam al  
813-877-2200, Ext. 10671



## 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  
Ouелlette  
B-Russ, David, Scott & Joe  
S-Denise Volo  
Son-Bobby

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

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

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

Combs, Phillip "PJ"  
3/24/1986-6/12/2004  
P-Lisa Pyche & Phil Combs  
Sr.  
B-Travis Combs  
GP-Thomas & Sharon Pyche  
and Katherine Combs

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Howard, Joseph  
3/14/1985-10/5/2002  
M-Krista Howard

Kranendonk, Thomas James  
3/25/1991-7/6/2007  
P-James & Mary Jane  
Kranendonk  
B-John and Robert

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

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

Lawrence, Charles E.  
03/23/1965 - 06/22/2001  
P-Dave and Terry Lawrence  
S-Carolyn & Cindy  
S-Ashley, Christina &  
Stephanie  
W-Nicky

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

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

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

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

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

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

Simpson, Tianca  
3/15/1987-4/18/2000  
M-Monica Simpson

Stanley, Gregory  
3/2/1982-10/6/2004  
M-Darlene Stanley

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

Wilson, Joe  
3/24/1986-1/12/2005  
P-Paul and Jan Wilson

### Our Apologies

*The following name was omitted from past Birthday and Anniversary lists:*

**Anthony "Tony" Blazowich**  
2/20/1984 to 4/5/2006  
Parents - Daniel, Sr. and Marianne  
Blazowich  
Siblings - Jennifer and Daniel Jr.

### March Anniversaries

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

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

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

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

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

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

Frederick, Mark Anthony  
12/4/1974-3/9/2006  
M-Becky Frederick  
S-Mark Hunter Frederick

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

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

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

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

Howton, Kyle M.  
? - 3/7/2003  
P-Darrell and Drew Hoton

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

Lane, Matthew  
3/8/1978-10/10/2005  
M-Joylin Lane

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

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

Mendoza, Jennifer  
9/26/1986 - 3/3/2005  
F-Joey Mendoza

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sluder, Kathryn Elizabeth  
8/31/1966 - 3/17/2002  
P-Tom & Judy Sluder  
Son-Isreal  
S-Theresa  
B-Tom, III & Keith

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

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



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

**December 5, 2007, BP/USA Tampa Bay Chapter Candlelight Ceremony.  
Sandy Boehning was one of our speaker presenters this year and this is her story  
as a Bereaved Grandmother! *Wonderful job Sandy and thank you for sharing!***



Walk with me across the street to Women's Hospital. As the elevator doors open to the second floor, we are met by a wall of tiny pink and blue feet bearing the names of babies born there. Five of those little feet represent my grandchildren, four pink and one blue. You see, I have five precious grandchildren, four I can hold in my arms, one only in my heart.

I was there with my son-in-law at that wonderful moment as the doctor placed their first-born child Caylee into my daughter's arms. I was here in this very hospital (St. Joseph's) as doctors placed this same child into her mother's arms, as Caylee's earthly life ebbed away. It was the worst moment in my life. But I was blessed to have four years of precious moments in between. Each school day I would pick up my granddaughters, Caylee and Riley.. The two little girls had a ritual. Riley would come only as far as the head of the walk and sit down, testing me. Caylee, even though petite, had a booming voice. As soon as she turned the bend to start up the walk, she would yell "GRANDMA" at the top of her voice. All the parents and grandparents waiting for the little ones would laugh, but what a joy it was to have someone so glad to see me.

Riley and Caylee would spend the rest of the day with me. Sometimes, we would go to a park, sometimes out to lunch, sometimes home to watch Lion King or Shrek. Later, when my granddaughter Morgan joined them, the girls would dress up and parade up and down the hallway with makeshift instruments as I hummed a John Phillips Sousa march. What a grand time we had and what wonderful memories.

Caylee was seldom sick. There was no indication of the disease, Acute Myeloid Leukemia, that would rob us of her dear life. She was ill only five days. Caylee's website, [www.cayleeshope.com](http://www.cayleeshope.com), tells the story of those five days and the toxins believed to have caused her illness. She was sweetly spoiled, loved every living thing, and adored the Disney princesses. Her particular favorite was Aurora, Sleeping Beauty. The wall in her room bears the words, "Once Upon a Dream," and those words seem so appropriate.

There are no words to truly tell of the heartbreak of losing a grandchild. We grandparents call this journey, double grief. We were in love with this precious child from the moment we knew our son or daughter would be a mom or dad.. The double grief is from the loss of this precious child and from the shattered dreams of our own child. We read the great pain on our child's face and know this is a time we can never make better. Our son or daughter is forever changed. We listen to our children, we cry with them, but we feel helpless.

Then too, we grandparents worry about our other grandchildren. Are we showing them they are as important as the one we no longer hold? It is very difficult to continue to do things with these dear ones when our hearts are broken, and a member of our team is missing, but they also need to know their grandparents love them.

Nina Bennett, has written a book, *Forgotten Tears*, in response to her own grief at the loss of her precious granddaughter Maddy. I recommend this book for any grandparents here. All proceeds from this book go to AGAST, An Alliance of Grandparents; a Support in Tragedy. Some will ask how our children are doing, but few ask how we are, and a grandparent's grief is sometimes forgotten.

I was asked to share where my strength and courage come from. The truth is I am not strong nor courageous. I am simply propelled along by the great courage of incredible people - all of you here tonight who come to honor our children, my dear priest and his wife, who lost their four year old daughter and yet maintain such great faith, my dear friend Martha who never even saw her son Douglas who lived only nine hours, yet her kindness to others is unmatched, the wonderful grandparents across the world who talk with me through AGAST, all the members of the Angel of Hope Committee who dedicate so much so our children will be forever remembered. Most of all, any courage I have comes from my daughter, Caylee's mother. In her precious child's memory, Dawn has been able to get other children to treatment. I know Caylee is so proud of her mommy..

Oh there are things I cannot do? I cannot walk on the walk where Caylee used to yell "Grandma." I cannot take my grandchildren to the Pizza Hut across from Busch Gardens where Caylee would always direct my attention to the "roller poster." I cannot sing the "Butterfly Song," but God has a funny way of forcing me to do things I don't think I can.

When I was asked to substitute for the kindergarten class, the class that would be Caylee's, I just knew I could not be with those children, so instead I agreed to sub for the Spanish class. Wouldn't you know the very first class to come in was Caylee's class. They remembered me as her grandma, and those dear little ones talked with me so naturally about my sweetheart.

On Caylee's website, Dawn has this. "Death is a comma, not a period." So until I reach the comma in my life, my precious Caylee, I can hold you only in my heart, but I will never let the world forget I have five grandchildren, and I love each one of you.

Sandy Boehning

**Please note - Our new and improved website is now .com (and not .org )**

**[www.bpusatampabay.com](http://www.bpusatampabay.com)**

## So You Think You're Losing Your Mind Because You Need To Go To The Cemetery Every Day

There may be members of your family, some friends or neighbors who will imply that going to the cemetery every day is morbid and perpetuates your grief. Don't you believe them. What they don't understand is that we cry and think of our child whether we go to the cemetery or not. It comforts some to go every day; some only feel a need to go now and then; and still others never return to the cemetery after the funeral.

How often you go has nothing to do with the intensity of your grief, it is just another example of how differently we all react. You know how you feel, and that is what is really important. As you hesitate to make changes in your routine without guilt. Do what you need to do and don't worry how it may appear to someone else.

*Author Unknown*

## Rainbow Bridge



Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge.

When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable.

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor; those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by. The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing; they each miss someone very special to them, who had to be left behind.

They all run and play together, but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks into the distance. His bright eyes are intent; His eager body quivers. Suddenly he begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass, his legs carrying him faster and faster.

You have been spotted, and when you and your special friend finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your pet, so long gone from your life but never absent from your heart.

Then you cross Rainbow Bridge together....

*Author unknown...*

## Life Was Perfect

By Judith Friedman  
Pompano Beach, Florida

In the days when life was fine  
And the sun shone bright,  
We laughed and planned and dreamed.  
We danced in the warmth of love.

We believed that life was perfect.

Our children learned to walk and talk,  
We nursed them through childhood illnesses,  
And worried when they learned to drive.  
We grew together, nurtured with love.

We believed that life was perfect.

Then, our eldest daughter became ill.  
We didn't realize what the diagnosis  
Would come to mean.  
Nothing very bad could happen to us.

We believed that life was perfect.

Sometimes, love and hope and medicine  
Do not make an illness disappear.  
Sometimes, the unimaginable happens,  
And we are left wondering what happened to,

The life that was perfect.

The loss of a child of any age  
Is devastating to the entire family.  
We were unable to help our child.  
We look back and remember when,

We believed that life was perfect.

## Available ... Picture Buttons

Families wishing to have a picture button of their child made can do so at the next BP sharing meeting. Price for each button is \$3.00 and will be made during the meeting and you will take it home with you. Buttons are round and measure approximately 2 1/4 inches in diameter.

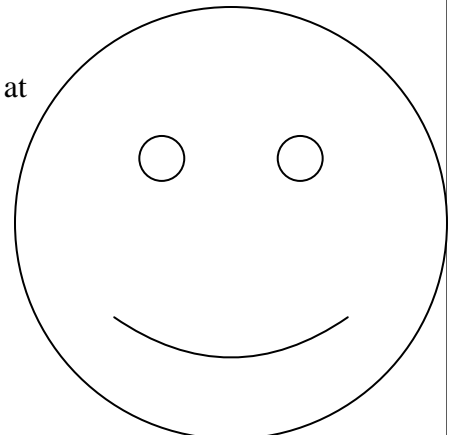
If you are interested in having a button made, be sure to bring a 3" to 4" picture that will be on the button.

**Note: Your picture will become the button!**

You can even have a copy of your child's footprint and/or handprint made into a button.

Note: Use Mr. Smiley Face to measure your desired picture!

*What a wonderful way to start a conversation about your child with someone when they ask about the picture button you are wearing! We never want our children forgotten!*





GOD sent an Angel to us - her name, Caylee Marie Cepero. For our family, pure LOVE. For others, pure HOPE. So, this 3rd Anniversary of her new life in Heaven, we honor her for the legacy she has left here and the many hearts of those unknown to her that she has touched.

Caylee Marie Cepero  
9/3/00-3/8/05

“Death is not a Period, Only a Comma.”

[cayleesheart.org](http://cayleesheart.org)

[cayleecepero.memory-of.com](http://cayleecepero.memory-of.com)

[cayleeshope.com](http://cayleeshope.com)

Feeling an emptiness that you can't explain? That horrific hole in your heart that causes your stomach to sink and you need to take a deep breath. This is our life without Caylee! Feeling an inexplicable shudder of longing that, as hard as you try you just can't describe to anyone. You won't get a hug. You won't hear I love you. Not from her.



What a great big sister and creative child she was. How sensitive and caring she was towards other people and animals. How cute she was with her big smile, enormous eyes that made you feel she was looking through your soul and a personality that would make your heart melt. What an extremist she was in everything she did and said. What an incredible degree of potential this amazing child had to offer our world with that amazing imagination of hers...that got cut short WAY TOO SOON.

Time does help, but it does not heal, how could time replace HER. For those of us who have lost a child, a Caylee, does time really heal all wounds? Personally, my heart remains as broken as it was at 8:13pm when she passed over on March 8, 2005. The same moment that a part of me died.

Finally, how could anyone not smile at her life and be sad at her loss. She is my child, my first breath, my pain is deeper than anyone will ever know - because she was mine. I will be with her again, but for now. This is my life without Caylee and I find joy in the lives my child has touched. So, in honor of her legacy and life, I have decided to pay tribute through the quotes of a handful of the thousands who have come to know her.

I created this site to let everyone know about a little girl who inspired me to do this. Caylee died after fighting a short battle with Leukemia.

Lorena  
<http://newwebs.com/oving-caylee/home.shtml>

I often visit Caylee on her Memory-of site. Caylee is dancing and singing in Heaven, showing the Angels how to party!

Jody - Shrewsbury, UK

Our goal for Caylee's birthday is to have 1,000 butterflies posted for Caylee with a hope that someday we can find a cure for cancer

Felicia  
[www.myspace.com/keeperstobyalive](http://www.myspace.com/keeperstobyalive)

She moved more people in her short life and tragic death than most do in an entire lifetime. I am so proud of my child and the lives she has touched while she was alive on this earth and in her new life. For those who knew her beauty, grace, passion and spunk, they will never forget her; for those who have recently come to know her, they will never be the same.

A beautiful girl! She has touched the heart of so many.

Emma - Leeds, England

I can't wait until my kids walk through the door from school today, so I can kiss them in memory of Caylee. I will be walking in honor of Caylee and my father who died from CLL.

Jedi - Safety Harbor, FL

I found Caylee's site and am using it to teach new nurses the importance of a CBC, so we can make the difference in a family's life.

Melissa - Pymouth, OH

Til' we are together again, your handprint is on our hearts! - Your Family

*In Loving Memory of*  
**Brian Harold Collum**

*May 11, 1965 to March 7, 2005*

My Son Brian:

March 7th three years ago the **unthinkable** occurred  
When you left to be with Jesus.  
The knowledge of you being in Heaven should make  
me rejoice;  
But I still miss you so much and I wish I could hear  
your voice.  
There's hardly an hour that goes by  
That I don't think of you and I try not to cry.

I always felt so sad when a child passed before a  
mother;  
Never dreamed how intense the pain could be,  
As though you might surely smother.  
I miss you so much—days run into each other.  
I look forward to seeing you again—and that goes for Reid, your brother.

It's easier said than done learning to exist without you in my life,  
And when I think how you suffered,  
I feel pain as though I've been stabbed by a knife.

I read in a "Bereaved Parents" bulletin  
That parents whose children have passed,  
Are the "Walking Wounded",  
As we try daily to co-exist.

This statement is close to how I feel —  
I described it as being half alive,  
As you struggle each day just to  
Cope and survive.

I pray Jesus will ease this grief,  
As He puts His nail-scarred hand on me.  
And that I will live in peace  
Until I see you in Eternity.

**YOUR BROTHER, REID, AND I LOVE AND MISS YOU, BRIAN  
A TREMENDOUS LOSS!**

Written by Diana Reams for her son, Brian Collum



*Michelle "Shelby" Booker*

March 25, 1987 - December 1, 2004

*Happy 21<sup>st</sup> Birthday Michelle*

*Michelle would have turned 21 this month and we can only wonder where she would be today if she was still here. She still lives in our hearts and remains forever in our thoughts.*

*We all loved her from the moment we saw her. She was the oldest of three children and had two younger brothers. She was scheduled to graduate from Plant City High School in May 2005 and completed all of her requirements early. After graduation, she had planned to go to nursing school and become a nurse.*

*Her beautiful smile would always light up a room from the time she was an infant. She developed a love of music and dancing at an early age that she never lost. Hip-hop music was her favorite when she was older, but she would secretly put in the country CD in the car and sing her loudest. She loved clothes, jewelry, and shopping. Shoes were one of her favorite things and she never had enough shoes.*

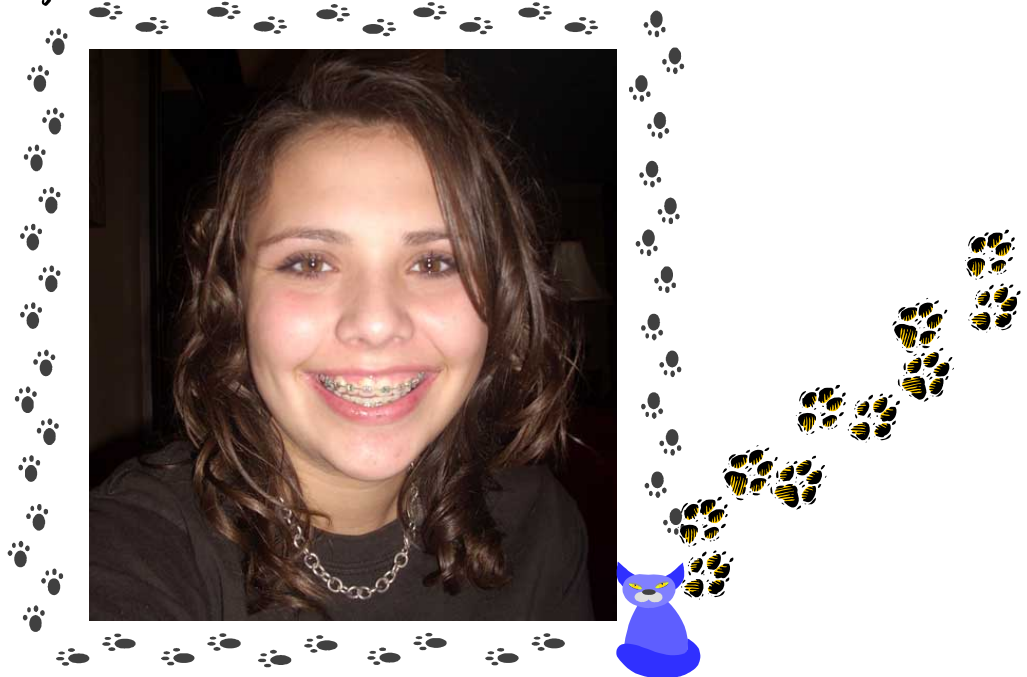
*She loved her family and her friends and in return was loved by all of them. She loved to sing and laugh. As one of her aunt's said, "Michelle had a song in her heart and laughter in her soul." If you add love, you have a great description of Michelle. Her family and friends called her by Michelle, Shelby, or Shell. She is our angel in Heaven who watches over us.*

*Michelle's Family*



*In Loving Memory of  
Anna Elise Lowe*

*January 30, 1994 to September 30, 2007*



My 13 year old daughter Anna Elise Lowe died in an ATV accident on September 30, 2007 in Elk Valley, Tennessee.

She spent every Summer there working with local churches and Christian youth camps as a teacher or counselor. She had decided to stay with her grandparents and to go to school there until the end of October while I recovered from major back surgery.

She got such a laugh out of going to my old school and having some of my old teachers. One of them remarked, "She was Beth plus."

Anna was looking forward to coming home to Tampa, but loved it there and kept busy with her Nana in raising money for a local Boys and Girls Club - she saw a great need for the children there.

Anna touched so many lives in the short time she was there. Over 800 people in this rural mountain community (mostly children of all ages) turned out to pay their respects to our beloved Anna.

We are more than ever dedicated to making Anna's dream for the kids there a reality.

With this web site ([www.annasmile.org](http://www.annasmile.org)) we have set up a memorial fund to my Anna so people can see the pictures that they drew for Anna and some of their beautiful writings. Few things bring us comfort now as we adjust to life without Anna, but knowing that she was a kind, loving and generous soul. And as Anna's teachers said, "Anna knew no social or economic boundaries - she was kind to everyone." That statement makes us so proud of her.

Maybe if we all strive to be a little more like Anna, we would all live in a better world.

Thank you,

Beth, William, and Katie Lowe  
Grandparents Bill and Ann Lowe



**PLAN NOW TO ATTEND:**

[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org) **OR** [www.2008gathering@bereavedparentsusa.org](mailto:www.2008gathering@bereavedparentsusa.org)  
618-244-1203 or 304-645-3048

It's time to make plans to attend the BP/USA National Gathering, *Seeds of Hope* on July 11-13, 2008 at the Airport Crown Plaza, St. Louis, Missouri. While each National Gathering may have a different theme, each gathering offers a safe environment where we can share our feelings and concerns and have an opportunity to learn ways of coping from people who truly do understand our pain. This year's National Gathering is hosted by the Southern Illinois Chapter, Mt. Vernon, IL, with assistance from the Lewisburg West Virginia Chapter. The co-chairs for this event are Gene and Martha Honn from the Southern Illinois Chapter and Jack and Betty Ewart from the West Virginia Chapter.

If you have never attended a National Gathering, I encourage you to make *Seeds of Hope* your first one. After attending my first National Gathering in Dallas, Texas in 2001, I was "hooked." While I had support from family and friends, the National Gathering gave me the opportunity to spend an entire week-end with other bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents who were actively searching for tools to help them through this unwanted journey of grief. When you are newly bereaved, you are like a little seed thrown into a deep, dark place. You need nurturing and encouragement to begin to come up out of that place and who better to offer it than those who have walked that walk. By meeting others who have walked this walk, you see that they have somehow found the courage to reinvest in life. Those who are a little further down the road in their grief have acquired tools to help deal with the pain. By sharing coping tools each of us has acquired over the years, you will have the opportunity to help the newly bereaved come up out of that deep, dark place. *Seeds of Hope* will not only offer suggestions about how to handle your grief but the opportunity to meet and start friendships with other bereaved parents, siblings, grandparents and others from all over the United States. I'll look forward to seeing you at the 2008 National Gathering.

**REGISTRATION**

The Gathering will be from Friday July 11 to Sunday July 13, 2008. Plan to arrive on Thursday, July 10. There will be a get together program on Thursday evening. The opening ceremony begins at 9am on Friday, July 11. The Gathering ends Sunday morning with a special closing program. Registration for the Gathering shall be \$25 for each person with a maximum of \$75 for a family if postmarked by May 15, 2008. After May 15, the registration will be \$35 per person or \$85 per family. **SO GET YOUR RESERVATIONS IN EARLY.** Registrations at the Gathering may be by cash, check or, new this year, credit card. The Registration Form is included with these materials.

**HOTEL**

The Crowne Plaza Hotel - St. Louis Airport, 11228 Lone Eagle Dr., St. Louis, MO 63044, 314-291-6700 – Ask for In House Reservations, Tell them that you will be with BP/USA

The Crowne Plaza Hotel features an eight-story atrium with a waterfall as its focal point; its wide-open airy design lets light flood into the Gathering workshop areas. The Hotel has been very generous to discount the room rate to \$75 per night plus tax. **Remember that it is your responsibility to make your own reservations by calling the number listed above.** The hotel provides doubles, kings, non-smoking and handicap rooms. To reduce the rate further, up to four persons may share the room and the cost. Reservations must be made directly through the hotel. When making your reservations, ask for In House Reservations and inform them that you are attending the BP/USA Gathering so that you will receive the special discounted rate. **RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY JUNE 15, 2008** in order to take advantage of the discounted room rate. Rooms are available, at the same cost, for 3 days before and 3 days after the Gathering. **So get those reservations in early!**

**MEALS**

The Hotel is noted for their excellent cuisine! Meal times have been planned so that we all eat together. During the meals there will be programs dedicated to our children so please plan to join us. After meals, we will remain in the Grand Ballroom for presentations and speakers. The cost for meals Friday thru Sunday is \$118.00 all inclusive (meals/gratuity). It will also be possible to purchase separate meals. After the scheduled meals have been served, those without meal tickets will be admitted to the room in order to hear the program. To save money for everyone, we have not scheduled breakfast on Fri. and Sat. If you plan to eat in the hotel restaurant, plan to be there early in order to eat and get to the Speakers on time each morning. There is limited seating in the restaurant. See the attached registration form to purchase meals. Note that, by purchasing the package, you save \$9 over individual prices.

**SHUTTLE SERVICE TO AND FROM THE AIRPORT**

The Crowne Plaza Hotel offers free transportation from the St. Louis Lambert Airport to the hotel and back. The shuttle runs every half hour or you may use the convenient direct phone line to call for the shuttle. The hotel is just minutes from the airport.

**SPEAKERS**

We are pleased to have some outstanding speakers this year. Ron Greer, author of "Markings on the Window Sill-A Book About Grief that is Really a Book about Hope", will be the Keynote Speaker. Joy Johnson from Centering Corporation will present a unique and helpful speech based on the book "Lucy Lettuce". Stephanie Frogge from TAPS will speak about the effects of grief, especially on armed service related losses. Mitch Carmody will speak about the effects the death of a child has on the extended family. Norma Sawyers-Kurz's will speak about coping with grief and rebuilding life after the loss of a child. Alan Pedersen will be with us again presenting his great music. Video/DVDs will be made of the meal speakers and an order form will be available at the Gathering to purchase these. Books and recordings of speakers and workshop presenters will be available in the Book Store.

**WORKSHOPS/SHARING SESSIONS**

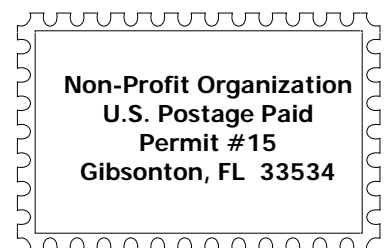
There will be many workshops, sharing sessions and programs designed to specifically address the needs of all attendees. Workshops are structured sessions with presenters that impart information and experience about the topic. *Workshops are held during the day. Sharing sessions are informal meetings with a facilitator for sharing experiences and are held in the evening.* There will be workshop sessions designed for parents, grandparents, and siblings. We have invited several authors and our speakers to present workshops/sharing sessions. Presenters are bereaved parents, grandparents or siblings. All persons volunteer their time to share their experiences.

**QUESTIONS**

If you have any questions, please contact Martha Honn at 618-244-1203 or Betty Ewart at 304-645-3048. You may also contact either of them by e-mail at [2008gathering@bereavedparentsusa.org](mailto:2008gathering@bereavedparentsusa.org). Please see the BP/USA national website for registration



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

**March 2008**

POSTMASTER - Dated Material

Please do not delay.



Please note - Our new and improved website is now .com (and not .org )

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