



A Journey Together: Hinsdale Chapter Bereaved Parents of the USA

www.bpusahinsdale.org

April - May 2010

Meetings are generally held the first Friday of every month. Doors open at 7:00 PM for greeting and fellowship.

*Redeemer Lutheran Church, 139 East First Street, Hinsdale, Illinois
(One block east of Garfield Street & one block south of the railroad tracks)
Donna Corrigan, Chapter Leader 630-279-6148 or 630-841-7056 (cell)*

Spring

By Donna Corrigan

*If winter comes, can spring be far behind?
-- Percy B Shelley*

Hopefully, by the time you read this, spring will have officially arrived, not just by the date; sunny days will affirm the calendar. Spring has always been my favorite time of the year, the budding leaves on the trees, the daffodils and tulips popping up through the bare soil. The season speaks of life and hope and reminds me that I will survive the winter seasons of life.

I remember how disappointing the first spring times were for me after my son died. Instead of the hope I was expecting, all I could see was a sad future without Matt. The beautiful flowers actually insulted me and my broken heart did not feel encouraged by any of this new life stuff! I only saw desolation and emptiness and I had begun to feel that maybe this was a winter I could not survive. I really had counted on a healing spring; would anybody but another bereaved parent understand this?

As a grieving parent, I realized my pain had changed the way I looked at the world... I seemed to be protecting my heart and memories and had a very difficult time allowing any beauty to touch me. I wanted to deny that the world could be beautiful without my son. Sound selfish? Yes. Again, only a bereaved parent would understand this feeling. Somehow, I did know, deep down in my soul, I wanted to live. I wanted to enjoy what life I had left, even if Matt was gone. I just didn't know how...

Going to my first bereaved parents meeting about 10 months after my son died, I left thinking I would never be like them and I would never return. I still wanted to believe I could somehow solve this grief thing. I just wasn't ready to accept that there was a new normal; I wanted to recapture the past.

Each month, as I attended meetings, I would tell my

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

**NOTE: APRIL REGULAR MEETING ON APRIL 9th
DUE TO GOOD FRIDAY FALLS ON FIRST FRIDAY**

Wednesday, April 7 - Men's Group:

Meet at Kappy's in Villa Park at 6:30 P.M. RSVP to Jerry Schulman 630-205-4552

Friday, April 9 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:

7:30 PM to 9:30 PM - "Sure I Know Where My Pictures Are, They're Still in the Camera! Technology has given us many new opportunities to remember our children. We will hear about digital photography and designing websites.

Friday, May 7 - Monthly Chapter Meeting: 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM - "Angels Across the USA" - Alan Pedersen will be the speaker at our regular Friday meeting. Don't miss this special evening with Alan, bereaved father of Ashley and a musician, who will bring us his messages of hope through music.

Wednesday, May 12 - Ladies' Night Out:

Meet at Bailey's in Westmont at 6:30 PM

Friday, June 4 - Monthly Chapter Meeting: 7:30 PM to 9:30 PM - Balloon Release; also cut out & decorate the Gathering design in memory of your child (bring a copy of your child's photo if you like.)

story and cry and listen and sometimes even laugh; not knowing when I became one of "them." One day I brought Matt's picture and a birthday treat; it had taken me a very long time to share this tender part of my heart. I was beginning to heal. It is taking much longer than I had expected.

Once again, spring speaks about new life and resurrection to me. I can enjoy the fresh green beauty, the sun is welcoming and the flowers are beautiful. Matt is still not here but I can see that for now, the winter is past. ❀

Love Gifts

A Love Gift is a donation to the chapter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling. All Love Gifts are gratefully acknowledged in the newsletter accompanied by wording exactly as the donor submits. BP/USA is a national non-profit organization therefore; all donations to the chapter are tax deductible as allowed by law.

When mailing in a love gift, **please include your child's name, your address** and any other info you would like in your love gift message. Please make your check payable to: **BP/USA Hinsdale** and **mail it to arrive by the 10th** of the month prior to the upcoming newsletter. The newsletter is published every other month.

**BP/USA Hinsdale Chapter
PO Box 703
Hinsdale IL 60522**

♥♥♥♥ Love Gifts ♥♥♥♥



*In loving memory of
Jeffrey Anderson
January 28, 1981 until May 25, 1998*

Jeff, This coming May, it will be 12 years we have been without you. Our love for you has never waned; we miss you as much now as ever. We know at some point we will see you again.

Love Forever,
Mom & Dad
Irene & John Anderson



♥♥♥♥ Love Gifts ♥♥♥♥



*In loving memory of
Paul Moore
November 4, 1982 until June 8, 1994*

Thinking of you.

Love,
Mom & Dad
Don & Julie Moore



*In loving memory of
Russell Witek
June 16, 1994 until March 29, 2009*

Love you always

Love,
Dad & Mom
Dan & Helen Dennet



Thank You

Bereaved Parents of the USA (BP/USA) does not charge fees or dues. The costs associated with the monthly Chapter meetings and the Chapter Newsletter are funded by your Love Gifts and by fund-raising, such as the sale of holiday cards. As with anything these days, costs have increased as donations have decreased.

The BP/USA Hinsdale Chapter is fortunate to have experienced your past generosity.

Thank you for your continued support.

Looking for Your Newsletter? Need to Know the Date of the Next Meeting?

Both the calendar and the newsletter are available on the Hinsdale Chapter website:
<http://www.bpusahinsdale.org/>

Welcome

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the new attendees at our recent meetings. We hope you were able to take home at least a small glimmer of hope.

New attendees:

- ♥ Pat Ross, mother of **Joseph Ross**
- ♥ Lance & Kristie Mitchell, parents of **Jamie Mitchell**
- ♥ Sherri Kavanagh, mother of **Christopher Kavanagh**
- ♥ Jeremy & Jaime Ford, parents of **Emily Rose & Henry J Ford**

While we are very sorry for the reason you are here, we are glad that you found us. ☙

Sure I Know Where My Pictures Are, They're Still in the Camera! – April 9 Chapter Meeting

At our Monthly Meeting on **April 9**, Jerry Schulman will show you some of the ways he takes, downloads, edits and shares digital images. He doesn't do this for a living. These are ways he has learned through trial and painful error to look at, change and share digital photos. Be prepared to tell him "That's not the way I do it!" And, be prepared to show him just how you DO do it. Bring your camera, your cables, your instruction manual and we'll see if we can actually get your pictures out where everyone can see them. ☙

Mark Your Calendar for Two Upcoming June Events: Balloon Release – Friday, June 4 & Butterfly Release & Picnic – Sunday, June 27th

Our annual Balloon Release will be held at our regular Monthly Meeting on **Friday, June 4**.

The Butterfly Release & Picnic will again be held at the Veteran's Memorial Park in Westmont. Save the date - **Sunday, June 27th** .

Angels Across the USA – May 7 Chapter Meeting

Alan Pedersen is a bereaved father, award winning songwriter, successful recording artist, and nationally recognized speaker on grief and loss.

In August of 2001 Alan's only daughter Ashley was killed in an automobile accident in Colorado. This tragedy took his life in a direction he never imagined. His pain and journey toward finding joy again have been the subject matter for three highly acclaimed CD's of original songs.

As an in demand keynote speaker and workshop presenter, Alan has been featured at many international, national, and regional conferences including The World Gathering on Bereavement, The Compassionate Friends National Conference, and The National Gathering of Bereaved Parents of the USA.

His music is popular with bereaved people around the world and is used at hundreds of candle lighting services, balloon and butterfly releases, and by hundreds of professionals and organizations as a healing tool for the bereaved.

Alan's message is simple, "*We were put on this earth to love them for as long as **WE** live, not for as long as **THEY** lived.*" He believes that healing comes slow, but does come as we reach out to others who share this journey and offer our hand to help.

With a gentle mix of humor and straight-from-the-heart talk wrapped around powerful songs about love and loss, an evening with Alan Pedersen will make for a unique, healing and memorable concert experience.

Source: <http://www.angelsacrosstheusa.com/>

Alan Pedersen will join us at our regular Hinsdale Chapter BP/USA monthly meeting on Friday, May 7th at 7:30 PM at Redeemer Lutheran in Hinsdale. Please bring a treat to share. ☙

Our Children, Loved Missed and Remembered - Anniversaries and birthdays are difficult for bereaved parents and families. In the days ahead, may we lovingly remember these children and send our prayers, love and support to their parents and families

Amanda Aadson - 20
Apr 08, 1981 - Nov 25, 2001
Car Accident
Sullivan Mary Jo

Dana Samuel - 32
Apr 07, 1970 - Jan 23, 2003
Asphyxiation
Lana Samuel

Johnny Hurley - 28
Apr 15, 1977 - Sep 11, 2005
Motorcycle Accident
John & Pat Hurley

Melissa Renee Wolfram - 30
May 18, 1971 - Apr 26, 2002
Pulmonary Embolism
Earl & E. Renee Bailey

Renee Michelle Saban - 21
Jan 07, 1964 - Apr 05, 1985
Auto Accident
Jackie & Joe Saban

Thomas Burton - 22
Apr 14, 1954 - Aug 27, 1976
Suicide
Patricia & Erwin Burton

Alyssa Dabrowski - 22
May 20, 1979 - Feb 03, 2002
Car Accident - Hit & Run
Allen & Rosemary Dabrowski

Cole Exner - 22
Jun 09, 1983 - May 21, 2006
Automobile Accident
Scott & Janie Exner

Eric Byrne - 44
Sep 04, 1960 - May 09, 2005
Pulmonary Embolism
Eleanor & Joe Byrne

Celeste Tomasello - 17
Apr 20, 1982 - Nov 05, 1999
Accidental Fall
Linda & Angelo Tomasello

Daniel M. Schedler - 23
Dec 16, 1969 - Apr 06, 1993
Auto Accident
Tom & Judeen Schedler

Kevin Jon Ryeczyk - 8
Mar 29, 1972 - Apr 15, 1980
Lung Ailment
Jack & Karen Ryeczyk

Michael Walter Schulman - 28
Apr 21, 1978 - Nov 28, 2006
Traffic Accident
Jerry, Mary, Melissa, Jonathon, & Katie Schulman

Scott Wesolowski - 18
Dec 13, 1984 - Apr 08, 2003
Drug Overdose
Sue Berger

Todd J. Smith - 23
May 12, 1983 - Apr 26, 2007
Cancer
Marie Smith

Amanda Coughlin - 10
May 11, 1991 - Mar 15, 2002
Cathy Coughlin

Diane Nylec -
May 04, 1998 - May 04, 1998
Prematurity
Jena Nylec

Eric J. Munzenmay - 12
May 07, 1969 - Jun 28, 1981
Pneumonia
Eric & Lillian Munzenmay

Challing Eugene Albert LeBlanc - 4
Apr 11, 1997 - Jun 02, 2001
Boating Accident
Liz & Stephen LeBlanc

Frank P. Amelio - 27
Apr 25, 1980 - Sep 13, 2007
Drug Overdose
Helen Amelio

Maria Elena Nudell - 14
Apr 17, 1981 - Jul 07, 1995
Horseback Riding Accident
Marilyn Cocogliato

Nicholas Martino-Krueger - 10
Jun 23, 1995 - Apr 15, 2006
Hit by Train
Jim Krueger & Rose Martino-Krueger

Susan G. Gabrielsen - 31
Apr 18, 1963 - Oct 14, 1994
Breast Cancer
Patricia Jacobi

Anna Nylec -
May 04, 1998 - May 04, 1998
Prematurity
Jena Nylec

Elizabeth Nelson - 23
Jul 27, 1980 - May 31, 2004
Car Accident
Tom & Kathy Nelson

Ian McDonald-Shumaker - 17
Feb 06, 1989 - May 11, 2006
Suicide
Stacia McDonald-Shumaker

Our Children, Loved Missed and Remembered (continued) - Anniversaries and birthdays are difficult for bereaved parents and families. In the days ahead, may we lovingly remember these children and send our prayers, love and support to their parents and families

Jeffrey Anderson - 17

Jan 28, 1981 - May 25, 1998
Asphyxiation
John & Irene Anderson

Jeffrey Scott Caccavari - 34

Jan 16, 1967 - May 10, 2001
Unknown
Dominic & Karen Caccavari

Joanna Nylec -

May 04, 1998 - May 04, 1998
Prematurity
Jena Nylec

Kate Pranno - 24

May 19, 1977 - Feb 22, 2002
Liver Failure from Drugs & Alcohol
Suzi Scott

Katie Satkamp - 7

Jul 12, 1974 - May 12, 1982
School Bus Accident
Ronda & Steve Satkamp

Kelly Ann Meicrotto - 23

May 25, 1980 - Sep 01, 2003
Lenore Robinson

Ken Putnam - 28

May 11, 1967 - May 23, 1995
Auto Accident
David & Karen Putnam

Lily Claire Domagala - 16 Months

May 11, 2002 - Sep 12, 2003
Heart & Lung Defects
Lisa Domagala

Lt Adam Philip Kass - 25

May 29, 1977 - Jun 25, 2002
Motorcycle Accident on Military Duty
Cindy & Dave Kass

Mark Thomas Fornek - 6

May 16, 1992 - Aug 04, 1998
Floodwater Drowning
Greg & Wendy Fornek

Melissa Juergensen - 19

Feb 24, 1989 - May 03, 2008
Auto Accident
Ruth Juergensen
Sarah Brewer

Michael Knorps - 51

Aug 17, 1957 - May 30, 2009
Mary Ann Knorps

Nadia Chowdhury - 20

May 14, 1983 - Feb 21, 2004
Hit & Killed by Drunk Drivers
Nasrin & Shamsul Chowdhury

Robbie Funston - 18

May 30, 1990 - Jun 22, 2008
Accidental Drowning
Ric Funston

Robert Conway - 15

May 12, 1975 - Oct 22, 1990
Hit by Van while Bike Riding
Rose Conway

Robert Joseph Gentilini, Jr. - 25

Mar 20, 1964 - May 18, 1989
Brain Infection
Bob & Mary Gentilini

Sarah Callister - 16

Aug 09, 1980 - May 03, 1997
Cardiac Arrhythmia
Lynn Callister

Shawn Lighty - 37

May 05, 1972 - May 23, 2007
Accidental Drug Overdose
Jan Lighty

Todd J. Smith - 23

May 12, 1983 - Apr 26, 2007
Cancer
Marie Smith

William Kavanaugh - 3

May 24, 1992 - Jul 04, 1995
Hit by a Van
Maribeth Kavanaugh

A Friendly Message to BP/USA Hinsdale

Amy has been gone from us for 15 years. We keep her close in our thoughts. Our little grandkids know about Auntie Amy. How you all helped us to make it as far as we've come is such a tribute to you - to the human spirit. Thanks and hope to see you in April.

Sandy Gales

The paradox of grief

By Rob Anderson, Brendon's dad

Oh yes, I wanted the pain to end quickly. Oh yes, I would have done anything to stop the hurt and make my suffering go away after my son, Brendon, was killed. I thought, "Give me the magic spell, the book, the video or anything else to make my pain end and I will take it." Grief grabbed me and beat on me; pounded me into submission and hurled me down the well of despair. Grief became my enemy. It was to be destroyed and chased from my life. In the weeks, months and for a few years after my son died, never once did I feel that my grief was teaching me anything but how much it hurt to lose him. My pain was from something bad and my life was in turmoil.

Yet somewhere deep inside I believed life could get better; that I didn't have to live with such deep grief forever. My son's death paralyzed me in many ways, so that belief didn't bubble to the surface and turn into action for over two years. It was then that I discovered my lonely journey didn't need to be traveled alone. I reached out for help because I needed to reach out for help. If not, I would have died inside and merely existed, and not lived. I would have become an echo, bouncing around forever, never finding a home.

Belief in a better life, which is my definition of hope, took hold of my spirit and I began to fight back against my deep grief and deep suffering. I knew others had traveled my path and if they were one day ahead of me then they knew something I didn't. To find out what got them to their next day I reached out and joined a support group of other bereaved parents and it worked. My fellow travelers saved my life, but only when I decided to let them into my life and help me learn how to survive my deep grief.

What grief teaches us

It won't be the first time you've heard this, and maybe it still doesn't make any sense, but maybe this will be the time it will take hold and start to teach you ways to make your life better. Hopefully it will help you know that death did not take all when it took your child's body. Here it is. "The pain is from the love. We hurt so much because we love so much." The paradox of grief is that something that

feels so bad, the death of your child, is because of something that feels so good, the love for your child. Odd isn't it. Our grief and deep sadness teach us how much we love and where that love comes from.

The reason we know sad is because we've known happy. There would be no sadness if happiness didn't exist. Here's an example of what I mean. If you were walking down the street and a dog came up to you for a quick visit where you stroked its fur, let it give you kisses and then you said goodbye, you wouldn't be very sad if you never saw that dog again. Because you hadn't experienced great happiness, you wouldn't know great sadness because it left your life. On the other hand, if your beloved dog of eight years died, you'd be heartbroken and very sad because your happiness from its life had been crushed by its death. You'd be sad because you'd been happy. Yes, I know there's no comparison between losing a child and losing a pet, but love is still love and it hurts when it gets bruised. The point is that because we've known such happiness and love with our children, that when they died it gave birth to our profound and overwhelming sadness. But our happiness didn't die, it was smothered by our sadness and is waiting to return.

The challenge is to find ways to transition from the sadness in our grief, to the happiness from the life of our child. That's where grief work, letting go and forgiveness come into play. Early in our journey the goal is for our grief to go away. But if I were to ask you, "If giving up one moment of your grief means giving up one moment of your love, would you do that?" I doubt you would. The grief we can live with, the love we can't live without. So we learn to live with grief, find ways to soften it, and learn what it teaches about our love. That way we can move forward to a better life by understanding that death did not take all when it took our child's body.

Don't let death win

Your life will never be the same. I'm sure you already know that, but might not have accepted it yet. The death of your child is too life changing an experience to ever be able to go back to where you once were. In the acceptance and acknowledgment of that unchangeable reality is one path back to your happiness. The relationship with your child has changed, but it didn't die when their body died. Our greatest suffering comes from the loss of the physical. We hurt so much because we can't hold them, hear them or even smell them. We long for one more hug, one more

The paradox of grief ... continued on next page

The paradox of grief ... continued

conversation and one more tomorrow. We fight that need for a long time because we want it back the way it was. If we can't let go of the physical part of our relationship, then we're in danger of seeing our child as a child who died and is gone forever, and not a child who lived, and will always live, if we let them. Letting go of their physical death is a tough bridge to cross through.

When we let go of their bodies we can begin to see that they are so much more than just their physical presence in our lives. If we're able to embrace what we have and will always have, which is the spiritual and emotional life of our child, then we can transition from sadness back to happiness. Here's how we can do that.

Bring back a good memory of your child. Now I ask you, "is that a memory of a living child or of a dead child?" Of course it's a memory of a living, breathing, loving child. That's yours forever and ever and ever. Death can't have that memory. Yes, you may be sad and cry when you bring that memory back. And that's fine; express that sadness. Remember, for your child to have died, it means they had to have lived first. In the letting go of their death is where you can see the return of their life. Not like it was, not like it will ever be again, but in the best possible way you let it happen. In time, if you do your work, the two emotions of sadness and happiness can change places. When you bring back that same memory, you can smile and say, "Wow, what a terrific child I've got.....not had. I am blessed." We can't change the past, only embrace what it teaches us and move to the future with a healing heart.

When you put your head on your pillow tonight, think of your child. Not a specific memory, but that feeling you get when you think of them. For me, when I think of my son, I get goose bumps. Brendon tingles me. The joy of the life of that boy surges through me like lightning. If that's what you feel, then you know that death did not take their life force and can never take it, if you don't let it. Don't let death take your goose bumps.

Yes, love hurts. But would you have it any other way? Not me, because without the hurt I wouldn't know the joy. And love does not die either. There is never a reason to add a "d" to the word love. There is no past tense to love. It was, it is, and it will always be. A love born can never die. Death can't have your love. Death can't have your child, if you don't let it.

Embrace your grief - it's not your enemy

I've got good news and I've got good news. The good news is that a measure of your grief will always live with you. It will be yours forever. "That's good news," you ask? It's good news because your grief teaches you that all of your love, and the entire life of your child, will be with you forever as well. I consider my grief a fair trade off for the love and the life of my son. I am grateful for my grief. It's not my enemy, I embrace it for what it is; the love for Brendon's life. So if grief is good news, then love is good news as well.

You and I will never live a top of the mountain life again. That's just the way it is. A part of us will forever be sad because of the death of our children. We will always live with a tear in our eye. But if we let our sadness from their death be more powerful than our happiness from their life, death wins. If we embrace our grief, express the pain in it, accept it and blend it into our lives, then the joy and happiness of the lives of our children will once again fill our lives with joy and happiness as well. Don't let death win, let the life of your child win. Embrace the paradox of grief. ❧

Help Yourself This Mother's Day

By Mary S. Cleckley, "I Walked A Mile With Sorrow"

I remember vividly the first Mother's Day after my son died. Had there been a vote that year, I would have cast mine for the abolition of Mother's Day. I didn't want such a day to exist, and I didn't want anybody to remind me that it did, indeed, exist.

My response to those who were left who loved me was to pull away and isolate myself. I made a mistake!

Between the first and second Mother's Day, I made a number of discoveries. Probably the most important one was that my surviving daughter needed to be allowed to show her love for me. She has that right. She was and is as important as my son who died. I also learned that my salvation lay in the hands of those people who cared for me, and when I learned to let them help me, I helped myself.

Help yourself this Mother's Day. ❧

Attending the 2010 Gathering

My husband, my daughter, and I have decided we are going to attend the Bereaved Parents National Gathering. We've never gone to one before so I will sit down now and look over the **Registration Packet**. I like the convenience of being able to do this right at www.bereavedparentsusa.org and pay-pal is very easy to do. There are some people who still like to do these things snail mail, not me!

First, I will make my airline reservations, I have never been to Little Rock; I think we will stay an extra day or two and do some sightseeing. There is a free shuttle to the Riverfront; I would like to at least see the Clinton Museum. That taken care of, now the **Registration Form**, I need to fill one out for each attendee. Do we want all of the **Meals**? Yes, I guess so. Although there is seating to hear the speakers after each meal, I think the camaraderie at the table will be important.

There are so many **Workshops** scheduled, I wonder if I will recognize any of the names of presenters at the **Gathering**? I am going to send a picture for the **Video Presentation** on Saturday night also. I'm not sure if I want to make a donation to the **Program Book**. It would be nice to have his picture in there with a little poem. I think I will do it, I know that's a nice **Fundraising** project for the Gathering. The check is written and ready to mail along with the **DIAMOND** template that I've decorated for the memory board. I think I am going to make some Butterfly Bookmarks and provide them as **Table Favors** at one of the meals. Of course I want to preorder some **T-Shirts**.

Next is the **Hotel** reservation... that goes directly to the hotel and I can put this on my credit card. The rate is sure reasonable and I see that it has been completely renovated in 2009. We are going to be the only group there and I hear it is a great facility.

All taken care of... I am looking forward to spending time with members from our chapter but I hear there will be people from all over the country. Will it be overwhelming to be in such a huge group of grieving people? Hope they have lots of Kleenex!

It's Thursday afternoon....We check in to the hotel and the 1st thing we see is a giant "**Bereaved Parents USA**" **Welcome Sign**. We approach the **Registration Table** and are greeted and checked in. We get a very

nice **Souvenir Bag** it has our **Program Book** and a few little extras (**notebook, pen etc**) we have some dinner in the coffee shop and then go back the **Thursday Evening Meet & Greet**. There we meet the Gathering Chairs and the National Board of Directors. They want to make us feel comfortable and we do... There is time to introduce ourselves and meet a number of the other bereaved parents. We stop at the **Hospitality Suite** for a snack and look over our program books, deciding which workshops we will attend tomorrow isn't going to be easy. There are so many choices; I can't believe the unique areas of grief they address. Our daughter is hanging out with some friends she meets at the **Sibling Group**.

Friday breakfast is early and we are officially welcomed; making us feel comfortable seems to be a priority! We hear the keynote **Speaker**, we're already glad we came.

The **Workshops** begin and then lunch and another speaker, then dinner and another speaker! There have been some really interesting **Table Gifts** by our place settings at some of the meals. Parents donated these in memory of their children, they think of such loving ways to remember our kids. I am a little overwhelmed but I want to go to a **Sharing Session** tonight also. I stop in the **Bookstore** first; I want to make sure I get the book the **Speaker** wrote. I also want to buy a handful of **Raffle Tickets** (it is fundraising remember!).

Saturday morning and we start all over again. It's even better than yesterday. Meals and speakers and workshops...after lunch I'm going to get some fresh air and then sit by the pool. Its wonderful being here, but so intense... I am listening to the advice though, "take care of yourself." After a little nap, I shop in the **Butterfly Boutique** and pick up some cute angel ornaments another Mom made. There were a few **Gathering T-Shirts** left so I bought some to take home to some of my friends who couldn't attend this year.

Tonight, after dinner was the **Video Presentation**. Seeing all the children's pictures, the candles, the music; it was really beautiful. I think now would be a good time to go to the **Reflection Room**; I just need a little time to think and be alone.

I can't believe its Sunday morning already, the **Closing Ceremony** was very serene and peaceful, a good way to say goodbye to the strangers who had so quickly become friends. What a wonderful weekend, I am exhausted and I can't wait until the next **Gathering** (I hear it's going to be in D.C.!) #

BUTTERFLY RELEASE & FAMILY PICNIC



Sunday, June 27th 12:00 Noon

Veteran's Memorial Park ~ Pavilion

E. Dallas Street & S. Linden Avenue ~ Westmont

(The park and pavilion/picnic shelter is located 2 blocks north of 55th Street and 1 block east of Cass Avenue in Westmont)

Donation: \$10 per individual; \$20 per family

Chicken, Beverages, Utensils provided

A - H Bring dessert (for 12)

I - Z Bring side dish/salad (for 12)

RSVP by June 17th to:

BP/USA Hinsdale

PO Box 703

Hinsdale, IL 60521

For The Both of Us

By Sascha - from Wintersun

As long as I can.
I will look at this world for both of us.
As long as I can.
I will laugh with the birds.
I will sing with the flowers,
I will pray to the stars,

For the both of us.
As long as I can
I will remember how many things
On this earth were your joy.
And I will live as well
As you would want me to live
As long as I can.

From Your Editor...

I commute every day by Metra train to work in Chicago. I carry a monthly pass in my purse in a little plastic sleeve. I have had this little plastic holder for a long time. The advertising on the back is for a bank which is no longer in existence. Today I decided to ask the Metra cashier for a new holder for my pass. The bank advertising on the back is actually a current bank. Now I am facing a dilemma. In the old holder is my train pass from December 2002. It is the pass that I showed the conductor on my last work day before Brandon and Sarah died. I have carried it in my purse ever since, putting each new month's pass on top of it and tossing the previous month's pass, all except for the one from December 2002. That pass represents my life before everything changed. It seems so silly and yet so significant to me because when I last used that pass Brandon and Sarah were still alive and it was Friday Dec 27, 2002 and I was happy because it was Friday night and the weekend was here.

Why do I hold onto it? I know I need to let go. I need to rip it up and toss it but I can't. I keep it in the little holder so every work day I have that reminder of what was and how quickly everything can change and how short life really is. So I will throw out the old worn out plastic holder with the obsolete bank advertising but I will keep the December 2002 pass right underneath the March 2010 pass because I am not ready yet, even after 7+ years.

Wishing you something to hold onto and the strength to let go....

~ Celeste

With sympathy

Paul Samuel passed away February 27. He was the husband of Lana Samuel, Meditation Room chairman on the 2007 Gathering committee. Their son Dana died in January 2003. Lana, please accept our kind thoughts of comfort and peace at this difficult time.

Save the World

Excerpts from an email letter by Chris Schindler, pianist at our December 2009 Candle Lighting

I've been a bit down lately. I've been overworking myself, which has led to exhaustion. At the start of this week I got to the point that I began questioning why I do so much. Why should I be the one who's there for everyone else? Then I started thinking I should just give up and start focusing on ME.

Then I was asked to play at a "Bereaved Parents" candle-light service. It's pretty heavy walking into a room filled with small, make-shift monuments on tables with pictures and nick-knacks that are placed there to remember each individual child. Then, when everyone has greeted and settled, they go upstairs to the sanctuary where I was playing some "soft and meaningful" piano music, to have a small service of remembrance and reflection, then to light candles in memory of their children.

I finished playing after everyone was seated and ready for the service to start. I stood up, grabbed my coat, and was about to head out when I turned and saw a woman in tears. She looked absolutely defeated. I don't know who she was or who she'd lost, but I will never forget her looking me dead in the eyes and saying, "Thank you...so much." This was the voice of a woman whose heart had been shattered, who was in desperate need of some kind of hope. And with four simple words I knew that the music that The Good Lord had sent through my weary fingers that night had touched her... maybe even gave her a bit of that hope she was looking for.

I went to the back of the church and watched for a while. There before me was a room full of broken, hurting people. They needed help, they needed support, they needed love, and they needed hope. Then it dawned on me: this WORLD is full of people who need help, and support, and love, and HOPE. This world needs Samaritans who can provide these things. This world needs to be saved.

At that very moment it's like the fire was reignited in my heart. I hadn't had a decent night's sleep in weeks, but I felt more alive and well than I had in MONTHS. My mission was clear and my spirit was renewed. I was ready to save the world....

Blessings to you all, and may the fire of hope, the essence of compassion, and the light of love burn strong in your hearts and your souls as you go forth into this hurting world.

Brothers and sisters. let's save the world. #

Address

Changes/Corrections

Please send address or information changes to Angelo Tomasello at angelotomasello@comcast.net.

“A Journey Together: Hinsdale Chapter BP/USA”

The Hinsdale Chapter newsletter is compiled, stamped and mailed by volunteers, in loving memory of our children. There is no charge to receive it. If you would like to submit content to be considered for inclusion in a future newsletter, please email the newsletter editor, celeste_hardy@hotmail.com.

Copyright 2010 BP/USA All Rights Reserved



Bereaved Parents of the USA - Hinsdale is a self-help support group which is run entirely by volunteers who are also bereaved parents. The volunteers are a little further down the road in their grief and can give back to the chapter by helping with the many jobs it takes to keep the chapter running. This makes it possible for new bereaved parents to see survival and hope when they walk through the door of their first meeting.

Thanks to all the volunteers who come early, bring refreshments, help with set up and clean up. We could not do it without you!

We have invested in a rolling library cart that will make meeting setup/clean-up much easier.

Steering Committee

Our chapter is run by a volunteer steering committee that meets periodically during the year to discuss future meeting programs, fund raising, member involvement, our library and other pertinent issues. Interested in sharing your time and talent?contact a member listed below:

Chapter Leader	Donna Corrigan	(630) 279-6148
	Cell:	(630) 841-7056
Database Administrator	Angelo Tomasello	(630) 420-1649
Hospitality	Sally Yarberry	(708) 560-0393
	Kathy Kuzmicki	(630) 968-4515
Treasurer	Jerry Schulman	(630) 205-4552
Librarian	Suzy Scott	(630) 985 0394
Newsletter Editor	Celeste Hardy	(630) 963-0096
Members at Large	Linda Horn	(630) 325-2816
	Karen & Dave Putnam	(630) 971-1240
	Rose Martino-Krueger	(847) 208-5620

Chapter Library

We maintain a large lending library of books and tapes of interest to bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents. These resources are available to check out at each meeting to be returned at the following meeting, if possible. Donations of books are always gratefully accepted, and acknowledged in the newsletter. If you are no longer attending meetings regularly and come across a book at home that belongs to our library, please **mail it** to us at the reduced **“media rate”** to: **PO Box 703, Hinsdale IL 60522-0703**. You can contact our Librarian, Suzy Scott at suzyart@sbcglobal.net or (630) 985-0394.

Telephone Friends

When you have a need to talk to another bereaved parent, these members are available to listen:

Val Vesely	(630) 469-9584
Donna Corrigan	(630) 279-6148
Marge Humbert	(815) 609-4151
Jim Moravcik (suicide)	(630) 904-9094

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

April 7 **Men's Group:** Meet at Kappy's in Villa Park at 6:30 P.M. RSVP to Jerry Schulman 630-205-4552

NOTE: REGULAR MEETING ON APRIL 9TH DUE TO GOOD FRIDAY FALLS ON THE FIRST FRIDAY

April 9 **Monthly Meeting:** 7:30 PM – Digital photography & design websites.

May

May 7 **Monthly Meeting:** 7:30 PM – “Angels Across the USA – Alan Pedersen will be our special guest speaker/singer

May 12 **Ladies Night Out:** 6:30 PM - Meet at Bailey's in Westmont

June

June 4 **Monthly Meeting:** 7:30 PM – Balloon Release & Decorating the Gathering design in memory of your child

June 27 **Family Picnic & Butterfly Release:** 12:00 Noon – Veterans Memorial Park in Westmont

BP/USA Hinsdale on the Web:

<http://www.bpusahinsdale.org/>

I Know Where You Are

by Debbie Trepanier, BP/USA of Springfield

3 years ago you left this earth
But I know where you are.

You are in my heart, in my breath,
You are in every part of my day.

You are in my dreams
And my thoughts

I know one day I will see you again
And oh! What a day that will be

We can laugh with each other again,
And cry with each other again

I may have to suffer many years
Before that glorious day

But for now it gives me hope

For now

I know where you are.

Bereaved Parents of the USA
Hinsdale Chapter
P.O. Box 703
Hinsdale, IL 60522-0703



April – May 2010