



# Tampa Bay Chapter

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

November 2009

*This month's newsletter lovingly sponsored by  
the families of:  
Taylor K. Pike  
Joseph D. Martinez*

## MEETING INFORMATION

### Reminder—ALL 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.



### **Regular Monthly SUNDAY Meeting**

(held the second Sunday of the month)  
**Sunday, November 8, 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 13, 10:00 a.m. to Noon**  
**The Greater Brandon Chamber of Commerce**  
330 Pauls Drive, Brandon, Florida 33511  
Please call Debbie Nemitz 813-907-1441  
for directions or information.

### **Regular Monthly PLANT CITY Meeting**

(Normally held the fourth Thursday each month except  
November and December due to holidays)  
**Thursday, November 19, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.**  
**South Florida Baptist Hospital**  
301 N. Alexander Street, Plant City  
in the Community Conference Room  
Call Janice Falcon at 813-779-9353  
for directions or information.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **BP/USA TAMPA BAY CHAPTER CANDLE LIGHT PROGRAM AND CEREMONY**

Mark your Calendar for Sunday, December 13, 7:00 p.m.  
St. Joseph Hospital Medical Arts Bldg. Auditorium for the  
**Annual Children's Worldwide Candle Lighting.**  
Mark your calendar and invite family and friends to attend our  
annual candlelight remembrance ceremony 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!  
(See Page 7 for more details and registration!)

### **Angel of Hope Memorial Garden Annual Candle Lighting**

Sunday, December 6, at 6:30 p.m.  
Riverside Park  
201 Riverhills Drive, Temple Terrace  
Please call Jackie Loadholtz  
You must RSVP 813-625-1468 to attend!  
(Weather permitting)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					
<b>NOVEMBER 2009</b>						

## The Fall of Fall

What is it about the season that  
takes me back in time  
Everything I do, I find you are  
on my mind.  
Haunting dreams find me at  
night when I try to sleep  
And every little detail is replayed,  
and the sadness falls  
so deep.  
Something about the close of  
summer seems to bring it back  
Making it so hard to move onward  
and stay on track.  
Something about the dying and  
fading of the trees  
Brings my heart to sorrow, with  
the falling of the leaves  
How I long to stop it, to keep  
the fall away  
But time marches on, and summer  
just won't stay.  
I know with the fall, winter's  
not far behind  
Another lonely season, and the  
memories flood my mind.  
I cry my tears of sorrow, and  
pray for spring to come  
A rebirth of the earth, and the  
warmness of the sun.  
It makes the memories softer  
and gentler to recall  
But now my life is saddened  
with the nearing of fall.



Sheila Simmons  
Dallas, GA

## Chapter News



### **ANGEL OF HOPE NEWS**

www.angelofhopetampabay.com

Angel of Hope Memorial Garden  
First Annual Candle Lighting  
Sunday, December 6, 6:30 p.m.

Riverside Park, 201 S. Riverhills Drive, Temple Terrace

The new angel statue was commissioned by Richard Paul Evans, in response to reports that grieving parents were seeking out the angel as a place to grieve and heal. The monument was dedicated on December 6, 1994-corresponding with the date of the child's death in The Christmas Box.

Flowers, adorn the base of the monument year round, accompanying notes left by parents for their "little angels." On December 6th of each year a candlelight healing ceremony is held at the base of each Christmas Box Angel monument.

Please call Jackie Loadholtz  
to RSVP 813-625-1468  
(please note new starting time)  
(Weather permitting)

### **Memorial Bricks**

Engraved memorial bricks still available.  
Please see our website for brick order form.

### **Telephone Friends**

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

Linda Delk (General Information)	(813) 661-0680
Theresa Farmer (Homicide)	(813) 994-0707
Traci Cooley (Drowning)	(813) 464-4525
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
<b>CRISIS CENTER</b>	<b>211</b>

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

## Love Gifts

Gregg Lalis

In loving memory of his son Timmy

"Thank you to the Bereaved Parents of the USA,  
Tampa Bay Chapter, for reaching out and  
helping my parents through a time of extreme pain.

Continue the hard work to help  
all the Moms and Dads that come your way.  
My Mommy and Daddy remember me !"

**Timmy Douglas Lalis:** July 29, 1996 - July 11, 2001

Tommy & Barbara Dietrich

In loving memory of their daughter

**Jamie Rachel Dietrich**

11/20/1977 - 11/17/2004

Beverley Hurley

In loving memory of her daughter

**Debbie (Hurley) Bray**

11/14/1967 - 6/1/1990

Linda Delk

In loving memory of her daughter

**Melissa Ann Delk**

11/13/72 - 12/09/77

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.

### **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 June also want to bring and share a picture of your child. Thank you!

### **Electronic Newsletter**

The Newsletter is available electronically. To receive it by Email, send your name and email address to: [bee.hurley@gte.net](mailto: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!

*Those of us who have  
worked through our grief  
and found there is a future,  
are the ones who must meet others  
in the valley of darkness and  
bring them to the light.*

*~Rev. Simon Stephens  
Founder of TCF*



## 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

Celestey, 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

Dominguez, Mario  
11/1/1987-7/18/2008  
M-Sonia Dominguez

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

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

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

McDonald, Brooke  
11/8/1990-10/4/2008  
P-Mitch & Barbara McDonald

Milam, Perry  
11/4/1974 - 10/01/1994  
M - Nancy Milam

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

Miulli, Matthew Michael  
11/27/1987-1/19/2005  
P-Jim & Kathy Miulli  
GP-Mike & Sue Miulli and  
Rudy & Mary Prehnal

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  
P-Connie & Bob Pike  
S-Megan

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

Shank, Jamie  
11/2/1972-10/26/2003  
M-Joan Schank

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

Taylor, Aniya  
11/9/2005-6/16/2009  
M-Miesha Belthrop

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, Just5in  
10/3/1989-11/6/2007  
D-Chris Black

Bridgmon, Matt  
2/11/1978-11/4/2006  
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

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

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

Gladen, Renee Rose  
4/21/1961-11/17/1999  
S-Diana Gladen

Gray, Jay  
09/07/70 - 11/09/01  
M - Dee Gray

Harrington, Kimaura  
12/4/1995-11/1/2008  
M-Kichma Nieves

Hines, Heather  
4/28/1975 - 11/25/1998  
M - Sue Hines

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

Kowiak, Harrison  
1/5/1989-11/18/2008  
M-Lianne Kowiak

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

McKaughan, Michael  
5/19/1989-11/3/2000  
P-Darlene & Michael Lack  
S-Andrew McKaughan & Lauren Lack

Vanessa, Moore  
9/3/1980-11/11/2005  
M-Pat Moore

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

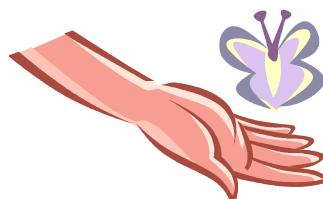
Russell, Melody  
11/25/1985 - 11/25/1985  
M-Karron Russell  
GP - Ben & Sue Bowditch  
S/B - Brytani and Derak  
Aunts - Catherine and Roben

Sluder, Theresa Elaine  
10/14/1961-11/17/2008  
P-Tom & Judy Sluder  
S-Kathryn  
B-Tom III & Keith  
Children-Brandy & Brandon  
GC-Romeo & Thaliana

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  
GP-Pola Lespier



*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.*

## A Parent's Worst Nightmare

For me, my nightmare started February 7<sup>th</sup> 2008. A Thursday. A normal day or so I thought. I had gotten up for work at 4:00 am as I did every morning. Stopped for coffee on the way into work and started my day as I always did. My cell phone rang, but I was in the middle of checking security logs as I always did in the morning. Nothing could prepare me for what I was about to hear.

When I retrieved my voice mail it was a message from my ex-wife. By the tone of her voice I knew something wasn't right. Call it intuition, gut feeling, I don't know, but I knew it was bad news. I apprehensively returned the call.

I dialed the number, I don't recall how many times it rang if any. "Hello," she said, "Phoebe?" I replied. "What's wrong?" In a trembling voice she said, "Jason passed away last night." In an instant, I felt like someone was standing on my chest. I couldn't breathe. When I finally did, her response was, "I did the same thing when they told me." I asked what happened. Her response was. "The police are here now and they are trying to figure it out. I need to you come up as soon as possible."

My mind went totally blank. I didn't know where I was, what to do next, or who to talk to. A few minutes went by. I walked into my boss's office and said, "I have to go, my son just passed away." My boss's face turned white. It seemed like ten minutes went by. He asked me if I was okay and I responded "no", but turned and left. I got out to the parking lot and didn't know what to do next. Drive home? Drive to the airport? I couldn't decide. I can only assume that autopilot kicked in and in a blur, I was half way to my house. I managed to call my best friend and my oldest brother to blurt out the news and hung up on both of them. I didn't know what I was doing.

I called the woman I had started dating only four months earlier and left her a VM with the news. By the time I reached my house she called back. I blurted it out once again and she said, "I'm on my way." It seemed like it was only seconds and she was at the house. She asked me what I wanted to do. I remember saying, "I don't know what to do," and after a bit more dialog she assisted me with booking a flight to Boston that day (two hours later in the day). Next thing I remember I'm standing in Tampa International Airport thinking what am I doing? I get a message from my second wife. "Brian, I'm so sorry." It's always amazed me how fast bad news traveled. She asked if there was anything she could do. My response was, "Please pray for Jason." It's all I could think of. I remember looking out the airport window thinking "what just happened?" There must be a mistake. I don't remember any of the flight to Boston, or getting picked up at Logan, but I do remember my friend Kevin driving me back to his house. When I got there I was met by my sister Jeanne. There was a spotty conversation and it was revealed to me that my son had died from an accidental drug overdose. My response was, "He's been clean for six months. You must be mistaken." As it turned out, I was the one that was mistaken. The details of the incident now are inconsequential. The bottom line is that my oldest son was dead.

The next day I went to the Police department to get some details. My impression of their fact finding was that they were just going through the motions. In their view, it was just another drug addict that OD'd. For them it was clinical. There was no sense of urgency, it was another statistical death. They didn't know what kind of person he was, what kind of dad or son he was. Just that he was just another dead junky. They had all the information they needed to catch the drug dealer. They had my son's cell phone with all of his incoming and outgoing calls. When pressed for what they were doing, I was told, "We're following up on all the leads Mr. Ascii."

As with most people, their attitude as well as a large part of the public was 'junky' is synonymous with homeless people. People that live 'Under the bridge' or low life's. The stigma attached to junkies spans multiple generations. Old clothes, rotted teeth, someone you wouldn't want to give a quarter to. To be completely honest, I had the same opinion of a junky prior to Jason's death. In the end, the police quickly closed the case. No arrests were made, not a single person was brought in for questioning.

Days passed and funeral arrangements were made. During the wake, so many people showed up to pay their respects that the funeral home turned away more than 150 people. They couldn't get everyone into the funeral parlor. Truth is he was a very nice young gentleman and liked by everyone. Not because he was my son, but because he was a nice person prior to his drug involvement and he was very intelligent as well. Jason had his own business and made a lot of money. The exact reason for his start on drugs is still unclear. I do know that he started out with prescription pain medication on the weekends for recreational use. As time went on, his drug use bled into the week. First into Mondays, then starting the weekends early, eventually turning into daily use. When his addiction started to affect his work and family life, he went into rehab a number of times until he found a rehab center that worked for him. His short drug career was about nine months. Not a long one but still long enough to be a successful addict. The problem with addiction is that no matter what your drug of choice is, the reason for using it is common, to get away from emotional or physical pain. Jason was no exception.

At the end of the day a drug is a drug. Whether it is alcohol, cocaine, prescription medication, or street drugs, they all achieve the same thing; they will alter your state of mind. They also all have the ability to kill you sooner or later for people with addictive personalities.

After the funeral, I flew back to Tampa, thinking that if I go back to my home surroundings that things would be easier. That wasn't the case. Once back home, I struggled to go to work. I found it more and more difficult to be social because of my emotional pain. I couldn't remember conversations, days, dates, anything. I would start doing something and forget what I was doing. I was clearly overwhelmed and didn't know it. It got to the point that I stopped cooking because I would start cooking dinner, then go into a different part of the house to do something else and burned what I started cooking. That scared me.

I would wake up crying in the middle of the night, cry at the drop of a hat. I would wake up in the middle of the night hearing my son Jason calling me "Dad, Dad" only to realize it was wishful thinking.

I had to educate myself about the disease and how to work through my grief. I read almost every book I could find on the subject. But none of the books I read eased my pain. I found that in this country there is an epidemic of drug addiction. Most start out with prescription meds and go to street drugs at some point as they are much cheaper, just as strong and more readily available. So was the case with Jason. He started with Percocet's, then oxycontin, then Heroin. I carried a lot of shame that Jason fell into the category of a Heroin addict. But after educating myself about it I found that it wasn't a poor man's drug. Celebrities, musicians all used the "Bad" drug. Also Dr's and Lawyers used it.

(continued on Page 5)

(A Parent's Worst Nightmare, Continued from Page 4)

I blamed myself for his death, living so far away, thinking "If I was living up there, I could have stopped it." Although most of the time now I realize that even if I lived up there I couldn't have helped. Being a parent, we like to think that we have more control over our children. Truth is, Jason was 28 when he passed and he was a young adult. A person who made a mistake as we all do. It's just that his mistake cost him his life. The saddest part of all this, is he left behind two beautiful children. For me, that's heart wrenching.

I read dozens of books on bereavement and loss. Until I read the book "How to go on Living When Someone You Love Dies" I had no comfort. For me it explained why I took his passing so difficult. All of my dreams of my latter years with Jason and his children, vacations, holidays, were all gone in a blink of an eye. All the roles that I had given my son, I now needed to take those roles and give them to someone among the living, as they could no longer be fulfilled by someone not living.

Today 20 months later, I still cry more often than I care to admit. On my way to work, sometimes on my way home, and worst of all, as I lay awake at night alone thinking of him and what we had. I miss my son terribly. I miss the conversations, the visits, the fun things we used to do. I miss telling him how proud I am of him as a young man as well as being such a good dad.

It's funny, I spoke with Jason less than seven days before he passed. I told him just that. That I loved him and I was so very proud of his progress fighting his addiction. We had made plans for him and his younger brother to come to Tampa for a visit. It's a shame that he never made it. But truth be told, even if he had come down and I said all those things face to face, I still would not have been satisfied. You always want to tell them one more time how much you love them, how much you miss them, and how proud as a parent you are of them being young adults.

If only people that haven't lost a child could understand how you feel. It would make it just a little easier. The woman I was dating faded away. She would ask me, "When is the old Brian coming back?" My response to her was "Part of the old Brian died when Jason died. What is left is the new Brian." A person that I am just starting to get to know now. The loss of a child changes everyone. There are no exceptions, but it takes time. Some people (on the outside) can wait and help, others feel the need to move on, and everyone is different. In a way, I guess I don't blame her. She got to know me one way, then I was changed completely four months later. Four months is hardly enough time to really bond with someone.

Somewhere along the way it was recommended that I attend a Bereaved Parents grief support meeting. It was the best decision I have ever made. When all this occurred I believed I was going crazy. I wanted to be with my son Jason. I didn't want him to be alone, and I didn't want to be without him. I was the one that was supposed to go before he did. It just wasn't natural. All the things running through my head indicated I was crazy. I attended my first meeting and realized, "I'm not crazy." All the emotions I was experiencing were "Normal" for someone who had just suffered such a loss. I knew I was in the right place. We all share a common bond. Someone that has not lost a child would never understand. For me that gave me hope.

Today I live my life one day at a time. Some days, one moment at a time. This is a departure from a person that had a plan for everything and a backup to the original plan. God has a plan for me, he just doesn't share it with me, at least not yet.

One thing that I have learned is that I will never get 'over' this. I will in time learn to live with it. My bad days are fewer than they were a year ago. But still come with little or no warning. The episodes don't last as long now either but are still overwhelming when they do come. I do know that as long as I have memories of my son Jason, the pain will never go away. I am at a point where I can laugh at times without feeling guilty. For a long time I couldn't do that.

My hope is that maybe by writing my story that someone new to grief will get some hope that life will go on. Is my life Normal? By most people's standards, no. But by my new family's standards, Bereaved Parents, I am. Most importantly, I'm not alone in my walk through grief. If I am having a bad day I can call a bereaved parent and talk. I know that I won't be judged or be asked "Aren't you over it yet?" or "I know how you feel I lost my dog a few months ago" or "Just put it in the back of your mind." Yes I've heard all of those phrases. Although each of them had good intentions, they are cutting phrases and to a bereaved parent insensitive.

To anyone newly bereaved, you're not alone, you're not crazy, and although no two people grieve exactly the same, you have people that have gone through something similar and will be more than happy to extend a hand to assist you down the path. Will you be normal ever again? I guess the short answer is yes but it will be a new normal.

No parent should outlive their child.

Brian Ascii  
BP/USA, Tampa Bay Chapter

*Editor's Note: Although this was lengthy for our newsletter, I decided not to edit this and to add two more pages to our newsletter. We currently have many parents attending our meetings whose child died by an overdose of prescription or illegal drugs. **This message needs to be heard.** Each child is loved and missed deeply by their parents. Drug addiction loss is a difficult loss to understand as there is much guilt, anger, and unanswered questions and sometimes illogical shame.*

*I don't believe that every person that overdoses is a drug addict. Due to our society, this is a problem but one that families try to work through and have hope it will cease before such a tragic ending as this one. Many of these tragic deaths also lie with a system that continues to give the edge to profits rather than to patient safety. Each of our kids are normal kid who made a bad choice, and we must make others aware that the horrible things we read about in the newspaper could happen to any of us -- that real, normal people, who have regular lives, full of laughter and hope, are only a lapse of judgment away from tragedy.*

*Death isn't about a particular drug; it's about how a simple bad choice can have a horrible outcome -- an outcome whose terrible permanence most people cannot fully comprehend.*

*Thank you Brian for telling your story and sharing Jason with us!*

## Tears and Cheers

We will never stop loving our children. A thoughtful, gentle man named William Penn once wrote, "Those who love beyond the world cannot be separated by it. Death cannot kill that which does not die." We loved our children yesterday, we love them today, and we will love them tomorrow. There is neither force nor foe that can ever remove the love we have for our children. They live within us and beyond this world, now and forever. This is not the way we wanted our lives or their lives to be because our children belong, not to the ages, but to us. In the end, sadly, they are not ours to keep. They will always be ours to remember, to honor, and to love.

We hurt so much because we love so much. It is our curse to live with the reality of death's details. It is our Blessing to be given a glimpse of the infinite possibilities of perpetual Love. It is not a fair trade. Neither is this a bargain we sought to make. The Children that died too soon have broken our hearts while giving us the great gift of enlightenment. Where do we exchange that unwanted present for one minute with them when no refund line exists. We reach out to strangers, to family or friends to help us remember, to help us hope all is not lost. It helps. It is not a cure. This pitiful plight is not a wound that time heals.

'Death cannot kill that which does not die.' Our Children would no more leave us than we would stop loving them. 'Those that Love beyond the world cannot be separated by it.' No one, no thing, not now, not ever can take away our love for our children. Our love defies death and taunts time while embracing and displaying its eternal nature. Sometimes Love travels an earthly path filled with tears and cheers inspired by the life of a child measured in moments or years. Our children live forever in the glorious, unending infinite light of our love, as we in theirs. That is our blessing. That is their gift and maybe they are waiting to see if we like it. Perhaps a cheer joined to the tear is what they need to hear.

Pat O'Donnell; Livonia, Michigan

### To realize

To realize  
The value of a sister  
Ask someone  
Who doesn't have one.

To realize  
The value of ten years:  
Ask a newly  
Divorced couple.

To realize  
The value of four years:  
Ask a graduate.

To realize  
The value of one year:  
! Ask a student who  
Has failed a final exam.

To realize  
The value of nine months:  
Ask a mother who gave  
birth to a stillborn.

To realize  
The value of one month:  
Ask a mother  
who has given birth to  
A premature baby.

To realize  
The value of one week:  
Ask an editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realize  
The value of one minute:  
Ask a person  
Who has missed the train, bus or plane.

To realize  
The value of one-second:  
Ask a person  
Who has survived an accident.

Time waits for no one.

Treasure every moment you have.

You will treasure it even more when  
you can share it with someone special.

To realize the value of a friend  
or family member:  
LOSE ONE.

## Bereaved Parents of the USA Meeting

I went to the North of the River chapter of Bereaved Parents last night.

I think my participation with the "Bereaved Parents" group is unusual. I should say that the *timing* of my participation is unusual. You see, although I had been referred to them often, I never went to a single meeting until probably 2 years after losing Jae.

A lot of reasons,.....the biggest being that the only available chapter was way over in Little Rock, a 45 minute drive from my home.

Another reason? I felt as if I had the intense emotional support of friends and family. I just did not *need* to go.

Another reason? I think I was afraid of showing how broken I was. I tried to reserve my hysteria for Ralph and my brothers and parents. Didn't really like showing it to them either. I mostly cried outside in the yard, in the privacy of her bedroom or at her grave. Once I began "the crying", I'm tellin ya,...it was loud and ugly.

Now, almost 5 years later, I still do not NEED to go meet with the "Bereaved Parents" support group. I COULD get along without them. However,.... the meetings that Ralph and I attend never fail to encourage me. The people I meet in that room are some of the most strong, wonderful friends I have. I expect that our friendship could be lifelong, although the reality is that, years will pass, we will "move on" in our grief and other newer, fresher bereaved parents will take our place.

The parents who find the courage to come mere weeks after their loss amaze me.

I could not have done it.

But then again,...I wish I had.

Becky Russell

*Lovingly lifted from:*  
<http://grievingwithgrace.blogspot.com/2008/12/bereaved-parents-north-of-river.html>

*Editor's Note: Becky Russell will be a return speaker and workshop presenter at the upcoming 2010 BP/USA National Gathering in Little Rock Arkansas. She is awesome!*

In Loving Memory  
of  
Joseph D. Martínez  
"Joe"

May 23, 1972 to October 13, 2007



**Dear one, we are eternally one with our Creator and with each other**

Remembering You:

Dear one, I am remembering you especially today. I remember that, even though you may no longer be here beside me, you are a divine creation and part of all that is and will always be.

Although others may not have known you personally, your presence in this world has blessed many lives and I am grateful for you. I give thanks for your courage in overcoming challenges that perhaps seemed daunting at the time.

I remember that in Spirit there is nothing that ever did or ever could separate us. The oneness of all life expands into eternity and we are eternally one with our Creator and with each other.

Dear one, I remember you.

“I am grateful to God – whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did – when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day.”  
2 Timothy 1:3

Love, Mom

We miss you and love you.  
Your loving family,  
Mom, Patty, Mike, Brittany, and Michael

*In Loving Memory*

*Taylor K Pike*

*November 9, 1985 - May 14, 2007*



*Happy 24<sup>th</sup> Birthday in Heaven, my son*

*You are and always will be "Forever 21"*

*As time moves on and we come to the acceptance of the way life continues without your physical presence, we also see you and feel you in so many special ways. We know that your spirit is alive and well, and that love never dies.*

*We are thankful and grateful for the 21 years we were blessed with you! We know you are safe in the arms of God and free to continue your existence in a richer way. We'll meet again one day.*

## *Amputation of the Heart*

*By Connie Pike*

*Losing you, Taylor, was like losing a part of myself that can never be reclaimed until I am with you on the other side. It is as if a part of my heart, that was created when you were conceived, has been taken away. Nothing can fix it or replace it. It feels like I am living with an amputation. Amputees, they learn to live without the limb or limbs they have lost. But they never, ever forget what it was like to be whole. Some get artificial limbs - I have a lot of those. Your friends are wonderful to me and your dad and they come around when we need a young man. I see you in all those little boys I work with. They aren't you, but they sure make life easier, like a prosthesis would for an amputee. I see Amputees. Some of them sit bitterly in a wheelchair and maybe they numb out and stay angry. I understand that. Others, well, they run marathons, and they ski and swim and ski-dive and they learn to live life in a different way. Sure they miss that limb, and they'd like for things to be as they were. They'd like to be whole again, but they can soar as they are; incomplete. And so I seek to live my life. I miss you every day, but I am not going to stop living and I hope I can keep walking, running, growing, and learning until one day I can soar. With God's grace, I can. I will always love you, and never forget you.*



## 2009 Candlelight Ceremony (December 13) 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 13, and will light a candle in remembrance of my child/children

Number of people attending \_\_\_\_\_

- I have enclosed a picture for the Presentation.       Please use the picture from last year Presentation.
- I have enclosed \$3 for a picture button.     I have enclosed add'l \$1.00 to add child's 1st name: \_\_\_\_\_
- 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.

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: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## December 13, 2009 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 13. The ceremony will be held in The Medical Arts Building (MAB) Auditorium at St. Joseph's Hospital in Tampa. This day is also the **Children's 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. We can make a preordered picture button and have it ready for you when you arrive at the candle light. It will be made from a copy of the picture you submit for the picture presentation. Or bring a picture no smaller than 3" x 5" and picture will be cut and become the button! Buttons are round and measure approximately 2.25" in diameter. Cost per button is only \$3.00. You can also have their first name appear on the button preordered for \$1.00 charge. See above order.

**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 Beverly Hurley at 813-831-2588.

**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!

# 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.

## ***NOVEMBER MTG. 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-please do not wrap gifts!)

## Is Your Resistance Down?

One of the definitions of resistance is “the ability to bounce back after an injury.”

When recovering from an illness or an operation, everyone is concerned about your “resistance.” Don’t overdue it, take it easy, let yourself recover... You are in a compromised position right now and are very susceptible to complications to your recovery. When your resistance is down, it seems like you are pick up every virus, every sore throat. We’ve all heard and said those words. Physically, we understand that concept. What about emotional pain?

Since your child died, does it seem like almost every other bad thing in the world has happened to you and your family? It certainly may seem that way. You would think you had suffered enough already! But life goes on and grievors are not necessarily protected from more pain...

Your emotional, physical and spiritual being has suffered an enormous beating and your resistance is surely at its lowest point. Do you feel that you don’t have any ability to bounce back? Sometimes, even the simplest problems can seem insurmountable. Problems you used to be able to handle seen to wipe out all of your reserves.

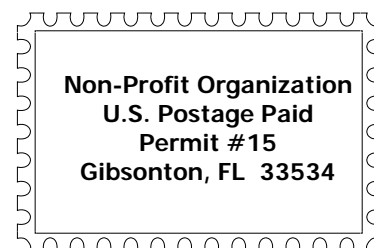
Grief can often rob of us of the ability to see the world around us with any kind of hope. Our rose-colored glasses are now darkened, and our horrible loss seems to overwhelm all of life.

The Bereaved Parents Credo says, “Recovery is possible.” It is; we, who are farther along the journey, know this to be true. In time, you will be able to bounce back, a little bit. Life will not always overwhelm you. You’ll be surprised to discover what a survivor you really are. Each day, you are creating your own new normal.

I never thought I could have survived a single day after Matt died. Now, the days have become years...



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



**November 2009**

POSTMASTER - Dated Material

Please do not delay.



If you no longer wish to receive a newsletter or have a new address, please let us know!