



# A JOURNEY TOGETHER

## NEWSLETTER OF THE BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA

VOLUME X NO. 4 FALL, 2005  
(October, November, December)

### 2005 NATIONAL GATHERING

The 2005 National Gathering in Las Vegas was a memorable one. Las Vegas broke the heat record twice – 117 degrees one day and 120 another. It is more memorable for the members of BP/USA because of the great speakers and workshop leaders.

Our thanks to Cathy Bender and her committee. Especial thanks are owed to President Pat Moser, her Pete and her chapter in Ocala, Florida and to Dave and Bev Hurley and their chapter in Tampa Florida. They all spent much time putting things together and handling registration. Then, when Cathy became sick the day before the Gathering, the Board of Directors, their spouses and members who had come early pitched in and everything was ready when the people began to arrive. The Tampa and Ocala chapters also made wonderful gifts for the tables at the meals. It certainly showed how the officers, Board members and chapters can work together to make a meaningful Gathering happen. Thanks to everyone.

If you would be interested in seeing and hearing some of the speakers and workshop leaders, see page 10 of this newsletter for an order blank. These tapes would make good presentations for chapter meetings too. We thank Dave and Bev Hurley for making these tapes for us.

Plan now to come next year. Information is on page 2 about the 2006 Gathering.

### “TRIGGERS THAT CALL THEIR NAMES”

“Triggers That Call Their Names” was the title of the first keynote address given by Mitch Carmody at the 2005 Gathering. Mitch talked about many aspects of grief but one thing that was especially helpful was the reference to triggers of grief. We have all experienced them but it was helpful to have them listed and spelled out so well. These are the senses that trigger memories of our beloved child. They may cause tears, anger or agony but, like all memories we have, they can also be triggers of happy times.

The sense of touch is one of the senses. Touching certain things may bring back memories. The sense of smell is another. How often has the smell of our child’s clothing, his or her favorite food, flowers, a Christmas tree, etc. brought back fond memories.

The sense of sight is another trigger. We often see a lunch box, a prom dress, a school bus, etc. that brings back memories. The sense of hearing is a sense that reminds us of how much certain songs or sounds can remind us of our loved one. The sense of taste can also bring memories as we eat the child’s favorite food – or maybe even the child’s most unfavorite food! The last sense and trigger that Mitch mentions is the psychic sense. How many of us have had experiences when we truly felt the presence of our child, maybe when we see a butterfly, smell a special smell or hear a special song.

Mitch reminded us that our connection to our loved one who has died is very real. He also reminded us that we can not run from these thoughts and experiences but can live with them and enjoy them. He encouraged us to use all of our senses to remain close to our loved one.

Mitch organized a sibling choir who sang and signed a beautiful song to us at the end of the Gathering. This will be another trigger for many of us, reminding us of not only the child we no longer have here on earth but of the real comfort of those children some of us still are fortunate enough to have with us.

If you are interested in reading more of message, it is written in Grief Digest, Vol. 2, Issue 4. You may subscribe or obtain copies of this helpful magazine by contacting Grief Digest, Centering Corporation, PO Box 4600, Omaha, Nebraska or calling them at 402-553-1200. His book of letters and poems written to his son, *LETTERS TO MY SON, A Journey Through Grief* is also available from Centering Corporation and is a very helpful book.

(This cover page was written and

“I learned that there is life after death on both sides of the equation – when faith is the common denominator. We substantiate our lost loved one’s life by the way we *live* ours.”

Written by Mitch in  
*LETTERS TO MY SON*

compiled by the editor. )

**BEREAVED PARENTS OF  
THE USA**

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**BOARD NOMINATIONS**

There are three vacancies to be filled on the Board of Directors for 2006-2007. Nominations are welcome and should be sent to Bev Hurley by email at [Bee.hurley@gte.net](mailto:Bee.hurley@gte.net) or by calling her at 813-832-3175.

**SPECIALS**

This edition of the Newsletter is longer and contains several specials: Page 8 is the order form for the Hinsdale Christmas cards; Page 10 is the order blank for videos of speeches and workshops of the 2005 Gathering; Page 11 is pictures from the 2005 Gathering.



**FROM  
THE  
EDITOR**

At various places in this newsletter you will read about the past Gathering. the Mayor of Las Vegas, Oscar B. Goodman declared July 15-17, 2005 to be Bereaved Parents of the USA Weekend. Plans are already underway for next years Gathering in St. Louis and we are all looking forward to it. See the box on page 3.

Our Treasurer, David Hurley, testified at a hearing of the President's Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform on behalf of the small business owners and was named Small Business Champion for 2005 by the National Federation of Independent Business. We congratulate Dave and now know how he can manage our funds so well!

Our mission is to help parents, grandparents and siblings as they journey through the grief over the loss of a child, grandchild or sibling. I am especially happy to review two new books for Grandparents who are grieving. The loss of fine men and women in Iraq leaves many family members to whom we should reach out. We also need to reach out to the survivors of Katrina. If you know anyone who has suffered a loss in either of these places or if you live near a base for service and reserve personnel, offer your help to them. Refer them to our website and/or any of our Board Members or chapters and tell them about the National Newsletter.

We all can understand these losses and we, as individuals, of course, have opinions about the war and the problems related to Katrina, but we should remember that our mission as BP/USA is to reach out to the grieving. BP/USA does not take a stand on a political or religious matter. Reach out with your love and concern and offer these people a way to deal with their loss and grief as we "Journey Together".

Dear BP Friends,

I once again am humbled and thankful to be elected to serve another year as President of BP/USA. This will be the final year of my 6 year term on the National Board and I am looking forward to having it be a productive and growing year for our organization.

We would like to welcome Donna Corrigan from Hinsdale, IL, to the Board. Reelected were Theresa Valentine of Omaha, NB, and Cathy Bender of N. Las Vegas, NV. Beverly Hurley from the Tampa, FL, chapter was elected Vice President. Kevin Hunsaker of Little Rock, AR and Carol Welch of St. Louis, MO, make up the rest of the BOD. David Hurley continues as our National Treasurer. Our thanks go to Jack Ewart from Lewisburg, WV, who went off the board this year.

The 2004-2005 year has been a good one for BP/USA. Perhaps our biggest accomplishment this year was our great new website with Elise-Cronin-Hurley of Winter Park, FL Since we started this site, we have received over 250 requests from across our country and even from other countries, asking to be added to our e-mail notification list for the National Newsletter. Betty Ewart of Lewisburg, WV, continues doing her usual great job as our editor.

We had 8 new chapters and 3 new satellite chapters start. Our Policy & Procedure Manual and our BP/USA Bylaws were updated. Our BOD, after much thought and deliberation, decided that it was now time in our history to eliminate the "Member at Large" designation leaving everyone who desires to be a part of BP/USA, whether a member of a chapter or an interested person to be full members of BP/USA. Board Members have been serving as "email buddies" to those in areas where there are no BP/USA Chapters, finding other support groups for them to attend when possible.

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Our Annual National Gathering held in Las Vegas this summer was a great success. A special thanks to all our wonderful speakers, Mitch Carmody, Prentice Minner, Harold Ivan Smith, Joyce Harvey and Rosemary Smith as well as all who presented workshops. It was each of you who played a tremendous part in helping make it truly a weekend of healing and hope. We are now looking forward to our 2006 Gathering on June 23-25 in St. Louis, MO. We encourage everyone to start making plans to attend.

We are in the finishing stage of developing a new Chapter Leader's Guide which will be sent soon to all chapters. We will also be adding articles to our national website to help newly bereaved persons who spend those sleepless night we seasoned grievors know so well, searching the web for help in their grief. We have succeeded in getting our Bereaved Parents of the USA name registered.

On a sad note, BP/USA lost three very special friends this year with the deaths of Jim Moore, longtime member and tireless worker from the Orange County CA Chapter, Bob Ottman from the Denton TX Chapter who served as Treasurer of the 2002 National Gathering as well as supporting Shirley's work in BP/USA and Dolly Criswell, former member of our Marion County FL Chapter and member of the Low-Country SC Chapter who served as Chairperson of the 2004 Gathering. Our love and prayers are sent to Linda Moore, Shirley Ottman and Dolly's sister Harriet Selandar and all of their family and friends. The people will be greatly missed by BP/USA.

I must add that the thoughts and prayers of all of BP/USA are also with all of the victims and families who were affected by the devastation of hurricane Katrina. We are especially concerned about members of

the St. Bernard LA Parish Chapter where our 2001 Gathering was held. If any member of the Chapter receives this, please contact us at [PresidentBP/USA@aol.com](mailto:PresidentBP/USA@aol.com) as all of your BP family is very worried about you.

Remember that BP/USA is truly a "Journey Together" and I and our entire Board of Directors look forward to working hand and hand with our Chapters and other members to see BP/USA grow and be able to reach out to help even more hurting bereaved families across our nation. Please let us know how we can serve you.

Hugs to each of you.

Pat Moser, President BP/USA



### THE PETERSON AWARD

The 2005 Roy and Juanita Peterson Award was presented this year by Juanita to Betty Ewart "For 10 Years of Dedicated Service in Giving of Her Time, Talents, Love and Compassion". Past Recipients have been Roy and Juanita, John Goodrich, Mary Cleckley, Paul & Pat Kinney, Mitchell & Renee Dudnikov, Shirley Ottman and Pat Moser. In accepting, Betty said she was honored to be in the same company as these people and appreciated the award. She thanked her husband, Jack, for supporting her and said she did it for and in memory of their Ruthie.

If you would like to nominate someone for this award for 2006, please contact Pat Moser with details of the persons involvement in Chapter and National activities. The nominations should be sent to Pat Moser as [presidentbpusa@aol.com](mailto:presidentbpusa@aol.com).

### PLAN NOW

The 2006 Gathering will be June 23-25 in St. Louis. Those of you who were at the previous Gathering know that this will be a great one. The Theme will be "Gateway to Healing where the Journey of the Heart Continues". More information will be coming out later on both the web and in this newsletter. Meanwhile you may contact Sharon Krejci at 314-878-0890 and all of the latest information will be posted on the St. Louis Chapter newsletter at [www.bpustl.org](http://www.bpustl.org).

See you in St. Louis!

### LESSONS LEARNED

By Tom Wyatt  
BP/USA St. Louis, MO Chapter

They'll come to the door in  
make-up and masks,  
"Trick or Treat" they  
will say.

I'll smile and give them candy, on  
this joyous, sorrowful day.

I'll celebrate this day with joy  
in my heart and a tear in my eye:  
it is the day my Johnny was born  
and with joy and sorrow I'll cry.

I'll remember the first time I held  
him, my sweet baby boy:  
I'll think about our four years  
together with all the love and joy.

I'll think about what was lost,  
The future that might have been:  
But then I'll remember what we had  
and I'll smile once again.

The sorrow I can't deny,  
the pain his death has brought,  
but on this day I choose to remember  
the lessons of love he taught.



## BOOK REVIEWS

**FORGOTTEN TEARS:** A grandmother's Journey Through Grief by Nina Bennett is a great addition to the library of grief books. As she said, when she became a bereaved grandmother, she could not find much written just for grandparents. Her Granddaughter, Maddy, was stillborn and no one expected this because all had been going well. She tells us that 71 babies are stillborn every day. Her book gives many insights into the different role of some grandparents today – caregiver while the parents both work and total caregiver sometimes. This means a close and different relationship with a grandchild. She also talks about the great-grandparents who are often from a time when the thinking about still birth and infant death was handled differently. She uses references to many of the good books on grief and offers a book list and a list of groups who can help – including BP/USA. She deals with the fact that there is a bonding between child and grandparents even before birth. Grandparents had plans for life with the grandchild. She also deals with the terrible pain of seeing one's child (the parent) grieve and not being able to help. This book would be a good addition to any library. It is available through [www.Booklocker.com](http://www.Booklocker.com).

**TO HENRY IN HEAVEN**, by Herbert Brokering is another new book about a grandparent's grief. It is written by a grandfather to his grandson who was stillborn. He wants to keep the child's memory alive and not have him forgotten because of his early death. He writes poems and spiritual dialogues to the grandson, Henry, about many things he wants the child to know about. He adds what he feels are Henry's replies and thoughts in italics. No matter what the age of your child or when he/she died, this book would be

helpful. It is available from Augsburg Fortress, 100 South 5th St., Suite 700, Minneapolis, MN, phone 612-330-3234.

Editor's note:

I would like to refer you to two other places that deal with the loss of a stillborn or infant. **CANDLE LIGHT** is a newsletter put out by Pen-Parents of Australia. It is very well done and always has articles written by someone who suffered this type of a loss. You can contact them at PO Box 574, Belconnen ACT 2616, Australia. I would suggest you offer to make a donation to cover the mailing of the newsletter to help them with their costs. Secondly, I would suggest you might want to look into information on making a scrapbook for a baby who has died due to miscarriage, stillbirth or perinatal death. For this, contact Emily Wilberg through [www.pregnancylossribbons.com](http://www.pregnancylossribbons.com).

**MORE THAN TEARS:** *Lifting the Burden of Grief* is by Janice Urie. It is the story of one family's recovery after the unexpected death of a teenage son. She reminds us that family, friends and support groups can help us but, "Grief work is the hardest work you will ever have to do but it is necessary in order to take back control of your life." At the end of each chapter, she offers insights into an aspect of grief. She also gives a good list of books and support groups who are available at the end of the book. (Please note that our web site is .org not .com as listed there.) She points out that we have three choices: "(1 ) You can try to stay the same after the death of your loved one, (2) You can give up on life and drop out of society, (3) You can recover and become a stronger, more compassionate person." This book can help you choose number 3. It is available from Vantage Press, Inc., 419 Park Ave. South, NY, NY 100016. Janice has a web site also. It is [www.MoreThanTears.com](http://www.MoreThanTears.com).

**ALSO NOTE :** On [www.griefcast.blogspot.com](http://www.griefcast.blogspot.com) you will find more help from Dr. Shep Jeffreys who led workshops at the Gathering including an interview from the Gathering.

December 12, 2005, is National Children's Memorial Day. We ask that you light a candle that night at 7 p.m. This date is observed all over the world so that, as time zones vary, the light spreads around the world, reminding us all of our children. Some chapters use this as their Memorial Candle-light night also.

## MEMORIAL COOKBOOK

The St. Louis BP/USA chapter is reprinting their Cookbook, **TASTE OF HEAVEN**. They would like to give parents all over the country an opportunity to be a part of this cookbook. It is a collection of our children's favorite recipes with excerpts/quotes from you about the grief process and what helped you in your grief journey. The cookbook will be out in 2006, they anticipate.

To include your child/children in this 2nd edition you need to have your information in by October 15, 2005. Contact Sharon Krejci at [skrejci@swbell.net](mailto:skrejci@swbell.net) or by phone at 636-532-0033. You may e-mail the information to Sharon. Please include the name of your child, birth and death dates, their favorite recipe, your quote/words of wisdom/poem, etc. Include the name of the author if the poem you send is by another author. The entire article should be no more than 200 words. If your child was stillborn or an infant death, send your favorite recipe and the poem or other writing. If your child is included, this makes a great Christmas gift for family and friends.

For more information go to [www.bpusastl.org](http://www.bpusastl.org) and click on Taste of Heaven.

## THE GRIEF DANCE

By Beverly Hurley  
BP/USA Tampa Bay FL

I have always loved to dance. As a toddler, I danced around the living room, watching TV programs as they once were, with talent entertainment. As a young girl, I tap danced my heart out at weekday classes and performed in recitals that culminated our season's efforts. As a team, I danced as a cheer leader, leading chants to a crowd cheering on our team, and I loved sock hops. As a young woman, I danced at parties and weddings. Dancing was a fun expression of joy and happiness: an escape at times from reality.

When my daughter Debbie died. I found myself what I now refer to as the grief dance instead of dancing for fun and an expression of happiness; it was a definite escape from reality. I did this dance with my spouse, surviving daughter, with my sister and brother (who lived out of town) and with friends, neighbors and coworkers. I was hurting so badly inside but thought I needed to hide my true feelings from the many people in my life.

Was I dancing the Two-Step (avoiding my true feelings); the Tango ( an expression of passion and anger with an attitude) so no one would notice my pain; the Ballet (tiptoeing around so no one would notice my pain); or was it the Tap ( fast and loud) so no one would see my pain; the Fox Trot with two steps back (or forward), two steps to the side, etc. (always trying to stay a step ahead of those around me who might see my true grief); perhaps it was at times the Waltz (being smooth and gracefully showing others that I was in complete control of my emotions); or the Polka (by displaying high energy and moving around with lots of spins and turns so that I myself would not even know the pain I was

feeling); or it the Salsa I was dancing (which was fast and furious so that I, myself, would not even take the time to feel my grief or to acknowledge it and work on it)?

Now I am doing the Stroll (which is accepting where I am and living a purposeful live). I guess I will never stop totally dancing my Grief dance and may, at times, may try to side step my grief; nevertheless, I still love to dance and I find myself, once again, dancing to the enjoyment of living.

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The next two articles are taken, with permission, from the newsletter of the BP/USA Anne Arundel County Chapter in Annapolis, Maryland.

## THE CHERRY TREE

By Diane Royer  
In memory of Aaron S. Royer

Dad cut down the old cherry tree today.

'It needs to come down', I had to say.  
So he would notice it was true,  
Diseased and riddled with bugs too.

Later that night, I started to cry...  
I didn't quite understand why.  
Tears spun like a tornado to my core  
Leaving me crying an hour, two,  
then more.

Now there's an empty place in our yard

Where the cherry tree once stood guard.

But if I close my eyes I can still see  
The four of you picking cherries  
from that tree.

Those were happier days.. they went by so fast.

I always knew they couldn't last...  
For the four of you grew much like the tree.

So beautiful...you mean the world to me.

Now, my lovely son, four years dead—

Thoughts of you always fill my head.  
Your short lifetime-only eighteen years.

Not long enough say my endless tears.

You are so deeply mourned by your sisters and brother,  
But I can't know their grief— only that of a mother.

A Grief so unrelenting I can't move on -

So instead, I cry when a cherry tree is gone.

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## CARING FOR THE OTHER...

Rick Tomaszewski. Editor

William L Stidger, a noted pastor brilliantly described the true meaning of sympathy by sharing this story: "I remember once seeing a crowd of children on a playground, all of them weeping. I walked over to them. A boy was lying on the ground bent over almost double and crying with pain. I asked a little girl what the trouble was and she replied, "We all got a pain in Jimmy's stomach!" What a wondrous definition of sympathy and caring from the mouths of babes! Simply stated....sympathy is another's pain in my heart.

The above was from a message posted by M. Thomas Harned, Colonel, USAF, NSA/CSS Staff Chaplain.

I am stuck by the thought that, as we sit through our monthly meetings, that same basic sympathy seems to be present in the hearts of most everyone in the room. Although we may not be attending these meetings to draw sympathy from others, we appreciate the thought that no one hesitates to offer their heartfelt feelings to help others through their grieving process.



## **COPING WITH OCTOBER**

By Tracy Stackhouse

BP/USA Central Arkansas Chapter

The coming of autumn with the beautiful colors of the leaves and their falling will bring different emotions to different families. Maybe your family had a tradition of driving through particularly scenic areas. Maybe the child you lost was the one who raked the leaves. Perhaps all of this will simply be a reminder that winter and a barren landscape are coming.

Halloween is a favorite holiday for most children, but it can be hard for bereaved parents. This formerly innocent holiday, the year's decorated as graveyards with markers and ghosts and skeletons, the stories of unhappy spirits that must walk the earth, all have a completely different impact on us now.

Many of us have opened the door to give out treats and been faced with a costume so similar to one our child wore for a Halloween past that either we really want to pull aside the mask to see the face behind or we want to dream that this was one last visit from our precious child.

Some parents have surviving children who still want to join in the fun – and, oh, how hard to “trick or treat” when you feel the victim of the ultimate “trick”.

Stop and think – What can you do differently? For autumn and its beauties and chores, what routines can you change? Hire someone or ask a friend who has been offering to help and asking for specific tasks. Maybe you could do it together. For Halloween, take surviving children to a carnival (many schools and churches sponsor these). Or, if a carnival was an every year event, go to the zoo or go door-to-door this year. If you don't have surviving children wanting to celebrate, maybe you can leave your house dark and go to a movie and skip this holiday. In any

event, planning ahead will help you get through a difficult time.



## **THANKSGIVING IS FOR THE BEREAVED AND BROKEN**

By Alice J. Wisler

Revised from LARGO, Winter 2001

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 Years 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.

## **MERRY CHRISTMAS**

By Sandy Goodman, 2002

This year...  
the silence of a starry night,  
the brightness of the snow,  
and the crispness in the air  
remind me of you.

Memories of you  
allow joy to sneak in.  
Though time has not healed,  
Love has,  
and love needs time to show itself  
when smothered in fear..

This year...  
the glitter of the garland,  
the tinkling of the bells, and the  
cheer of glad tidings  
remind me of you.

And you...  
Remind me to love.

## A BIKE FOR CHRISTMAS

By Jim Dixon

BP/USA Springfield IL Chapter

I'll never forget the first new bike I gave him for Christmas. I was working construction then and saw a pair of bikes on my lunch time one day. I knew my son and daughter would love these bikes. Each week, when I got my paycheck, I would go make a payment on the bikes. After 4 weeks, I took those shiny new bikes home and hid them in a neighbor's garage.

On Christmas eve, I brought them home and we put them under the tree. He and his sister were so excited when they got up Christmas morning and found the bikes. I'll never forget the look of joy in their eyes.

The second Christmas after my son died, I again had a real need to give him a special gift. All I could think about was how happy he had been when he got that new bike years ago. I decided some young boy was going to get a new bike and that both Todd and I would share a smile on Christmas morning. I didn't know any boy who needed a bike and, honestly, I didn't want to see a boy riding that bike in my neighborhood to remind me every day of one who would never ride a bike again.

I did know a priest who serving an area where many parents did not make much money. I called him and told him I needed to give a new bike to my son but, since I couldn't give it to him, I needed his help to find a family who had a son who would treasure a bike but could not afford one. I asked him to tell this boy's parents that they could really help a bereaved father have a better Christmas. I didn't need to know who they were. It was a gift, but it really was a gift to me as much as to their son.

On Christmas morning, a young boy got a bike and I got to repeat that memory of that great smile and it made it a little easier day.

You might want to try doing something similar.



## CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS

By Dennis Klass

Former Advisor to BP/USA

“What child is this who laid to rest, in Mary's lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds guard are keeping?”

So, it's about a baby – born, celebrated. About the wonder that gathers around a birth. It's about new life and hope—a rose blooming in the middle of a winter's snow. Gifts from afar and the promise of peace.

Everybody's baby feels like the Christ Child. The mystery of that birth is repeated for each of us in the birth of our own children. The mystery of something new, that never was before, that has nothing but possibilities—those mysteries are all part of every birth.

For most people, the hope is for that emerging newness. The birth of the child represents a continual renewal—the opening up of the future as one generation succeeds another. But, it was not a long and happy life. He couldn't seem to settle down to the carpenter business. When He came home once, He got people so upset that they ran Him out of town.

And He died!

For bereaved parents, some of the message of Christmas is in the irony that this child was born to die. So Christmas has a bittersweet taste for BP/USA members. A baby born and now a child dead. Our love is still going out, but there is not a receiver on the other end.

There is another way of looking at it though. “O come to us, abide with us, be born in us this day.” The child lives because he lives in us. Our life was changed by his visit to earth. We have been touched by that specialness that was that child's alone. Our child did not die so that we would shrivel up. Our child's birth and death means we must live. The love we had for that child is now ours to give to ourselves and to others.

We know the meaning of Christmas in a way others can only guess. We thought we would leave our children behind us, now we know that our children have left us behind. We live in their place.

“O come to us, abide with us, be born in us this day.”

## WINTERSONG

By Sascha  
From WINTERSONG

Season of lights,  
season of love and peace

Season of shadow,  
season of memories

Season of warmth and joy,  
season of secret tears:

Give us the courage to laugh  
again

Give us the vision to hope again

Give us the power to love again

For all our new seasons

And all our new years.

## CHRISTMAS CARDS

Again this Christmas season, the Hinsdale Chapter of BP/USA is selling Christmas Cards. This is a fund raiser for their chapter. This year's card has the word PEACE embossed across the center of a white card. Above the word PEACE is a silhouette of a small angel with a trumpet that has stars tumbling out of it. The stars continue to fall around the word PEACE, continuing on to the bottom left corner of the card. The angel silhouette and the stars are blue and the rest of the card is black and white. The card is 4 1/2" by 8". The message is "Wishing you a season filled with peaceful memories carried forever in your heart. The inside top side of the card says, "In Memory of our Children." The cards come with white envelopes.

The cards cost \$12 a package with 20 cards per package plus \$4.50 postage. If you order 10 or more packs there is a \$10% discount and only .50 for extra package. Make checks payable to Bereaved Parents of the USA and send the order and check to BP/USA c/o Dominic Caccavari, 481 Uvedale Road, Riverside, IL 60546. For information or an order form you may call him at 708-442-6555.

The Hinsdale Christmas cards are always beautiful and a way of remembering our children as well as our family and friends at Christmas.

## ALL OCCASION CARDS

The Hinsdale Chapter also has all occasion cards available. The front of these cards is a field of flowers in black and white, heavily embossed in the foreground with lighter embossing toward the back, giving the effect of a garden that seems to go on forever. On one of the flowers is a periwinkle blue butterfly. The card is blank inside for one's own message. The cards are 4 1/2" by 6" and there are 20 cards with white envelopes in each package.

The prices are the same and checks should be made out to Bereaved Parents of the USA and mailed to the same address



## LIGHTS

By Dorothy Hanley

From Nov/Dec 1988 Bereavement Magazine – [www.bereavementresources.com](http://www.bereavementresources.com)

The holidays are a time of many lights, yet the holidays may also be the darkest days for people who are grieving the death of someone they loved, but many other kinds of losses as well. I am reminded of the October fogs here in the Seattle area. The sun comes out in the afternoon and things look wonderful until the fog returns at night. We always hope that the next day will repeat the procedure-happy for whatever brief sunlight we can see. It's somewhat like the respite from grieving we begin to experience when the pain lifts for a few minutes. The grief becomes more bearable when we know that, in exchange for hours of hurt, there can be moments of peace and hope.

We hope that, while the holidays may be painful for you, they will also bring the realization that you have the opportunity to exercise choices and make decisions about how you will spend this time. This may be the best gift of all-the opportunity to begin to take charge and direct the course your life will take, if only by one small step at a time. The candles can be reminders that, as time passes, what began as a view of a frighteningly dark future may finally be seen in the light of your own personal growth toward adjustment to the death of your loved one. Just as the rain passes and a single ray of sunlight at first illuminates only a tiny spot in the dark landscape, light will return to your life, bit by bit. Take heart and try not to be too afraid of the dark. Look for the candles along the way to give you hope for a brighter new year.

**BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA  
MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

Elizabeth B. Estes  
Mary Murphy  
BP/USA of Metropolitan Baltimore Chapter  
Renee Dudnikov  
Michele Fletcher Friends at the SEC  
One Roof/Corner Pocket Teams of Maryland  
Maxine Russell  
Susan Monkhouse  
Linda & Clifton Martin  
Jack & Betty Ewart  
Morton & Lorraine Schrag  
Lee Story

In Loving Memory of John Cleckley  
In Loving Memory of son, Dylan  
In Loving Memory of their Children  
In Loving Memory of Bob Ottman and get well wishes for Betty Ewart  
In Loving Memory of Willie J. Fletcher  
In Loving Memory of Reginald & Willie Fletcher  
In Loving Memory of Darren Russell  
A Donation toward the work of BP/USA  
In Loving Memory of Dolly Criswell  
In Appreciation for the life of Bob Ottman  
In Loving Memory of Robert Ottman & John Cleckley  
In Loving Memory of Robert Ottman & John Cleckley

We also want to thank all of those who made objects in memory of their children for sale at the Boutique at the 2005 Gathering. We also thank those who gave beautiful gifts for the auction at the Gathering in memory of their children. We also thank Burton Erlich of Ladas & Parry Firms in Chicago for donating his time to help us register our BP/USA name.

If we missed listing a donation, we apologize. If you will notify the Treasurer of your gift and the memorial, we will be sure it is acknowledged in the next Newsletter. Thank you. Our Treasurer is Dave Hurley and he may be reached at 3805 West San Juan Street, Tampa, Florida 33629-7819, by phone at 813-831-2588 or by e-mail at david.hurley@gte.net. Since BP/USA is a qualified charitable 501(c) (3) organization, your donation may be tax deductible. The work of BP/USA is financed entirely by contributions. All the leaders, national and local, are volunteers. Donations go directly to help chapters, to help in the sending of the Newsletter and to keep costs of the Gathering as low as possible. You may designate your donation to any of these areas or to the general work of the BP/USA. If there is no designation, the money will be used for general operating funds. Please always designate carefully how you wish a memorial or gift listed. We thank our chapters, individual members and other friends for their generous support of BP/USA and its work.

**NOT AN EASY WORD**

**Hope is not an easy word for grievers  
but we, more than most others,  
need to understand  
what hope can mean for us.**

**Hope means finding the strength  
to live with grief.**

**Hope means nurturing with grace  
the joy of remembrance.**

**Hope means embracing  
with tenderness and pride  
our own life  
and the gifts left to us  
by those we have lost.**

**By Sascha from WINTERSUN**

## Bereaved Parents of the USA - 2005 National Gathering - Available Videos

Number	Workshop/Occasion	Presenter(s)	Video Tape	DVD	Quantity	Amount
1	Triggers That Call Their Name (Opening Ceremony)	Mitch Carmody				\$
2	My Grief Gear Bag	Betty Werner				
3	A Family's Journey Through the Suicide of a Child	Tom & Debbie Hennessy				
4	Someone I Love Was Murdered	Marie Belmontez & Agnes Gibboney				
5	From the Abyss to Abundance (Friday Luncheon)	Joyce Harvey				
6	Forgiveness - A Christian's Perspective	Jerry & Skip Mudge				
7	Mending Broken Hearts	Prentice Minner				
8	Butterfly Gardening	Theresa Valentine				
9	Grief Keeping: The Ultimate Gift of Remembrance (Friday Dinner)	Harold Ivan Smith				
10	The Forgotten Victims: Parents & Siblings Whose Child Died From Substance Abuse	Richard & Susan Berman				
11	A December Grief/Grieving While Others Are Celebrating	Harold Ivan Smith				
12	The Grief of Parents: An "Upside Down World"	Shep Jeffreys				
13	Dreams of the Bereaved	Joyce Harvey				
14	Easier Said—Than Done (Saturday Luncheon)	Prentice Minner				
15	The Night the Angels Cried: I Started Journaling	June Proctor				
16	It's Been A Long Time and I Am Still Grieving	Juanita Peterson				
17	Cliches	Linda Delk				
18	A Breath Away—Hope is What Really Matters	Rosemary Smith				
19	Gathering Highlights including: Welcome by Mayor Goodman; Roy & Juanita Peterson Award; Youth Signing at closing					
<b>TOTALS:</b>						\$

Ordered by: \_\_\_\_\_

Of the \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclose check payable to David Hurley for \$7.00 per ordered tape. (Includes Postage)

Enclose check payable to David Hurley for \$6.00 per ordered DVD. (Includes Postage)

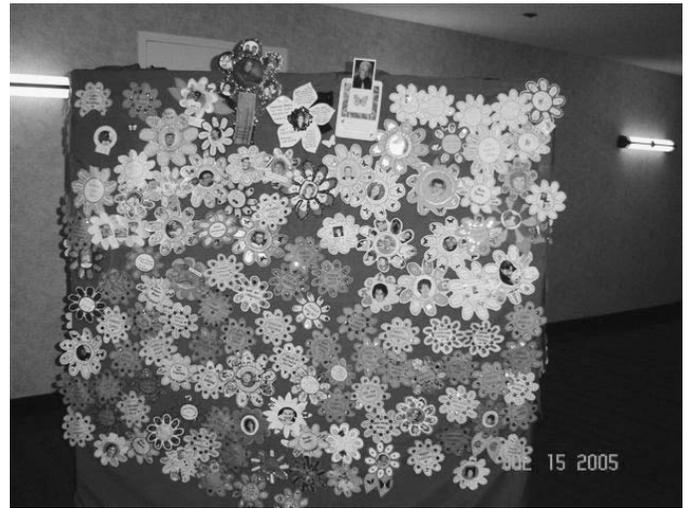
### MAIL ORDER TO:

**David Hurley**  
**3805 West San Juan Street**  
**Tampa, Florida 33629-7819**  
**Phone (813) 831-2588**

Email questions to [David.Hurley@gte.net](mailto:David.Hurley@gte.net)



**Members prepare for Gathering**



**Flowers sent with loved ones pictures**



**Preparations for Registration**



**President Pat presiding**



**Presentation of Peterson Award**



**Sibling choir signing song at closing**

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 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 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 to each other and to every more recently bereaved family. We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA. We welcome you.

**BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA  
CREDO**

**Newsletter Editor  
Bereaved Parents of the USA  
326 Longview Ave.  
Lewisburg, WV 24901**

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



**If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or have a new address, please let us know. Thank you.**