

Summer 2014



caring & sharing news

Helping rebuild lives following the death of a child

Caring and Sharing Support Meetings

4th Sunday

3 p.m.

Good Shepherd UMC
14999 Birchdale Avenue
Dale City, VA 22193

**There will not be a meeting in
July or August**

2nd Thursday

Pot Luck Social Event
7 p.m.

Larson Home
6900 Cole Timothy Court
Manassas, VA 20112
703-791-6537

rlarson900@verizon.com

**July's Pot Luck will be held on the
3rd Thursday - July 17th**

For more information contact:

Jodi Norman, Chapter Leader

703-910-6277 (home)

703-656-6999 (cell)

bpusa.nova@yahoo.com

"On The Wings of Love" Butterfly Release Sunday, July 13, 2014 (note date change)

5 p.m.



BP/USA Memorial Garden
St. Benedict Monastery
9535 Linton Hall Rd
Bristow, VA

The highlight of the Butterfly Release will be the individual and mass release of the butterflies accompanied by music, inspirational readings and remembering our children. We are requesting a \$5 donation per butterfly. Orders for the butterflies must be received by July 5th. Light refreshments will be provided.

RSVP by July 5, 2014 with the number of butterflies to Bev Ruane at bruane01@verizon.net or call 703-395-9546.

**No Sunday Meeting In July and August!
The Next Sunday Meeting will be on
September 28, 2014**

Hope to see you at the Butterfly Release!



We Remember Our Children

*Who have Birthdays and Angelversary dates
in May, June and July*

Jason Duane Alexander	7/02/74 ~ 7/24/13	Kashif Johnson	3/15/87 ~ 5/01/07
Charles (CJ) Angelos, Jr.	5/28/85 ~ 11/18/06	Robert Larson	3/14/94 ~ 6/30/10
Mielen Garlit Arquines	12/01/68 ~ 6/04/08	Nicole Michelle Lee	6/22/89 ~ 1/26/08
Brandon Scott Bailey	6/21/79 ~ 5/31/99	Robert Loiseau	8/22/72 ~ 5/27/93
James "Jimmy" Barnette	7/11/98 ~ 6/03/06	Sara Lott	11/01/95 ~ 7/23/08
Donald "Donnie" Barrett	5/14/76 ~ 5/03/02	Ella Miller	4/27/02 ~ 7/23/10
Kimberly Ann Barrett	9/08/86 ~ 5/04/02	Christina Morgan	7/30/80 ~ 3/13/02
Mateo Louis Bowman	6/10/13 ~ 6/10/13	Michael Joseph Moore	7/13/71 ~ 1/09/09
Parker Evan Boyd	9/15/98 ~ 6/04/08	Christina Morgan	7/30/80 ~ 3/13/02
Brian Brumbaugh	11/09/83 ~ 5/02/07	Johnny Ray Mullins	7/11/61 ~ 1/22/02
Brandon Bundy	5/19/84 ~ 8/24/08	Christian Paul Norman	2/04/85 ~ 6/03/01
Jason A. Clover	7/30/84 ~ 9/28/03	Matthew Miguel Ortiz	4/23/84 ~ 5/13/08
Todd Coder	7/23/84 ~ 9/24/10	Josephine Pennefather	6/21/03 ~ 6/21/03
Brandon DeWulf	6/20/85 ~ 6/29/09	Ronald Ralph, Jr.	7/27/66 ~ 11/04/02
Corey Martin Dill	7/25/90 ~ 5/03/07	Vernon Santmyer, Jr.	8/24/79 ~ 5/17/11
Tresa Eastes	3/07/67 ~ 7/08/03	Courtney Sharee Shelby	11/23/93 ~ 5/14/01
Robert Alan Finch	7/27/70 ~ 1/02/01	Brandon Simms	10/10/80 ~ 7/14/95
Rhonda Lynn Flannery	7/31/63 ~ 11/10/01	Adam Charles Sorge	5/12/84 ~ 1/04/14
Raven Gileau	6/23/90 ~ 4/23/10	Kevin Michael Stanphill	3/12/80 ~ 5/09/09
Jacob Charles Glushefski	5/23/77 ~ 2/21/11	Michael "Ryan" Stevens	7/07/87 ~ 5/30/07
Dwayne Eddie Gonsorcik	5/26/74 ~ 4/26/13	Linda Thompson Plewes	7/16/51 ~ 3/21/02
Christina Gordon	5/08/13 ~ 5/08/13	Andre' Waters	5/31/97 ~ 12/23/07
Kourtney Michelle Hale	5/29/80 ~ 3/17/10	Josh Weaver	6/17/82 ~ 9/09/09
Gabrielle Henderson	5/28/86 ~ 6/17/99	Kyle Robert Wilson	5/25/82 ~ 4/16/07
Adrienne Leigh Ingram	6/25/79 ~ 12/02/07	Tommie J. Wonnun III	6/14/84 ~ 6/20/03
Derrick V. James	6/01/74 ~ 5/28/05	Conner Woodward	5/15/08 ~ 5/17/08
Rasheem Jenkins	5/04/82 ~ 9/09/09	Stephen Wesley Wright	6/06/89 ~ 11/21/13



**Jason Duane Alexander
July 2, 1974 – July 24, 2013**

Dearest Jason,

First of all, Happy Birthday, as you celebrate your Big 4-0 amongst the heavens. We can't believe it's been a year since we last saw you. There isn't a day that goes by without a thought of you...a smile, a sunset, an 'ole familiar tune,...you left us with many memories, and your spirit lives on in our hearts! We miss you so much! Like the saying goes, "Sometimes memories sneak out of my eyes, and roll down my cheeks." However, we would rather have had you for 39 years, and all the pain that goes along with losing you, than never to have you in our lives at all!

Your Baltimore Orioles are playing on your birthday, so we'll be going to celebrate your special day...hope they win! We also plan on visiting the Dallas Cowboy Stadium in honor of your birthday. We know you'll be with us in spirit, and helping us get through the day.

Love you Forever!
Mom & Dad

Jason,

Just when I think it's getting easier to cope with your passing, then it happens...I see a photograph, or am reminded of a situation that reminds me of you. Waiting for you to chime in, and just knowing what you would be saying in any given situation. Knowing which jokes you would laugh at, and what you would find funny just being out in public. The fact is it won't get easier. There will always be something to remind me of you.

*Miss You!
Your brother Brian*

Summertime

By Sascha Wagner

It sounds so easy. A soft, warm word—time to run barefoot, time to leave windows open all night. Summertime. Somehow it seems, doesn't it, that it's especially meant for children. Children on beaches, children on swings, children in large pools, children in tiny tubs.



We who do not have all of our children with us may feel the summertime in two ways. One is to remember shared events and adventures—there were so many. Long rides in a hot car, a nap in the back seat. The famous question, "Are we there yet?" Everything from a heat rash to ice cream cones and sand castles.

For us, another way to feel summertime is the special emptiness brought about by children who are no longer on this earth. They used to trot along on hikes in the hills; they used to gather wood for an evening fire. Now summer brings us again the melancholy awareness of their absence.

Have you ever walked on some unfamiliar path, surprised about not having been there with the children? Even when there's nothing to remember, we are reminded of the children's absence. We have been diminished by death. Some of us may still have living children. Other parents have no children left. They have lost an only child, perhaps. Or all of their children died. And here we are, grateful for the warmth of summer mornings, aware of the ripe beauty of nature, trying to deal with our children's absence with all the grace of which we are capable. Often we do not want to burden others with our grief. Or we may be convinced that others don't wish to share our distress.

We have learned, after all, that the world around us is not always able to understand how we feel. Besides, we were taught to be brave. Many of us will do everything we can to appear "normal" after our loss. But we were also taught to be honest. And when you feel the hurt, when you seem almost to be lost in the shadows of this golden summertime, don't hide your sorrow. The grief of your spirit can perhaps be kept a secret on the outside. Yet, your deepest feelings, unexpressed, can burn into your existence with harmful force.

You can be both brave and honest. You know that it's brave to share grief, be it old grief or new grief. And revealing that sorrow is also honest. Of course, nothing can wipe away much of your pain, but sharing grief is helpful. You will know that after you have expressed the painful sorrow you once kept hidden, and you find yourself, finally, smiling at the memories and the blessings of past summertimes.

A Grieving Parents Wish List

- 1). I wish you would not be afraid to speak my child's name. My child lived and was important and I need to hear his/her name.
- 2). If I cry or get emotional if we talk about ... my child, I wish you knew that it isn't because you have hurt me. The fact that my child has died has caused my tears. You have allowed me to cry and I thank you. Crying and sometimes unexpected emotions are healing.
- 3). I wish you wouldn't ignore or act like my child never existed by removing from your home his pictures, artwork or other reminders of this very special person who lived and made a contribution to all of our lives.
- 4). I will have emotional highs and lows, ups and downs. I wish you wouldn't think that if I have a good day my grief is all over, or that if I have a bad day I need psychiatric counseling. My erratic and unpredictable mood swings, from exhilaration to hopelessness, are as unpredictable by me, as they are by you. This is part of my new "normal" life.
- 5). I wish you knew that the death of a child is different from other losses and must be viewed separate. It is the ultimate tragedy in a persons life. I wish you wouldn't compare it to your loss of a parent, a friend, a spouse or a pet.
- 6). Being a bereaved parent is not contagious, so I wish you would not shy away from me. I need you and you need me.
- 7). I wish you knew of all the "crazy" grief reactions that I have are, in fact, very normal. Depression, anger, frustration, hopelessness, and the questioning of values and beliefs are to be expected following the death of a child.
- 8). I wish you wouldn't expect my grief to be over in six months. Please do not think because my "time period" is over that I am a "former bereaved parent" but will forever more be a "recovering bereaved parent" . Please don't tell me how I should "cope" or that "it is time to move on" or "someday there will be closure". The word "closure" is a convenient, faddish media term that is absolute and complete nonsense and meaningless.
- 9). I wish you understood the physical reactions to grief. I may gain weight or lose weight, sleep all the time or not at all, develop a host of illnesses, be accident prone or forgetful, all of which may be related to my grief. I may become isolated and withdrawn for periods of time. I may not even be able to talk on the phone or return phone calls.
- 10). Our child's birthday, the anniversary of their death and holidays are terrible times for us. I wish you would tell us that you are thinking of our child on these days and if we get quiet and withdrawn, just know that we are thinking of our child and don't try to coerce us into being cheerful. If nothing else, I wish you would call once in a while and say "hi, I was thinking about you." Or just a friendly note, "just wanted to let you know I was thinking of you today and hope things are OK"
- 11). It is normal and good that most of us re-examine our faith, values and beliefs after losing a child. We will question things we have been taught all our lives and hopefully, come to some new understanding with my God. I wish you would let me tangle with my religion without making me feel guilty.
- 12). I wish you would understand that grief changes people. I am not the same person I was before my child died and I will never be that person again. If you keep waiting and encouraging me to "get back to my old self" you will be disappointed, discouraged and frustrated. I am a new creature, not by choice, but by circumstances, with new thoughts, new dreams, aspirations, goals, priorities, values and beliefs. Please try to get to know the new me...maybe you will still like me.

WHEN YOU SEE A BUTTERFLY

By: Brytani Russell Tampa, FL

When you see a butterfly
Think of me.

When you see a shadow
Don't be afraid.

When you see a light,
Think of good things.

But when you see a butterfly
Think of me.



When you see a cloud,
Don't be afraid to try and grab it.

When you see a raindrop,
Open your mouth and let it fall in.

When you see a hand touch you,
Don't jump away.

When you get all tingly,
Let the feeling last.

When you feel loved Cherish it forever.
But when you see a butterfly,

Think of me.

When you feel like no one is there,
Make sure you know I am.

When you feel like I am gone forever,
Make sure you feel like I am there.

When you think you have grieved too much,
I know there is always another tear,

Think of me.

For you know I am always with you,
in every way, shape and form.

I am always there to protect you,
Even through dangerous storms.

Know that I am right behind you,
In whatever fate decides to put you through.

For I may be gone,
But I am around,

**So when you see a butterfly,
Know I am always there.**

Memorial Garden

Our Memorial Garden located at the St. Benedict Monastery; 9535 Linton Hall Rd, Bristow, VA is a beautiful and peaceful place that is in memory of all the children of the Northern Virginia Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA. The Butterfly Release on July 13, 2014 will be held at our beautiful garden.

It takes a lot of hard work to keep the garden beautiful. I would like to thank those that have generously given of their time to make the garden a beautiful place to honor and remember our children. A huge thank you to the following: Bev Ingram, Dwain McMullen, Bev Ruane, Mary, Neil and Brian Alexander and all their friends who helped. Everyone is welcome to come and help to keep the garden looking alive and beautiful – the plants would love to have you give them some water while you are out enjoying the beauty of all the nature that is out there. Sit and listen to the birds sing, watch for beautiful butterflies, listen to the wind chimes or just enjoy the peacefulness of a quiet evening remembering our beautiful children!

There is still room for more memorial stones. They can be ordered from the website "Rockit Creations."

The large size is the best size to order allowing for enough room to have your child's name engraved on the stone.

Hope to see you all at the Butterfly Release!



Save the Date:
Annual Picnic,
Memory Walk
And
Balloon Release

Sunday, October 5, 2014
3:00 p.m.

AMAZON.COM

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This means that if you visit BP/USA before making an Amazon.com purchase, and click on the Amazon link on the page, that BP/USA will receive a percentage of all sales. The use of this link does not increase the cost of your purchase. Four to 13% of the sales price comes back to BP/USA.

Go to www.bereavedparentsusa.com.



FACEBOOK PAGE

A facebook page has been set up for our chapter. Members can join our group at [http://www.facebook.com/Bereaved Parents](http://www.facebook.com/BereavedParents) of the USA/Northern VA Chapter. This is a closed group for privacy purposes, so nothing posted here will go into your regular News Feed for your regular FB friends to see. Request to join the group and approval will be sent to you.



July 13, 2014
5 p.m.

Butterfly Release

July 25-27, 2014
National Gathering
St. Louis, MO

July 17 & August 14
Monthly Pot Luck Dinner

October 5, 2014
Picnic, Memorial Walk & Balloon
Release

Webmaster Needed

Our Chapter website is in desperate need of being updated. If you have the skills needed to be a Webmaster, we really could use your help and computer skills. We already have a site on Fat Cow but it has not been updated since 2011. We would like to include photos and bios of our children and use the site to keep our members up-to-date on what is going on in the chapter. This is a great way to do something in memory of your child.

If you are able to help us with this very important project, please call Jodi at 703-656-6999 or email bleachermom2000@aol.com

Refreshments

If you would like to remember your child's birthday or the anniversary of his or her death please bring your child's favorite cake or cookies to the meeting that month.

Bereaved Parents of the USA 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 journey. We attend month gatherings whenever we can and for as long as we believe necessary. We share our fears, 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 the triumphs as well as the love that will never fade. Together we learn how little it matters where we live, what our color or our affluence is 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 from each other to every more recently bereaved family.

*We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA.
We welcome you.*

Chapter Contact Information

Jodi Norman, Leader

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Bereaved Parents of the USA

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