



A JOURNEY TOGETHER

NEWSLETTER OF THE BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA

VOLUME VIII NO. 1, Winter 2003
(January, February and March)

From January, 2003 Newsletter

By Lisa Beall
BP/USA Ann Arundel County
Chapter, Annapolis, Maryland

January seems like a good time to talk about making changes – New Year's resolutions are, of course, very popular. The problem with them is they rarely last longer than the thirty-one days of January. Despite our good intentions, we don't lose the weight, stop smoking the cigarettes, etc.

What kind of New Year's resolution is right (or even possible) for a bereaved parent or sibling? We might resolve to find something to feel good about each day. But some days, we can barely get out of bed, let alone feel good. Should we abandon our resolutions when we have a bad day? Unfortunately, for bereaved families, consistency is one of the things that we lost when we became bereaved. What we really need is patience with ourselves. Just when you think you are making some progress, a bad day just takes everything out of you. It's tempting to give up and decide that it will never get better again. But making our way through grief really is a series of tiny steps. We want to feel better, but it will take a long time.

We recommend that your resolutions take the form of gentle reminders – that life has dealt you a terrible blow...that you are not the same person you used to be and never will be...that you will get through this with the help of your family and friends...that life holds promise

beyond the pain.

A friend told us recently that her mother grieves for the son who died 30 years ago, especially at Christmas time. Her eyes fill with tears and she longs for the child who has been gone for so long. She misses her child, and she always will, yet she lives a happy and productive life with the family and her church. Life can go on for us, even when we continue to miss and love our children and siblings. We must hold on to that hope for our lives to continue to have meaning. We urge you to resolve to live – not just to live, but to live with meaning. It is possible for all of us to make the New Year a year of promise. Our resolution is to be there to help you make that happen.

(We at BP/USA – chapters and the national board and officers – join Lisa in pledging to help other bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings make this a year of promise!)



The children
who were with us
in the rush of life,
let them now be with us
in the peace of spirit.

Sascha
From WINTERSUN

Through the glass,
I touch your face.
I trace your beauty
with my fingertip.
I close my eyes and imagine
you sitting next to me.
Your head is gently resting
on my shoulder like it used to.
I feel your presence with me
and I am at peace.
If only for a few moments,
it feels like you're back
where you belong.
Through the glass,
I touch your face and
I remember what you felt like.

By Laurie Lizotte
Bangor, ME

(Laurie wrote this as she prepared herself for the 23rd birthday of her daughter, Jodi, who was killed in a car accident on Jan. 24, 1999. She found us through our website and has joined BP/USA as a Member At Large.)

You will not be cured,
But...one day -
an idea that will horrify you now –
this intolerable misfortune will
become a blessed
memory of a being who will
never again leave you.
But you are in a stage of unhappiness
where it is impossible for you to have
faith in these reassurances.

Marcel Proust
1871-1922

BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA

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<http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org>

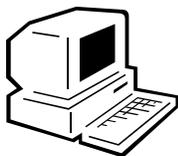
NOMINEES FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors has approved the following persons who will be up for election to the Board at the 2003 Gathering:

Chapter Representative: Pat Moser of FL Jeff Oberreiter of MO, Martha Smith of IL, Virginia Gallian of TX, Susan Means of KY, Kevin Hunsaker of AR and Ann Wooton of SC. Two to be elected for a 3 year term.

Member-at-Large: Therese Valentine of NE and Barbara Cooke of AL. One to be elected for a one year term.

Ballots will be sent to all Chapters and Members-at-Large. Please direct any questions or further nominations to Mitch Dudnikov, Chairman, One Farringdon Ct., Baltimore, MD 21209. We are especially pleased to find so many willing to be considered for a seat on the Board.



FROM THE EDITOR

Betty R. Ewart

It is with deep regret that I tell you of the death of Paul Kinney on December 10, 2002. Paul, along with his wife Pat, worked with the Louisville TCF, later the BP/USA tirelessly. They helped establish the Memorial Garden in Louisville for the Chapter. They were also active in the founding of the BP/USA and hosted the first two Gatherings with the Louisville Chapter. Paul had served as our Treasurer since John Goodrich's retirement from that position, working for our best interests at all times. Even at a time when Paul was very sick and in the hospital and the Hospice and had much else on his mind, he kept our financial business up to date. We shall miss him and his guidance of our budget and organization. Memorials may be sent to the Louisville Hospice or to our National BP/USA. Notes may be sent to Pat at 1902 Emerson Avenue, Louisville, KY 40205-2519.

We are most fortunate to have John Goodrich step forward to serve as Acting Treasurer and he was unanimously elected to that position by the Board by e-mail action. John was our Treasurer from our founding until he retired. He has been able to transfer the accounts from Louisville to a bank near him – a branch of the same bank. Please send any contributions or business for the Treasurer to him at PO Box 95, Park Forest, IL 60466.

We appreciate his help at this difficult time and the smooth transition he has been able to bring about.

We have three new chapters and are please to announce those: Santa Margarita, CA which is a satellite of our San Obispo Chapter and the South Labourche LA Chapter with Deborah Pitre as Leader. We welcome all these people and wish them the best in their chapter development. We are also finalizing the development of a chapter in Maui! It is good to be growing. We thank for Pat Moser for her work with the chapters! We are also pleased to welcome Vickie Smith and Sue Michalik as the new Co-Chairpersons of the St. Bernard Chapter of the BP/USA in New Orleans. Some of you met Sue and Vickie at the Gathering and we know that they will bring their skills to the Chapter there.

If you know of a place where a chapter might be formed, please let Pat Moser know. She can be reached at 3921 S W 5th Ave, Ocala, FL 34474-6716. If you live where there is not a chapter but would like to join BP, contact Theresa Valentine at 5107 N. 142nd St., Omaha, NE 68164. We receive so many inquiries from our web site so we know there are people out there who need our help.

Speaking of that, our webmaster reports that our monthly average for visitors through 12/03/02 was 92,017. Since many people visit several parts of the web site, our total hits for the year are 935,318. Many of these come as the result of using a search engine. You will find us on Google search engine among many others. This is an another example of a devoted person, our webmaster. Craig is a bereaved parent himself and does much more than just the usual work of a webmaster and at a very reasonable fee. It is a labor of love for him in memory of the Andrew W. Workman, the son of Craig and Sis Flanders.

Without the work of our Board members, our Chapter leaders,, our Members-at-Large and Craig, we could not have the great organization we have. We look forward to 2003!

LIVE NOW

Margaret Gerner
BP/USA St. Louis MO Chapter

THE HOLIDAYS ARE OVER! We have survived one more hurdle. Now a whole year faces us. 365 days. It's rather frightening, isn't it? Would it be less frightening if I suggested you have only one day to face: It's true. ALL YOU HAVE TO FACE IS TODAY – THIS 24 HOURS.

There isn't much we can't do if we only have to do it for 24 hours. Even the torment of our grief can be handled for 24 hours. We can get through the next 365 days one day at a time.

In order to take one day at a time, we must learn to keep ourselves in the NOW. When our minds start wandering back to yesterday and the painful yesterdays before that, we need to make every effort to consider that yesterday, with its pains, hurts, and, yes, even its mistakes, is gone now and there is absolutely nothing we can do about it. When our minds wander to tomorrow and we begin to panic at the thoughts of another day of torment, we can block out those thoughts too. We can bring ourselves back to the NOW by paying strict attention to what is going on in the immediate present.

What if our responsibilities right now won't allow us to give in to our pain? Our other children need our attention or our job demands our attention? Then we must focus ourselves only on what we have to do at that moment. We can only think of one thing at a time.

What if we are having one of those moments of enjoying ourselves? Then we should enjoy. We deserve it. Emotionally we have been battered. It is essential to have a few moments of relief occasionally. By laughing and having a few forgetful seconds, surely we aren't really betraying our child.

And what if we are just having a crazy, mixed up, hurting, enjoying, crying, laughing, getting things done in the morning, getting nothing done in the afternoon kind of day? So what! Maybe the next 24 hours will be different.

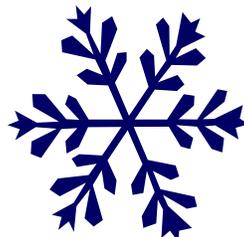
By concentrating on the NOW, we add up the minutes and the hours. Eventually we complete a day. Days become weeks, then months. Then one day we realize, GEE, I'm feeling a little bit better! A whole lot better! By taking one day at a time, living in the present, I guarantee that life will take on meaning once again.

**From DON'T TAKE MY
GRIEF AWAY FROM ME
by Doug Manning**

Grieving is as natural as crying
when you are hurt,
Sleeping when you are tired,
Eating when you are hungry
Or sneezing when your nose
itches.
It's nature's way of healing a
broken heart.

A cut finger...
is numb before it bleeds.
bleeds before it hurts,
hurts until it begins to heal,
forms a scab and itches
until finally... The scab is
gone and a small scar is
left where once there was
a wound.

Grief is the deepest wound you
have ever had. Like a cut fin-
ger, it goes through stages and
leaves a scar.



ONE DAY

Winnipeg Canada Chapter
Newsletter

If one day you feel like crying,
call me.

I don't promise that I will make
you laugh,
But I can cry with you.

If one day you want to run away,
Don't be afraid to call me.
I don't promise to ask you to stop,
But I can run with you.

If one day you don't want to
listen to anybody, call me
And I promise to be quiet.
But, if one day you call and there
is no answer, come fast to me.
Perhaps I need you!

*Remember, if you ever need a help-
ing hand, you'll find them at the end
of each of your arms. As you grow
older, you will discover that you
have two hands, one for helping
yourself, the other for helping oth-
ers. Joan Rebeiro*

ON MEMORIES

From LIVING WHEN A LOVED
ONE HAS DIED by Rabbi
Earl A. Grollman

Memories – tender, loving bitter-
sweet. They can never be taken from
you. Nothing can detract from the
joy and beauty you and your loved
one shared. Your love for the person
and his or her love for you cannot be
altered by time or circumstance. The
memories are yours to keep. Yester-
day has ended, though you store it in
the treasure house of the past.

And tomorrow! How can you face its
awesome problems and challenges?
It is as far beyond your mastery as
your ability to control yesterday.
Journey one day at a time. Don't try
to solve all the problems of your life
at once. Each day's survival is a
triumph.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 25-28, 2003: International Death, Grief and Bereavement Conference at the University of Wisconsin LaCrosse Center. Contact 608-785-6773 or cox.gerr@uwlax.edu

June 27-29, 2003: The St. Louis Chapter of the Bereaved Parents of the USA will host the 2003 Gathering of BP/USA in St. Louis at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, St. Louis Airport. See page 6 for more information on the Gathering and for contacts for receiving brochures and registration materials.

July 4-6, 2003: The 2003 National Conference of TCF at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Atlanta. Information will be on the web at www.tcfatlanta.org/2003 conference.

A CALL FOR BUTTERFLY STORIES

Judy Hominick, presented a workshop on butterfly gardening for the 2001 Gathering in Dallas. She reports that, "I have been amazed to hear stories from people about encounters with butterflies. The stories also show a comforting connection between butterflies and the death of someone close. For instance, when a dozen monarchs were released at a memorial service held for a young girl's mother who had died, all the butterflies flew off until one returned to briefly perch on the shoulder of the young girl."

She asks that if you have had a similar experience with a butterfly and a loss and would like to share it for possible inclusion in a book which she is writing, she would like you to contact her. You can reach her as follows: Judy Hominick, 8619 Richardson Branch Trail, Dallas, Texas 75243. She has a web site at www.riverrunning.com and her e-mail is hominick@swbell.net.

BOOK REVIEWS

Theresa Valentine has reviewed the following two books for us.

DREAMING KEVIN, *The Path to Healing* by Carla Blowey, Bereaved parents will certainly identify with the author's vivid account of her feelings on the day that her son, Kevin, was struck by a car and killed. Complicating those emotions were the fact that, only the night before, she had a nightmare about his death; as a busy mom, she brushed the dream aside and involved herself in the routine of that day. During the early months of her grief, she began to feel that her dreams, which throughout her life had been very vivid, were a way for her to deal with the pain and to confront the spiritual dilemma that many parents experience. Carla's account of using messages of hope in her dreams to begin to let go of her pain and to reach for a new spiritual center and renewed faith may be encouraging to others grieving the death of a precious child.

QUIT KISSING MY ASHES by Judy Collier is a mother's account of the "messages" she receives from her son on the other side. The author relates her initial skepticism regarding after death communication and other paranormal activities. But, as a parent looking for reassurance that her child was "all right", wherever he was, she was willing to explore the communications from Kyle. Sometimes these are direct messages and sometimes they come through Kyle's communications with others close to him or through mediums that the author and others who knew Kyle have consulted. This book could be useful and informative for parents who are interested in paranormal topics or are looking for signs or messages from their child.

TASTE OF HEAVEN ST. LOUIS STYLE: This is the cookbook produced by the BP/USA chapter in St. Louis. It is a treasured collection of

their children's favorite recipes and the parents thoughts on grief. You may order a special Gathering copy of this, personalized with your child's picture. If picked up at the Gathering, you will need to order ahead of time and supply a picture. You can get more information or an order form by writing BP/USA-St. Louis Chapter, PO Box 410350, St. Louis, MO 63141. If a personalized copy is picked up at the Gathering, the cost will be \$19 per book. Regular editions are \$15. If mailed, there is an additional \$3.50 shipping and handling per book.

EVAN'S EARTHY ADVENTURE by Mark Holofcener is a book written by a father about his son's life and death. It shows the similarities of reactions and feelings that we all have when our child dies. It is published by Beyond Time Books in Groton, Mass.

THE BOOK OF JESSE by Michael Rowe is another book by a father about his son's sickness and death. He goes into great detail about the son's suffering, operations, etc. Doctors report on the jacket that this would be a good book for young or student doctors to read that would help them understand what a family goes through as a loved one is put through various medical procedures. The book is available from The Francis Press in Washington, D. C.



*May I try to tell you again
where your only comfort lies?
It is not in forgetting the happy past.
People bring us well-meant
but miserable consolations
when they tell us what time will do
to help our grief.
We do not want to lose our grief,
because our grief
is bound up with our love
and we could not cease to mourn
without being robbed of our affections.*

Phillips Brooks

“...but you’re not HERE”

**By Mel Giniger, in Memory of Amanda
Nevada Member-at-Large of BP/USA**

I see your face in my memory, and I speak to your pictures each day,
But you’re not HERE.
I listen to your voice on tape and read and reread your cards and letters,
But you’re not HERE
I speak of you as often as I can, to whomever will listen, and, at times, it seems that I can sense your presence,
But you’re not HERE
I caress the sock and sneaker that you were wearing the day of your accident, It makes me feel closer to you
But you’re not HERE.
I know that we’ll be together again; it gives me some comfort, but my heart cries out,
Why, oh why aren’t you HERE?

THE BEAUTY PLACES

Edgar A. Guest

Here she walked and romped about.
And here, beneath this apple tree
Where all the grass is trampled out,
The swing she loved so used to be.
This path is but a path to you,
Because my child you never knew.

‘Twas here she used to stoop to smell
The first bright daffodil of spring;
‘Twas here she often tripped and fell
And here she heard the robins sing.
You’d call this but a common place,
But you have never seen her face.

And it was here we used to meet.
How beautiful a spot is this,
To which she gayly raced to greet
Her daddy with his evening kiss!
You see here nothing grand or fine,
But, oh, what memories are mine!

The people pass from day to day
And never turn their heads to see
The many charms along the way
That mean so very much to me.
For all things here are speaking of
The babe that once was mine to love.

**(Editors Note: Many of you enjoy Edgar Guest’s YOUR CHILD
AND MINE. Many don’t realize that he wrote that one .
This is another one of Guest’s writings that may be less known.)**

**THERE’S A VALENTINE
WAITING FOR YOU**

**Mary Cleckley
Member-at-Large BP/USA**

There is a Valentine waiting for
you
that’s different from all others.

It’s there every month at our meet-
ings
for Fathers, Mothers, Sisters and
Brothers.

It’s envelope is made of caring.

The glue of understanding seals it
tight.

This nonjudgmental group
who’ve “been there”
help to take away your fear and
fright.

So, come join with us together.

Read your loving message printed
clear
in not only this month’s Valentine,
but all those throughout the year.

2003 GATHERING

The 2003 Gathering will be on June 26-29 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel at the airport in St. Louis. The Theme is: **GATEWAY TO HEALING: *The Power of Parents, The Power of Siblings, The Power of Family.*** This is a weekend dedicated to our children.

Hotel reservations must be made by May 25, 2003 to guarantee the discounted rate of \$69 plus local taxes per night with up to 4 in a room. Reservations are to be made directly with the hotel at 1-800-227-6963. Meals (tax and gratuity included) may be purchased separately for \$13 for breakfasts, \$18 for lunches and \$26 for dinners. However, a special rate of \$115 will cover all Fri. and Sat. meals and Sun. Breakfast. There will be special programs and gifts at each meal so we hope you will sign up for the package.

There will be many helpful speakers, workshops, sharing sessions (which will include sibling and grandparent sessions), a hospitality room, a Meditation Room, and a Boutique/Bookstore. There will be a special trip at the end of the Gathering to the Angel of Hope statue, a memorial designed after the Angel in CHRISTMAS BOX, in St. Louis on Sunday morning at a \$5.00 cost.

You can get much more information in the registration packet. This will be mailed out in January to Chapters, Members-at-Large and those requesting it. You may also find information through the national web site. You may receive information as follows: Sharon Krejci, Gathering Chairman by phone at 636-532-0033 or by e-mail at 2003nationalgathering@bpusastl.org. or Carol Welch, 123 Rue Grand Dr., Lake St. Louis, MO 63141-8119. You may also contact Steve Welch, Registration, at 2003gatheringregistration@bpusastl.org. You will also find information at their web site: www.bpusastl.org.

The Chapter asks for donations for the Butterfly Boutique. This is always a big part of the Gathering and a way to provide meaningful gifts for people to take home to family and friends as well as a way to earn money for the work of BP/USA. For information call or e-mail Christine Stephenson, Butterfly Boutique Chair. Her phone is 636-530-9864 or you may reach her by e-mail at 2003gatheringboutique@bpusastl.org.



BE PATIENT

Susan Taylor
Winnipeg, Canada

Be patient.
My child has died.
A light in my life has been snuffed out!
A piece of me us gone forever!
This must be true for my love is
deeper than I can say.
My grief is so intense that sometimes
moment to moment is unbearable.

Be patient.
Today I may smile and laugh;
But tomorrow I may be cranky.
I am hurting and I am confused.
Sometimes I am angry that I am in
this nightmare.
Other times I feel totally and completely at peace
Because I sense my child is free and no
longer suffers.

Be patient.
I know I must move on with my life.
I must because others need me and I
need them.
The road to recovery is difficult because
it has its peaks and valleys.
I know my child would want me to move
on as well.

gentle voice? Will I forget that

I am afraid. Will I forget my child's
gentle voice? Will I forget that
tender touch?
No! I will take all the beautiful memories
for I was blessed to have this
child.

Be patient.
I am told and I read that grieving
parents learn from their child's
death and teach others.
What an I to learn? What am I to
teach?
If I am to teach, it should be positive.
Whatever can I learn and teach from
this journey that is positive?
With your compassion and support I
can make it.
Along the way I will try very hard to
learn the positive messages to teach
others.
More than anything I want my child,
my family and friends to be proud
of me.

Be patient.
I may cry; I may laugh; I may be
angry; I may be at peace
At any given time today and today's
tomorrow.
But tomorrow's tomorrow will bring
happiness.
I am trying to seek that happiness now
but I am tired and fragile.
I see other bereaved parents who have
gone before me.
They have made it down this long
hard road.
I will as well.
Be patient.

—Dedicated to bereaved parents who
have traveled this difficult road ahead
of us.

—This poem is written in loving mem-
ory of all our children who have left
our lives but not our hearts.



**BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA
MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

Mitch & Renee Dudnikov

In loving memory of son Marc

In loving memory of Renee's mother, R. Zimmerman

Rosemary Ravella

In loving memory of son Arthur Ravella III

Russ & Linda Horn

In loving memory of their son, David

Nelson & Mary Koopman

In loving memory of their son, Tony

Erwin & Patricia Burton

In loving memory of their son, Thomas

Jack and Betty Ewart

In loving memory of their daughter Ruthie

James & Demarius Aman

In loving memory of their son, Mark

Baltimore Metro Area Chapter

In loving memory of their members' children

Mitchell & Renee Dudnikov

Contribution to the 2003 Gathering

Gary & Lynne DeMeco

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

Jack and Betty Ewart

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

John & Carol Olliges

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

Norbert F. Ebert

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

Betty Kissel

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

Carl & Renate McDonough

In Loving memory of Paul Kinney

Larry & Judy Bizianes

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

Bart & JoAnn Magil

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

Mitchell & Renee Dudnikov

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

BP/USA Tampa Bay Chapter

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

Larry & Karen Cook

In loving memory of Paul Kinney

If your donation should appear on this list, and does not it may be as a result of our change in Treasurers. We apologize if we missed any memorial and ask that you understand the circumstances and forgive us. If you will notify John Goodrich of the gift and the memorial, we will acknowledge it in the next Newsletter. Thank you.

Since BP/USA is a qualified charitable 501(c) (3) organization, your donation may be tax deductible. Donations may be designated as follows: in memory of a loved one, in appreciation for someone or something in our life, the Gathering costs, brochure printing or the newsletter printing and postage. If there is no designation, the money will be used for general operating funds. Please carefully designate how you would like the donation listed on this page. We thank our chapters individual members and other friends for their generous support of BP/USA and its work.

Contributions should be sent to: John Goodrich, PO Box 95, Park Forest, IL 60466.

ON MEMORY

When you remember me, it means that you have carried something of who I am with you, that I have left some mark of who I am on who you are. It means that you can summon me back to your mind even though countless years and miles may stand between us. It means that, if we meet again, you will know me, and hear my voice and speak to me in your heart. For as long as you remember me, I am never entirely lost.

Frederick Buechner

From the BP/USA Tampa Bay Chapter Newsletter