



Tampa Bay Chapter

P.O. Box 3226
Tampa, Florida
33601-3226
www.bpusatampabay.com

May 2008

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

*Steven Scott Holdren, Jr.
Mark Thomas Morrow
Taylor K. Pike*

MEETING INFORMATION

Regular Monthly SUNDAY Meeting

(held the second Sunday of the month)

Sunday, May 11, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

St. Joseph's Hospital

Medical Arts Building, Auditorium

3001 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

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

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, May 9, 10:00 a.m. to Noon

The Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce

330 Pauls Drive, Brandon, Florida 33511

Please call Linda Delk at 813-661-0680 for directions or information.

Regular Monthly 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, May 22, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

South Florida Baptist Hospital

301 N. Alexander Street, Plant City

in the Community Conference Room

Call Sue Bowditch at 813-661-9334

for directions or information.

Upcoming Events:

Angel of Hope monthly meeting

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

Next meeting 7:00 pm May 5 and June 2, 2008

Perkins on Bears Avenue, just west of I-275

The National Military Survivor Seminar

Presented by T.A.P.S. and held at the Double Tree Hotel in Crystal City, Virginia, May 23-May 26 ending with the Memorial day Ceremonies in Arlington National Cemetery. This is an excellent meeting for the loved ones of service personnel killed in the military. There are workshops for those who attend, and for professionals and a Good Grief Camp for Youth. For information, contact T.A.P.S. at 800-959-8277 or at info@taps.org.

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| | | MAY | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

A Mother is Forever

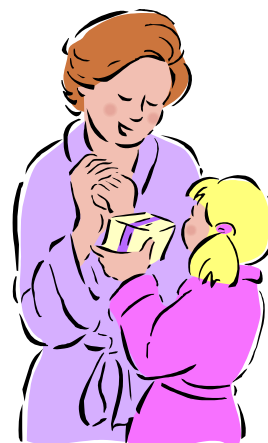
~ By Shirley Ottman

BP/USA North Texas Chapter

From her book, *The Slender Thread*

*This Mother's Day will trouble you -
It can't be otherwise
Since your son and daughter, too,
Won't be there by your side.
They won't be there to bake a cake
Or bring you cards and flowers,
Nor can they walk into your home
To brighten lonely hours.
The memories you have of them
I know will make you smile,
And you'll remember all the joys
that made your lives worthwhile.
And so on Mother's Day this year
And in every other,
Remember they're connected still
By love to you, their mother.*

A special gift will be given to each Mom and Grandmother at our May meetings in honor of Mother's Day!



Chapter News



ANGEL OF HOPE UPDATE

Please check out our NEW improved website at 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 May 5 and June 2, 2008 at Perkins on Bearss Avenue (at I-275)!

4TH ANNUAL SPRING TEA!

We had a record attendance with a fabulous raffle and silent auction. Many guests went home with wonderful prizes!!

Our thanks go out to all of our tea hosts and hostesses, crystal tea sponsor and corporate linen sponsors. Alan Pedersen did a wonderful job of entertaining us and Belk Department store provided a wonderful fashion show!

Our 5th Annual Spring Tea will be held the last Saturday in April on the 25th, 2009. Mark your calendars for a wonderful event!

Angel of Hope Pins

We have available our specially designed *Angel of Hope* pins. You have a choice of a pair of angels with boy and girl with a heart and butterfly and the words **Hope**, or a lapel pin with angel wings, a heart, a butterfly and the word **Hope**.

Size of boy and girl pin - Wing span to wing span is 2 inches, top to bottom about 1 1/4 inches.

\$20.00



Size of angel wing lapel pin – Wing span to wing span is 1 1/4 inches, top to bottom about 3/4 inches.

\$10.00



Please call Julie Leyde to order at 813-784-6929!!

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

BP/USA National Organization

Our chapter is part of the nationwide Bereaved Parents of the USA (BP/USA) organization. Take a few minutes to browse the national website at www.bereavedparentsusa.org.

The BP/USA National Organization publishes a quarterly newsletter. It includes writings and poetry by bereaved parents, book reviews, information on bereavement conferences and other items. To be added to the mailing list, contact: Betty Ewart at 326 Longview Avenue, Lewisburg, WV 24901 or email you address to her at newsletter@bereavedparetnsusa.org.

Chapter Outreach—New Members

New members to the chapter find us through various contacts with other bereaved parents, clergy, hospital, social service organizations, etc. If you know someone who has experienced the death of a child, please contact Linda Delk at 813-661-0680.

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.

Electronic Newsletter

The Newsletter is available electronically. To receive it by Email, send your name and email address to: bee.hurley@gte.net and indicate your desire to switch from regular "snail" mail to email. Email recipients will also receive additional news and information, while helping our chapter save costs. We very much appreciate your cooperation by helping us out this way!

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). Please note that sponsorship pages are **due by the 15th of the month BEFORE the publication month.**

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

May Birthdays

Boyd, Anastasia "Nicole"
5/4/1998 - 7/8/2004
P-Anita Dennert & Thomas Boyd
Sibs-Tara Lewis, Mike Boyd, Alan Boyd
GP-Huey & Marie McDonald, Angus &
Jewell Howell & Angus Grace
GP-(Preceded in Death)Arthur & Vivian
Boyd

Bracewell, Madisyn Nevaeh
5/8/2002 - 5/8/2002
P-Jessica & Joshua Bracewell
GP-Mark & Pamela Leonhard

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

Delp, Jeff
5/15/1972 - 5/30/2001
M - Karen Kornman

Holton, John William
05/20/52 - 08/10/94
M - Ann Holton

Keithly, DeAnne
5/24/1976 - 5/12/1993
P-John & Peggy Keithly
S-Dawn & Karen
B-Dustin & Kevin
GP-Clark & Frances Keithly and Alice
Pugh

Makowski, Anthony
5/20/1983 - 4/24/2005
M-Cathy Makowski

Metallo, Armando
5/3/1984 - 9/15/2005
P-Angelo & Luisa Metallo
S-Ana, Angelo, Luisa, & Joe Metallo
GP-Armando & Ana Metallo and
Graciela & Dorothea Martinez

Morrow, Mark
5/19/1978 - 12/7/2005
P-John & John Morrow

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

Rademacher, Rhonda Marie
5/19/1977 - 1/26/1999
P - Doris & John Rademacher
B - Ronald & Jeremy Rademacher
S - Cherry & Carrie Rademacher

Roberts, J. Michael
5/31/1963 - 9/25/2002
M-Ann Roberts Mitchel
GP Merle H. Brunson

Robinson, Ashley Lauren
05/20/94 - 01/16/96
P - Sara & Tim Robinson
S - Morgan Ashley Robinson

Shye, John David
05/27/1964 - 08/07/1994
P - Betty Jean & Charles Shye
S - Lydia and Mary Shye
B - Chuck Shye
Father of J.D. and Justin Shye

Smith, Cameron Troy
5/24/1983 - 6/4/1999
M-Martha Honn
B-Aaron Smith
S-Jasolyn Evans

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

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

Turner, Devon
5/2/1986 - 7/28/2005
M-Marie Lawson

Waller, Albert Marcus
5/2/1994 - 6/16/2000
P - Marc & Charlotte Waller

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

Williams, Alec Michael
5/17/1996 - 7/27/1996
P - Kathy & Michael Williams
B - Chad & Chase
G - Frank & Robbie Edwards
G - Dwight & Melvalene Williams

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 at our next meeting!

May Anniversaries

Bracewell, Madisyn Nevaeh
5/8/2002 - 5/8/2002
P-Jessica & Joshua Bracewell
GP-Mark & Pamela Leonhard

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

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

Carpenter, Ben
10/3/1965-5/10/1995
P-Carl & Marilyn Carpenter

Colla, Aaron Dante
11/15/01 - 05/24/02
P-Amanda Colla
GP-Jana & Frank Colla
A-Danielle
B-Dylan

Delp, Jeff
5/15/1972 - 5/30/2001
M - Karen Kornman

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

Finchum, Tommy
07/10/75 - 05/06/94
P - Pete & Joyce Finchum
B - John Finchum

Goldman, Ariel Nicole Rothschild
8/30/1989 - 5/15/2001
P - Steve and Lynn Goldman

Harless, Jessica Nicole
11/15/1988 - 5/10/2000
M - Heather Harless

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

Holdren, Steven Scott Jr.
4/10/1986-5/31/2007
P-Bill & Donna Henry and Steven
Holdren Sr.
GP-Joseph & Catherine Washington,
George & Mary Jo Holdren

Hughes, Jessica Alexis
1/13/86 - 5/11/02
F - Michael Hughes

Keithly, DeAnne
5/24/1976 - 5/12/1993
P-John & Peggy Keithly
S-Dawn & Karen
B-Dustin & Kevin
GP-Clark & Frances Keithly and Alice
Pugh

Knight, Arleen Diane
10/16/1947 - 5/4/2004
P-Arthur & Ethel Fernandez
S-Elaine Rogers
Daughters-Trina Fuller, Amy Diaz,
Katie Tuclula

O'Brian, Toby Lee
8/10/1966-5/16/2006
M-Bonnie O'Brien

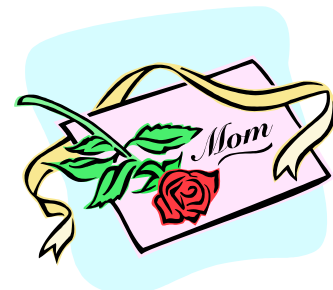
Pike, Taylor K.
11/9/1985-May 14, 2007
P-Bob and Connie Pike
S-Megan Pike

Shelton, Emma Victoria
7/8/2003 - 5/8/2005
M-John & Jennifer Shelton
Sibs-Jacob & Hannah
GP-Peg & Jim Bishop, Tom Musolin,
Art & Sam White, Robert & Judy

Sluder, Keith
4/25/1964 - 5/11/2006
Children-Keith II and Miranda
P-Tom & Judy Sluder
Grandaughters-Kalie & Ella Mae
S-Theresa & Kathryn
B-Tom, III
N/N-Israel, Brando & Brandy

Stoeltzing, William (Bill) W.
01/02/57 - 05/09/02
P - Bill & Elvira Stoeltzing
S - Cecille Parido
Father to Eaton & Brent

Thompson, Scott
2/18/1985-5/12/2006
M-Martha Thompson



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.

Memorial Day Monday, May 26th



They Don't Wear Purple Hearts in Heaven

I lost my brother to a foreign land;
I was too young to even understand
There was a knock at the front door,
Then Momma wasn't smiling anymore.
The man at the door was a Marine;
The first I've ever seen.
Momma told me to go out and play,
Then the preacher came and they started to pray.
Tears ran down Momma's eyes, and
I heard her say, "Why, Lord, Why?"
Father stood there seemingly mindless, all he said was,
"We've lost another of America's finest."
The Marine handed Momma a small velvet case,
Inside was a Purple Ribbon, attached to
a gold heart with Washington's face.
I asked Momma if it were mine,
But she said "It's your brother's, Sunshine."
"Momma can we send it to Kevin?"
She answered, "They don't wear Purple Hearts in Heaven."

Author unknown

If you could only imagine ...

You say it's time for me to "move on" in my grief. Perhaps you're right or perhaps you just don't realize what you're asking. So, why don't you try this little exercise and maybe it will help you get a better perspective on what I am going through.

To make this really hit home for you it should be practiced for at least 24 hours – the longer the better. Don't blow this off as a stupid idea. It works along the same lines as blindfolding yourself to experience being without sight.

First of all, think about your first-born child. Now imagine that that child is gone. Whatever age or stage of development, whether he or she lives with you or not, just imagine you won't ever see that child on earth again. Call all your family and friends and tell them your child died. Next, go to a funeral home and discuss caskets, markers, burial plots, etc. Pick out a favorite outfit for your child to be buried in. Sit down and write out the obituary for the newspaper. Get in the floor or closet and cry until there are no more tears. Then repeat until you think you're losing your mind. If you made it through that part you are ready for the next step.

During all of this remember, the world hasn't stopped. If you have a job, you will have to return to it. The power company and everyone else still wants their payment each month. You may have doctors bills, ambulance bills, attorney fees if an accident was involved. If your child died at the hands of another there will be a trial and publicity.

If you were blessed to have other children, you will have to deal with their grief as well as your own. They will still have homework, tests, reports, projects and the class bully.

Next comes the "firsts". Birthday, anniversary of death, Christmas, etc. When everyone is singing tra-la-la and jingle bells, you won't be. Your heart will be too heavy. The hurt will be so intense you will marvel if you can get out of bed each morning.

GUILT IF ONLY ... IF ONLY... IF ONLY

By Joy and Marv Johnson
from a booklet CHILDREN DIE

You may hear yourself using those words. Most parents whose child had died have periods when they feel guilty. A part of the guilt is wanting to undo what has been done ... to stop time ... to re-do a day or a minute that might make a difference.

Our culture teaches people to be hard on themselves and blame themselves when anything goes wrong. We tend, then, to feel responsible when children die, too. "If only I had kept him in longer ... If only I had been there ... If only I had known ...If only ... If only."

We are people who want answers. It goes against all our beliefs, hopes and dreams when children die. You will search and look for answers to questions, which sometimes have no answers.

Feeling guilty is one way of getting some kind of meaning into a situation which makes no sense or trying to answer the unanswerable WHY questions.

When you feel guilty, recognize it for what it is ... a sense of guilt and a searching for an answer. If you could have prevented your child's death, you would have. You and your family are not to blame.

Editors Note:

Joy and Marv are authors of several books about grief and the owners of Centering Corporation, our book store for the Gathering. They will have over 200 books available about many aspects of the grieving process. They will also have Bailey, a Bernese Therapy Dog with them. Therapy dogs are a vital part of many homes, nursing homes and hospitals today and you will see why when you meet Bailey.

Every morning when you take your other children to school you'll be reminded that you AREN'T taking one too. You'll see their friends going on with their lives and it will cut you to the quick. When they all graduate from kindergarten, middle school, etc., your child won't. When you start getting wedding invitations in the mail for these other children, you'll be reminded again of your loss.

Don't forget to that when you go shopping you'll see things that you wanted to buy for your deceased child. You'll see places the two of you USED to go.

At home when you prepare a favorite meal of the child who is gone, it won't taste the same to you. The pictures, cards they made for you or sent you, toys and other possessions of your baby will be both harmful and helpful. They are a link to the past, a way to remember more about what you've lost and at the same time they are a link to the past and a way to remember more about what you've lost. Funny, huh? That family portrait you were always so proud of? Well, it will take on a whole new meaning now.

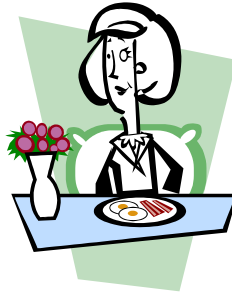
Didn't mean to ask too much of you. Believe it or not I could write dozens of other things for you to imagine. Fortunately for you, it's only an exercise. I live it every day. IF you have the guts to stick it out - this little experiment - congratulations. I don't think you will be so quick to utter those words now. Not if you really did imagine.

Author Unknown

Making Mother's and (Father's Day) Special

By Elaine E. Stillwell
Rockville Centre, New York

- ◆ Here are a few hints to help you through these days after the loss of a child.
- ◆ Pamper yourself - this is a special day in your life. You are a parent forever and your child is your child forever.
- ◆ Do what you need to do - what helps you. Grieve your way.
- ◆ Be with those who surround you with love, not demands or advice.
- ◆ Plan ahead - do things that make you feel good or give you a moment's peace.
- ◆ Start new rituals to make new memories.
- ◆ Share your thoughts with family members; decide together what the day should include. (If you are alone, find a good friend.)
- ◆ Include deceased children in the day - through prayer, lighting a candle, telling stories about them, looking through pictures, planting flowers or a garden, doing a good deed, writing about them, making their favorite recipe.
- ◆ Join with another bereaved family to honor this day and have mutual support.
- ◆ Start a garden or add to a special garden in memory of your child.
- ◆ Use this day to plant spring flowers so you can always see your child in each bloom and each bouquet that you cut.
- ◆ Visit the cemetery if that helps your heart on this day.
- ◆ Plant a flower or shrub that will come to bloom this time of year.
- ◆ Do something special for someone else or something special in your child's name (helping Cancer Care, MADD, Scouting, a nursing home, etc.)
- ◆ Listen to music that makes your heart feel good.
- ◆ Cool some favorite recipes that your child enjoyed or cooked for you.
- ◆ Buy a present for yourself from your child and enjoy the comfort it brings you.
- ◆ Write a poem or article in memory of your child, sharing memories or whatever has helped you.
- ◆ Attend a family gathering of relatives - their love and support can give you a lift on this day.
- ◆ Make a booklet of favorite poems that help your heart, and give copies to dear relatives and friends in memory of your child.
- ◆ Take part in a special church ceremony honoring Mother's Day and Father's Day.
- ◆ Pray to your child - talking is the best medicine and prayer is simply talking.
- ◆ Set aside some special time to grieve, unloading all the frustration and sadness that can envelop you on such a day, giving you time to meditate alone.
- ◆ Write a letter to your child, telling what's in your heart (perhaps some unfinished business or some new blessing that has enriched your life).
- ◆ Allow the tears to flow - crying is healing and allows a release for your feelings.
- ◆ Think of a way to "share your child with the world" - making sure his or her memory lives on through scholarships, writing, good deeds.
- ◆ Give and get plenty of hugs.



HOW TO HANDLE MOTHER'S DAY

By Clara Hinton
www.silentgrief.com

Special days of any kind can be especially difficult for anyone who has lost a child. The first year following the loss of a child is often filled with days of dread and fear when anniversary dates and holidays approach. Mother's Day is a holiday that is one of the most dreaded holidays of all. A mother grieving the loss of her precious child often spends weeks in fearful waiting of the day, wondering how she will ever make it through.

There is no real way of avoiding Mother's Day. The stores are filled with gifts made and designed especially for mothers and children. Advertisements for gifts on the radio and in the newspaper bombard us every day for weeks prior to Mother's Day. Card and flower shops experience their busiest season of the year on Mother's Day. Reminders of this special holiday are everywhere!

The pain of facing Mother's Day without a child can be the loneliest pain a mother will ever know. There is an empty ache that becomes increasingly more evident as the day approaches and there seems to be no way to find relief. It is wise to share these feelings with other family members and friends rather than to avoid the topic. By sharing how you feel, you can alert others to be more sensitive to your needs during this painful day of sad reminders. Sit down with your family and discuss what you would like to do for Mother's Day. Remember that this is not a time to worry about hurting other's feelings but, rather, a time to make your wishes known.



Remind yourself often that there is no right or wrong way to handle Mother's Day. Some mothers have found it helpful to go away on a mini weekend trip, totally avoiding any church service, special meals or family gatherings that will be too painful to attend.

Other mothers choose to do something special in memory of their child such as take a walk to a quiet place, read a special poem and then release a balloon in memory of their child. The actual releasing of the balloon is known to give mothers a sense of letting go that is quite healing.

Many choose to use Mother's Day as a special day to plant a flower or tree in memory of their child who has died. Seeing something growing is often a visible reminder of the ongoing love a mother has for her child.

Whatever you choose to do, remember not to set expectations too high for the day. Plan to do something that is healing for you, but realize that you will still experience a wide gamut of emotions and many tears will fall.

Because grief is exhausting mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually be sure to eat nutritious food for the day, hydrate yourself with lots of fluids and allow yourself time to rest and be replenished. Grief work is the hardest work you will ever do.

By planning ahead for Mother's Day, you have already crossed a big hurdle in your walk through child loss. Telling others that this is going to be a difficult day for you is a way of building up a support system that will help you get through the day. Remind yourself often that you will make it through Mother's Day and, when you do, you will be one step farther along in this difficult journey we call grief.



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.

BP/USA 2008 National Gathering

www.bereavedparentsusa.org OR 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.

HOTEL

Important DATE! 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!

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. Please see the BP/USA national website for registration forms.

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

www.bpusatampabay.com

MARK THOMAS MORROW

May 19, 1978 to December 7, 2005

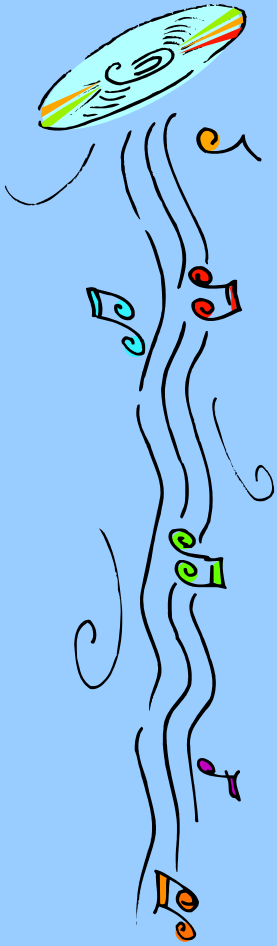
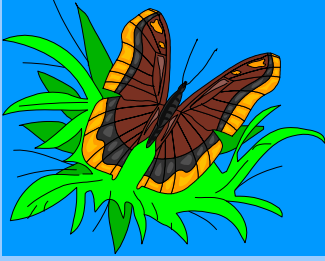


How do we convey
Just how we feel
When we lose someone we love?
How do we explain
The deep, lonely pain
The emptiness left in us?
No words can express
The hurt and anguish
Nor touch on how we feel.
God shares our tears
And gives us His love
And He, in time, will heal.
The hopes and dreams
We had remain
As an incomplete chapter
With nothing more to write,
But we know God's comfort and
Through him we will find the courage to
Accept what we cannot change.

Your Birthday was always a special day for you and for Mom and Dad. We have many fond memories of Parties with your friends at Chucky Cheese and your pool parties. We miss you every second of every minute but your birthday is an especially difficult day. Our only comfort and solace is our absolute faith that some day we will all be reunited in Heaven and spend eternity together, and that will be a glorious day. God has special angels for special purposes and we know you were Gods angel sent to welcome little Dakota Rae Ferguson and will look after her until she is reunited with Patrick and Trish.

WE LOVE YOU MARK

Mom and Dad



Taylor K. Pike November 9, 1985 - May 14, 2007



This first year without you here has broken our hearts. We go on as best we can, riding the waves of grief as they ebb and flow. We thank you for your love and your messages; for reminders that love and spirit live when the body dies. Mom is working on your "Spirit Song" since it won't leave her head!

*"Spirit Song, rising out of freedom.
Spirit Song, forgiving all the wrong.
Spirit Song falling from the heavens.
My soul gift to you, this Spirit Song."*

Our beautiful son, we'll forever keep you close in our hearts.

Mom, Dad, Megan & all your family and friends.

Enjoy your Music Missions!

In Loving Memory Of
Steven Scott Holdren, Jr.
"Scotty"
 April 10, 1986 - May 31, 2007



21 Years in our lives...forever in our hearts

This month it will be one year since you left us, and there are many things we want to say to you. You were a very special child: smart, handsome, curious, and kind. You never let anything keep you from making us laugh. Even when you were young, you didn't hesitate to help others. As you got older, that didn't change; you always put others needs before your own.

After your high school graduation in 2004, you were lucky enough to be able to indulge your love for travel. By getting a job with Uncle Russell, and going all over the world, you had the opportunity to visit places I will never see. I guess God wanted you to be able to have those experiences, and knew that you needed to get it done early.

Billy and I never dreamed of our life without you. We never imagined the kind of pain we'd feel just trying to exist without the huge piece of our lives that was you. We still wait for you to come home from one of your out-of-town trips, but know in our hearts that it won't happen; you won't come in again.

There's no way we can express how much we love and miss every moment and every day with you. We wait for the days to become easier. You gave us so many wonderful memories to keep us going. You were our world, and always will be.

We love you and miss you.

Mom, Billy, Caesar and Family

THERE I'LL BE

Please don't stand at my grave and weep;
 For I'm not there, I'm not asleep.

I'm in the light from stars at night;
 In morn, I'm birds in peaceful flight.

I am the soft and gentle rain;
 And golden sunlight on the grain.

I'm here in sparkles on the sea,
 So please, don't cry; my soul soars free.

When gentle breezes kiss your cheek,
 You'll know I'm there, though I don't speak.

So don't be sad when you can't see;
 Just lift your face, and there I'll be.

Written for Scotty
 by Aunt Bev

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.

There is tremendous confusion and there is still that expectation that the child will walk through the front door, spend hours on the telephone, raid the refrigerator, and do all of the things that were a part of that young life. There is anger that this has happened to one so young, one with such potential. It seems that all of the hopes and dreams for tomorrow have suddenly been shattered and there is a great sense of depression that is entrenched in every hour -- waking and sleeping.

There is guilt ... mothers often feel they are responsible for the child in every way and death is a bitter pronouncement that they have failed in not being able to save the child. Mothers say that death is so powerful there is loss, not just for the future, but of the present when the child should be happy and a part of family life. The memory of the past must be embraced and protected and this too can be very difficult.

Many mothers find they need to talk to others who have been down that lonely path and learn how they have coped and met this grief head on.

It isn't easy trying to talk to the rest of the world. Neighbours, friends, acquaintances, business associates, and even relatives are reluctant to mention the child's name, afraid that this could unleash a rush of tears that would be difficult to stem.

Women grieve differently from men and this can become a source of irritation in some marriages. Cultural differences can make it very difficult in families if one parent has customs that differ from another. Personalities are at odds and one parent may find that talking helps while another may feel that there must be time for silence.

Through A Mother's Eyes

Barbara Klich
BFO / Toronto



The most unimaginable words that can ever be said to a mother are -- 'Your child has died'.

Whether the words come from a doctor who has treated the child through a long and painful illness, from a policeman who announces that an accident has claimed another life, or from a relative who utters the terrible news, the words pierce through the heart.

Many mothers say that with the death of a child, they suffered an amputation of the heart - a part of them was gone. Many explain that the mind wants to comprehend what has happened, but there is a part of the brain and the soul that simply cannot accept this terrible fact of life which is death.

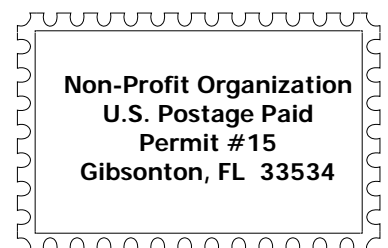
While many people want to help the bereaved, sometimes the words are inappropriate. It may be that an arm around the shoulder and a quiet word will be much better received than platitudes or suggestions that one knows how a mother feels -- unless one has been through the loss of a child, those words can be devastating.

Healing has its own timetable and it cannot be bent, stapled, or forced ... it may come though with the help of others and certainly through Bereaved Families of Ontario, Metropolitan Toronto, it can happen. By meeting with other mothers who have heard those terrible words, 'your child has died', the struggle can be lessened. Eventually, with help, there can be a time when a quiet sweetness and joy will return to life.

Living with a child's death is not easy work and for a mother it is a time to remember.



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



May 2008

POSTMASTER - Dated Material

Please do not delay.



Please note - Our website is now .com and not .org
www.bpsatampabay.com