



Tampa Bay Chapter

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

MEETING INFORMATION

Remember your Gift!

Regular Monthly SUNDAY Meeting

(held the second Sunday of the month)
Sunday, November 9, 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 men and women)

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, November 14, 10:00 a.m. to Noon
The Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce

330 Pauls Drive, Brandon, Florida 33511

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

Regular Monthly PLANT CITY Meeting

(normally held the fourth Thursday each month—

November and December meetings will be held the third Thursday due to Holiday schedules)

Thursday, November 20, 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.

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

Upcoming Events:

Angel of Hope monthly meeting

Please call Beverley Hurley 813-832-3175 for info!
Next meeting November 3, 7:00 pm.

MONTHLY MEETING TOPICS

November - Gift donations!

December 14 - Candle Light Ceremony!

November Meetings - Gift Night

Share a special Christmas story or memory about your child and if you can handle it, purchase a gift that you would have bought for your child. All gifts will be donated to charity.

(This is strictly voluntary—please do not wrap gift)



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

Mark your calendar and invite family and friends to attend our annual Candlelight Remembrance Service at St. Joseph's Hospital. *If you want to volunteer to help with this service or donate items for the boutique in memory of your child, please call Beverley Hurley at 813-832-3175!*

November 2008

*This month's newsletter lovingly sponsored by
the families of:
Taylor K. Pike
Matthew M. Minelli*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		NOVEMBER				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	* Don't forget to return your Participation Form for our upcoming Candle Light Ceremony!!					

WAYS TO FIND HOPE AND SURVIVE

*By Darcie D. Sims
Ph.D., GMS, CGC, CHT*

1.. Brush your teeth, every morning. No matter what else happens, do that and you are on your way to "recovery". Of course, if you don't want to recover, you still should brush your teeth. Just keeping a routine is a way to counteract the craziness. It is a "responsible, adult" thing to do and is a start. Just do it. Your dentist, mother and everyone you encounter will be glad you did.

2. Take out the trash. Just get it out of the house. Someday you can try getting it out on the right day.

3. Eat. Whatever you want, just make sure you eat whatever you are "supposed to". Skip the "oughts" and "shoulds" right now and concentrate on the comfort foods. You can't eat this way forever, but you might as well take advantage of your grief and treat yourself. If you find you can't eat "a thing", send it to me and I'll help. We'll diet together next month.

4. Buy a gift for yourself. Wrap it, but don't hide it! Just when you think you are going "off the deep end", open it up and enjoy.

5. While you are buying a gift for yourself, buy one for your loved one as well. Wrap it up and give it away to someone who might not otherwise have a gift. Pass on the love you shared together and it can never die.

6. Breathe. In and out. In and out. It's that simple and that hard. Some days just breathing is all you can manage. Other days it's a bit easier so relax and enjoy those moments when you can remember your loved one's life instead of focusing only on the death.

Surviving really isn't too hard. Living can be. No matter how crazy the world or out of "sync" you feel, don't lose the treasure of your loved one's presence in your life. You don't have to say good-bye. You don't stop loving someone just because he died.

Put something that reminds you of your loved one in your pocket and every time you need a hug, just pat your pocket and recall the loving connection between you. I carry a rock with me always, to remind me of the steadiness, security and sturdiness of his love. I've carved the word HOPE on that rock so I won't forget what hope is all about.

Hope isn't a place or a thing. Hope isn't the absence of pain, or sadness or sorrow. Hope is possibility. Hope is the memory of love given and received.

In addition to carrying a rock in my pocket, I've decided to create a new holiday for the bereaved. Since we can't remember what day it is or how we are supposed to behave, we'll just celebrate everything all at once. You'll get one card a year and just keep opening it on whatever days are appropriate for you. Love you and want to send my thoughts and hugs, but with all the changes always occurring in my life, I just may serve watermelon in December and frost the cookies bunny pink in October. Whatever. I'm trying and that's what counts! Hang in there. It gets better, honest. I just can't remember when.

Chapter News



ANGEL OF HOPE UPDATE

Please check out our 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!

Angel of Hope Memorial Bricks

Please get your order in for a memorial brick in memory of your child, grandchild, sibling, niece or nephew. Order Now to be a part of the original dedication of the AOH Memorial Garden in the new Riverside Park now being planned!



Deb's 100% Soy Candles

Christmas is sooner than you think. Candles make great gifts as well as adding to your home atmosphere.

One Christmas I ordered these candles for my family and friends, in the Angel scent of course, and in memory of my daughter.

Please call Debbie at 813-907-8239 for more information or to order your 100% Soy Candles. Be sure to mention the "Angel of Hope" when placing your order for a portion of your sale to be donated to this memorial to our children.

We want to thank Debbie Nemitz for offering these candles and this promotion in loving memory of her daughter Robyn.



Telephone Friends

Need to talk? Call one of our Telephone Friends. They're here to lend a knowing ear because they've been there. Don't hesitate to call, we understand.

Linda Delk (General Information)	(813) 661-0680
Sue Bowditch (Adult Child)	(813) 661-9334
Theresa Farmer (Homicide)	(813) 994-0707
Traci Cooley (Drowning)	(813) 300-6877
Ron Ellington (Suicide/Grandparent)	(727) 410-2308
Charles L'Homme (Accidental Death)	(813) 335-7628
Debbie Nemitz (Long Term Illness)	(813) 907-1441
Barbara or Tommy Dietrich (Death of an Only Child)	(813) 234-4705
Serena Graves (Sibling Contact)	(813) 810-7169
Violeta "Cookie" Fernandez (Se Habla Espano)	(813) 996-4281
CRISIS CENTER	211

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

Love Gifts



David & Beverley Hurley
In loving memory of her daughter
Debbie Bray
11/14/1967 to 6/1/1990



Tommy & Barbara Dietrich
In loving memory of their daughter
Jamie Rachel Dietrich
11/20/1977 - 11/17/2004

Linda Delk
In loving memory of her daughter
Melissa Ann Delk
11/13/72 - 12/09/77

Ben & Sue Bowditch
In loving memory of their granddaughter
Melody Russell
11/25/1985 - 11/25/1985

George & Jackie Loadholtz
In Loving memory of their son
Glenn Loadholtz
11/25/1969 - 2/15/2005

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.

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.

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.

Contact Tommy or Barbara Dietrich at (813) 234-4705 or visit one of our three monthly sharing meetings to return a book, arrange a donation or inquire about an available title.

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!

Refreshments

Some of us like to remember our child's birthday or the anniversary of his or her death by bringing a cake or cookies to the meeting that month. We would appreciate having you bring a special treat to any meeting. You may also want to bring and share a picture of your child. Thank you!





Our Children . . . Remembered

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

November Birthdays

Bray, Debbie (Hurley)
11/14/1967 - 6/1/1990
M - Beverley (Bray) Hurley
S - Kimberly Gonzalez

Buzbee-Reeves, Devon Michael
11/16/1994 - 11/19/1994
M - Celeste Buzbee
F - Mike Reeves
B-Tristan Alan Buzbee-Reeves

Celstey, Shaun
11/16/1980-1/3/2008
P-Vick & Paula Celestey

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

Decosta, Brittany
11/19/87 - 04/07/91
M - Kay Decosta

Delk, Melissa Ann
11/13/72 - 12/09/77
M - Linda Delk
B - Louis Delk
S - Meronda Brown

Dietrich, Jamie Rachel
11/20/1977 - 11/17/2004
P-Tommy & Barbara Dietrich

Dixon Jr., Anthony Howard
11/27/1978 - 4/1/1996
M - Brenda & Toney Dixon
B - David Dixon

Douglas, Christopher
11/4/1977 - 12/22/1997
M - Laren & Michael
S - Stacy & Leigh
B - Clinton

Dominguez, Mario
11/1/1987/19/2008
M-Sonia Dominguez

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

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

Hinchey, Ronald
11/17/1974 - 12/10/1999
P - Ronald & Donna Hinchey
S - Tracy Foster

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

Kelly, Amanda Jean
11/15/1986 - 7/7/1987
P-John & Brenda Kelly
S-Matthew & Ryan
GP-John Keller & Elizabeth Kelly

Kettlety, Daniel S.
11/7/1978 - 11/10/1997
P-Wayne & Sherry Kettlety

Lind, Joshua Richard
11/9/1983 - 11/14/1999
F - Richard Lind

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

Milam, Perry Edward
11/4/1974 - 10/1/1994
M-Nancy Milam
S-Suzanne Milam Clark

Nichols, Melissa
11/9/1982 - 9/4/2002
M-Terrena Nichols
F-Shannon Nichols
S-Brandy Nichols
B-Shannon Nichols,Jr.

Pike, Taylor
11/9/1985-5/14/2007
M-Connie & Bob Pike
S-Megan

Rios, Larry
11/8/1983-1/10/2007
M-Consuelo Rios

Rivera, Damian Elijah
11/19/2001 - 01/10/2002
M-Nicole Rivera

Robles-Greene, Brodie Shane
11/15/1996 - 11/29/1996
M - Denise Robles
F - Ronnie Greene
B - Shane

Russell, Melody
11/25/1985 - 11/25/1985
M-Karron Russell
GP - Ben & Sue Bowditch
S/B - Brytani and Derak
Aunts - Catherine and Roben

Shockey, Ann
11/08/56 - 04/26/70
P - Dick & Connie Shockey

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

Torres, Angel Luv
11/19/1982 - 11/2/1994
P-Aida & Angel Torres
B-Nicolas Torres
GP-Pola Lespier

Walker, Nick
11/12/1983 - 1/11/2001
M - Denise Walker
GM - Shirley Walker

Wheeler, Clifford Denmark
11/1/1979 - 1 /18/1996
M-Donna Wheeler
B-John, James & Duane
GP-Lynn & Marcel Baker



November Anniversaries

Baker, Brendolyn Joyce Butterfly
1/1/1948 - 11/9/1990
M - Rebeckah Mitchell
SF - Daniel Mitchell
B - Daniel Leroy Mitchell
S - Sharolyn Mitchell, Rhondolyn
Shedrick, Lerolyn Capehart, and
Angelyn Capehart

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

Black, Justin
10/3/1989-11/6/2007
P-Chris Black

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

Butler, Mark Anthony
7/7/1977 - 11/24/2001
P-Ray & Chris Butler
GM-Alice Butler

Buzbee-Reeves, Devon Michael
11/16/1994 - 11/19/1994
M - Celeste Buzbee
F - Mike Reeves
B-Tristan Alan Buzbee-Reeves

Chartier, Eric
9/3/1978-11/2007
M-Linda Chartier

Chilson, Candice
10/24/83 - 11/10/01
M - Wendy Chilson

Dietrich, Jamie Rachel
11/20/1977 - 11/17/2004
P-Tommy & Barbara Dietrich

Gray, Jay
09/07/70 - 11/09/01
M - Dee Gray
Hines, Heather
4/28/1975 - 11/25/1998
M - Sue Hines

Kettlety, Daniel S.
11/7/1978 - 11/10/1997
P-Wayne & Sherry Kettlety

Lind, Joshua Richard
11/9/1983 - 11/14/1999
F - Richard Lind

Miulli, Matthew Michael
11/27/1987 - 1/19/2005
P-Jim & Kathy Miulli

Robles-Greene, Brodie Shane
11/15/1996 - 11/29/1996
M - Denise Robles
F - Ronnie Greene
B - Shane

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

Ruiz, Marcus Nelson
12/29/1996 - 11/12/2000
P - Aleida & Nelson Ruiz
S - Illana

Russell, Melody
11/25/1985 - 11/25/1985
M-Karron Russell
GP - Ben & Sue Bowditch
S/B - Brytani and Derak
Aunts - Catherine and Roben

Snyder, Janna Marie
10/21/1978 - 11/11/1995
GP Marian & Paul Bullard
P - Dana & Connie Snyder
B - Jeff Snyder

Szczepanek,Daniel
6/21/1988-11/10/2006
M-Debra Szczepanek

Torres, Angel Luv
11/19/1982 - 11/2/1994
P-Aida & Angel Torres
B-Nicolas Torres

Moving Through Grief

Date updated: February 13, 2007

Content provided by Krames

Feeling better won't happen overnight. At first, it may be all you can do just to get through the day. But there is hope. Know that you will feel better with time, as long as you let yourself grieve. It hurts, but it is a normal, healing process.

The First Response

Your first response is often the most intense. You may cry a lot. Or you may feel a deep numbness or shock. Everyone grieves in his or her own way, but there are common signs of grief:

- Having intense mood swings
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Eating too much or too little
- Having trouble thinking clearly
- Wanting to be alone all the time

Give Yourself a Break

Try not to expect too much of yourself right away. It may be hard to work, take care of the kids, or focus on projects for a while. Give yourself more time than usual to get things done, since you may be distracted. Take time for yourself. Do some things that you enjoy. Go for a ride in the country. Read. It may feel like nothing brings you joy. But know that time really does help.

Avoid Common Traps

Because grief hurts, it's tempting to avoid the pain. Grieve now. Try to avoid these things that delay healing and cause new problems:

- Using drugs, alcohol, or food to numb your feelings
- Making the loss seem smaller than it really is ("We weren't that close")
- Working long hours to avoid pain
- Thinking over and over how you could "undo" the loss
- Staying alone to avoid sad feelings that come up around friends or family

Know Your Grief Process

Let yourself feel all of your feelings and go through your grief fully. The process is full of ups and downs. One day you may feel a lot better. The next day, you may cry again. Try not to think: "I should be over this by now." There are no "shoulds" to grief. Let yourself mourn your loss as long as you need to. It might help to think of ways you dealt with a loss in the past. That way grief won't seem so scary and overwhelming.

THANKSGIVING IS FOR THE BEREAVED AND BROKEN

~ by Alice J. Wisler
reprinted and revised from LARGO, Winter 2001 Issue

I have a hard time believing it is the season of holidays again. While this year should be easier since it will be our fifth Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's without Daniel, I still feel myself putting on an extra shield of courage.

In the cool afternoon air I am reminded of my first Thanksgiving since Daniel's death. On that day I wrote a poem; it wasn't very good, but it did express what I had learned from reflecting on the origins of this national American holiday.

For the first time I thought that the initial Thanksgiving among the settlers and the Indians couldn't have been that glamorous. Why not? For one, there had been many losses. Around those tables were certainly fathers and mothers who had had to bury children. While thankful for much, these parents held heavy hearts too.

Continuing to reflect this way helps me realize Thanksgiving is also a holiday with reality. It is not a Norman Rockwell painting. While we like the warmth this artist has created in his capturing of a happy Thanksgiving table, we know that in most families everyone is not present. Family members are gone from us and at times all we can notice are the silent empty chairs. How can we have thanksgiving when we are lacking? This holiday does not have the bereaved in mind at all, we conclude.

But in time, we are able to reflect on the presence our loved children held in our lives instead of only focusing on their absences. They lived and we are the more blessed because of their lives - so vibrant and so loving. We become more aware of just how much they impacted our lives then - and even now.

Light a candle this Thanksgiving for those we miss. Recall how blessed we were to have them, even for a short while.

And remember that the origin of Thanksgiving does not stem from the situations of cheery and perfectly intact families. There had been many deaths during the difficult trek to this land from England and Europe and once the settlers arrived, more deaths due to illness, occurred. The Native Americans experienced heart-breaking losses as well. Even so, these men and women found reasons to be thankful. So although our sorrow is great, we can be appreciative for the memories we hold in our hearts.

Thanksgiving is a holiday which includes each of us - bereaved and broken.

Falling Apart

by Eloise Cole

I seem to be falling apart.
My attention span can be measured in seconds.
I cry at the drop of a hat.
I forget things constantly.
The morning toast burns daily.
I forgot to sign the checks.
Half of everything in the house is misplaced.
Feelings of anxiety and restlessness are my constant
constant companions.
Rainy days seem extra dreary.
Sunny days seem an outrage.
Other people's pain and frustrations seem insignifi-
cant.
Laughing happy people seem out of place in my world.
It has become routine to feel half crazy.
I am normal I am told.
I AM A NEWLY GRIEVING PERSON.

Thanatos Magazine - Winter 1985



Thanksgiving Grace

By Alicia Sims

I'm supposed to say a Thanksgiving grace today at the table, but I don't feel very "thanksgiving".....

What are we supposed to be thankful for? God took our baby away, and we're supposed to still believe in HIM?

The table is set, the turkey smells good and everyone is gathering around...everyone that is, except my baby brother. Why didn't HE let Austin live. Why didn't HE help him get better so he could grow up with me? I don't want to be alone. I want to be a sister. I don't want two turkey legs!

Hey , God, I'm talking to you! Can you hear me? Why don't you answer??

Or do you , and sometimes I just can't hear? Well, any-way, I guess I'm thankful for the little while Big A was here. We did have fun sometimes.

THE FIRST IS THE WORST

They say the first is the worst.
I know the pain of not having my child.
I know the pain of not being able to hold her.
I know the pain I went through to have her.
I know the pain of burying my child.
I know the pain every time I go to the grave.
But no one said how the pain would increase when the ...
First Valentines Day came
First Easter came
First Mother's Day came
First Father's Day came
First Birthday came.

All the holidays that come during the first year are really very hard after your child dies.
I know the pain of those "First's."

You will get through them.
Believe me — I know.
I'm halfway there —
Then I'll have the "Two's."

By Michelle Ramsey
Tampa, FL



Thanksgiving Prayer

I'm thankful this Thanksgiving
That my grief is not so new.
Last year it was so painful
To think of losing you.

Death can't claim my love for you
Tho we are far apart,
Sweet memories will always be
Engraved upon my heart.

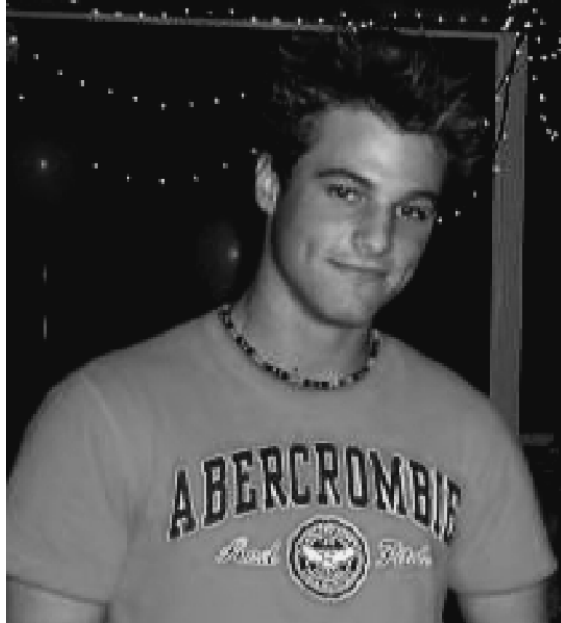
Time can never bring you back
But it can help me be
Thankful for the years of joy
You brought our family.

To all the parents with grief so new
I share your loss and sorrow.
I pray you find with faith and time
The blessings of each tomorrow.

by Charlotte Irick
Idaho Falls, ID

Matthew Michael Miulli

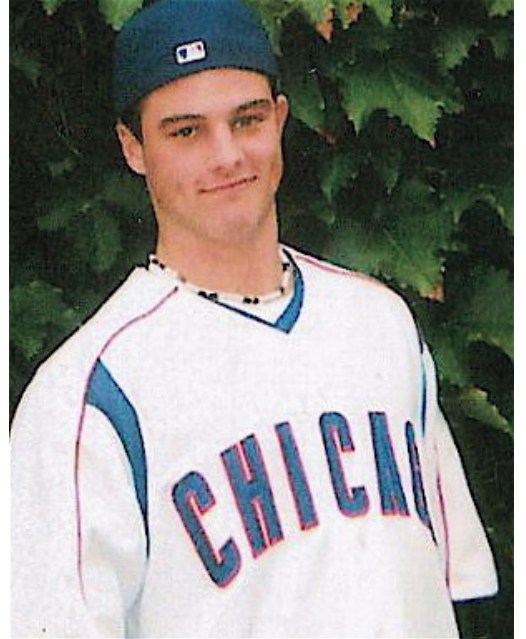
11/27/1987 to 1/19/2005



*Believe
Happy
21st
Birthday
Matt*

Talk to You

Written By Jim Miulli



(Dedicated to my Son Matt and to all those whom have lost someone dear to their hearts)

*Need a change, right away. Don't really know, if I can stay
This battle inside, seems to grow. Some things give, Some things Go.*

*I can't seem to stay awake and I can't seem to fall asleep.
I don't' want to run away, but just can't seem to find a seat.*

**Every time I think of you, my heart gets torn right in two.
As I sit here, I sit wondering, wondering what you would do.
If I had a wish, I'd wish for you and use that wish to talk to you.*

*Each day passes as time goes by. It's so damn hard not to cry.
People look at me and wonder why, I just can't seem to say goodbye.*

*It's MY cross that you don't understand, It's the nails that pierce My feet
MY hands.
And the thorns that stick into my head, you'll never know until
your dead.*

**Every time I think of you, my heart gets torn right in two.
As I sit here, I sit wondering, wondering what you would do.
If I had a moment, a moment with you and use that moment to talk to you.*

*This handicap I have, you can not see. But the cut is deep and I don't bleed?
All you people know it's true, You all don't even have a clue.*

*But one day I know we'll all understand, this craziness is God's great plan.
I know for sure one thing my friend, this pain will cease this story will end.*

**Every time I think of you, my heart is torn right in two.
As I sit here, I sit wondering, wondering what you would do.
When I finally... finally... finally..... TALK TO YOU.*

Happy 21st Birthday, Matthew

***We promise to celebrate your birthday, the way you would want us to,
with all your friends and family too.***

And somehow, we will know you, that you'll be with us.

You will be with us Forever.

Love Mom and Dad

Taylor K. Pike

11/9/85 — 5/14/07

Happy Birthday Brother!
We love and remember you always.
Little Sister, Mom and Dad

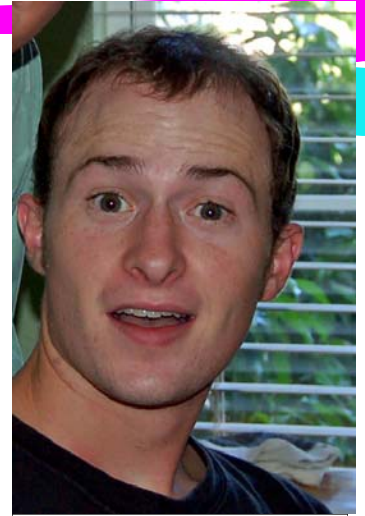
"So I've realized I'm going to have to figure this out on my own. No one seems to understand the true extent of my pain. I don't even understand it myself. I don't want sympathy, or to bother you with my list of things gone wrong. But I long for someone who understands and will erase my pain, wash the sour taste from my mouth, and relieve me of this weight bearing down on my every move. The fire I have always had inside has gone out, and this lovely little life I live ain't so lovely right now. I'll get over it someday... come on brother man, show me some light, but only when the time is right."

I wrote this journal entry on June 18th, 2007, one month after my brother passed away. Today I no longer recognize that sad little girl; I am truly amazed at how much my life has transformed. I embrace everyday with optimism; I cherish the time I have here. I live my life with love in my heart and a smile on my face. Don't

get me wrong, I'm no super woman. I'm just a 20 year old college student with minimal responsibility and a minimum wage paycheck. I am unsure, oversensitive, and have the attention span of a four year old. I am still working through my karma to say the least, but the transformation of my life has been a wonderful ride, one filled with mystery, renewing of faith, and lots and lots of love. Although I will always miss my brother - we experienced life together for 18 years - I now understand that his passing was meant to liberate my spirit, not suppress it. This was all a matter of choice; it was my decision as to which direction I would travel.

I remember my childhood well, when life was set in different shades of mystery, excitement, and above all else love- love for humanity, love for the stranger down the street and the crazy cat lady next door, love for every blade of grass beneath my mud covered toes, for the magical birds and

butterflies swirling through the air and the furry creatures cocooned in mother earth. I was in love with life as a child, and that's all I needed to be happy. I finally have that feeling of union again, the inner knowing that I am part of one human family, believing in my heart that we are in this together and never doubting the ability to transform and move as one. I am thankful for my brother's transition; he can love me more from where he is now. He has filled my mind with melodies and given me the gift of recognizing the world for the enchanting and beautiful place it is. I've realized that this planet, in which many of us are blindly living, is much more important than we know or can be aware of at a conscious level. We will continue to do the same things over and over again until one day something so profound happens that we all stop and smell the flowers together and celebrate life, finally realizing that we share the same heartbeat.



"Hey guys, I'm really fine. I'm sending you Light and Love. Live your lives well."

Spirit Song by Connie Pike (inspired by Taylor)

The world so small it could not contain me
 Searching higher I longed to soar
 Speeding, flying, falling, rising
 Earth is has me bound no more.

Spirit Song, rising from the freedom
 Spirit Song, forgiving all the wrong
 Spirit Song, falling from the Heavens
 My soul gift to you is this Spirit Song.

Out of earth realm, living spirit
 Music in me and through me here
 I and music a perfect union
 Listen, hear me, I am near.
 Do not cry; you go on living
 Joy and freedom here are mine
 I am not so far away here,
 Making music with my mind.
 Floating seeing crystal visions
 Contentment peace and joy are we
 Dream your dreams, hear the music
 Rest in Spirit, be with me.

When you want a teacher badly enough, you will find it within yourself, even through your painful experiences. Thank you for showing me some light, Taylor, you have sparked my alchemy, I am forever grateful.

Love and Light,
 Megan

2008 Candlelight Ceremony (December 14) Participation Form



Please return by November 20 to have your child's name/picture appear in the Program)

To: BP/USA, c/o 3805 W. San Juan Street, Tampa, FL 33629



☐ I (family) will be attending the service on December 14, and will light a candle in remembrance of my child/children

Number of people attending _____

☐ I will be unable to attend the service but would like to have a candle lit in memory of my child/children. **NOTE:** Due to time restraints, only picture for parents attending the Ceremony will be shown. Thank you for your understanding.

☐ I have enclosed a picture for the Presentation.

☐ Please use the picture from last year Presentation.

Child's name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Death Date: _____

Type of Death: _____

Son or Daughter of: _____

Sister or Brother of: _____

Grandson or Granddaughter of: _____

☐ I would like to furnish _____ for the reception. **NOTE:** Please try to furnish food (sandwiches, salads, deviled eggs, etc.) since we seem to have an abundance of desserts.

☐ I am enclosing a donation in the amount of \$ _____ in honor of my child/children.

Your Name: _____

Address/Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

December 14, 2008 Candle Lighting Remembrance Ceremony

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

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

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

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

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

Picture should be of your deceased child only. If your child's picture was included in previous years candle lights, any of the National Gathering closing ceremonies, or Chapter Newsletters and you want to use the same photo, just let David know that. Pictures mailed in will be returned to you at the Candle Light Service-please **pick them up at the registration desk**. You can scan the picture yourself and email to david.hurley@gte.net. Any questions please call David Hurley 813-831-2588.

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

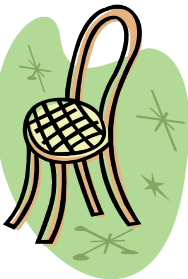
BOUTIQUE - There will be an Angel/Butterfly Boutique to purchase holiday items or gifts. All items are donated and all proceeds benefit your local BP/USA Chapter. To donate items, please call Sue Bowditch at 813-661-9334!

PARTICIPATION FORM - For planning purposes, or to ensure your child's name appears in our candle lighting program, or if you wish to have a candle lit for your child in your absence, please complete and submit the Form above and send it in before November 20 to: BP/USA Tampa Bay Chapter, c/o 3805 W. San Juan Street, Tampa, FL 33629

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

The Empty Chair

by *Ronnie Peterson, Northern NY*



I remember the first Thanksgiving after Tony was killed. I didn't know how we could possibly get through that dinner, with his empty chair.

The solution that occurred to me was to fill his chair with someone else — several someones.

Grandpa came to spend the week; a newly widowed friend came to dinner, and so did her delightful young nephew and his bride, who had just moved to town. They brought the salad. And we were thankful — for each other, for the love among us, and for memories.

If this will be your first Thanksgiving, do something different. The pattern for your life has been broken. Break it some more! Have dinner at a different place, or with different people. Go away for the weekend. Be kind to yourself. You do not have it all, but you have something.

NOVEMBER GIFT NIGHT



Share a special Christmas story or memory about your child and if you can handle it, purchase a gift that you would have bought for your child - please purchase gifts fitting for ages from infant to 15 years old. All gifts will be donated and delivered to charity by Steering Committee Member, Charles L'Homme!

(This is strictly voluntary-do not wrap gifts!)

WHEN ALL YOU CAN DO IS BUY FLOWERS

One of the many hurdles that I faced after my son Matthew died was not being able, during the holiday season, to buy him anything ever again. When the holidays rolled around, I had such an empty feeling. I was buying gifts for my surviving children and all I could get Matthew was flowers for his grave. That just wasn't enough! Shopping was such a chore because I didn't have the energy and the Christmas spirit just wasn't there. Not being able to buy anything for my Matthew was just unbearable.

What has helped me so much throughout the years, is our St. Peters BP/USA support group meeting. At our December Potluck Picture and Gift night, we are asked to bring a gift. The gift is something that we would have bought for our child if he/she were alive. This is not mandatory, but the majority of the group does participate. We go around the table and each person displays what he/she bought and explains why it was bought. Hearing the funny stories that are told is just wonderful. I hear laughter and see tears at the same time. The gifts are later taken to a local children's home. At first, the gifts that were taken to the children's home consisted of a couple of bags. However, the generosity has grown more and more every year. The parents that don't attend meetings anymore throughout the year will come to the meeting in December, just to bring a gift for their child. On Christmas morning when my surviving children are opening their gifts, I sit back and picture a child that probably would not have gotten a gift at Christmas, opening the gift that I bought Matthew. That gives me such peace.

I will not wish you joy this holiday season. That is something that will come later. But I will say this: do as much or as little as you can handle; don't push yourself too much. I will, however, wish you peace.

Sabra Penrod, BP/USA, St. Louis, MO



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

November 2008
POSTMASTER - Dated Material
Please do not delay.



DON'T FORGET
Annual Candle Light Ceremony
December 14, 7:00 p.m.

Send in your Participation Form TODAY and be sure to get your child's picture sent in too!
(See Page 7 for Participation Form)

