



October – November - December 2017

## A Journey Together: Chicagoland Chapter - Bereaved Parents of the USA [www.bpusachicagoland.org](http://www.bpusachicagoland.org)

### Bereaved Parents of the USA Mission:

We, as bereaved parents, help grieving parents and families rebuild their lives following the death of a child.

*Meetings are generally held the first Tuesday of every month, 7:00 – 8:30 PM. Doors open at 6:30 PM for greeting and fellowship.  
First Congregational Church of Western Springs, 1106 Chestnut Street, Western Springs, Illinois  
Eleanor Byrne (708-485-6160) and Sally Yarberry (708-560-0393), Chapter Co-Leaders*

### PLEASE DON'T ASK ME IF I'M OVER IT YET

*By Rita Moran*

*Source: A Journey Together 2016 Fall Issue*

Please, don't ask me if I'm over it yet.  
I'll never be over it.  
Please, don't tell me she's in a better place.  
She isn't with me.  
Please, don't say at least she isn't suffering.  
I haven't come to terms with why she had to suffer at all.  
Please, don't tell me you know how I feel unless you have lost  
a child.

Please, don't ask me if I feel better.  
Bereavement isn't a condition that clears up.  
Please, don't tell me at least you had her for so many years.  
What year would you choose for your child to die?  
Please, don't tell me God never gives us more than we can  
bear.

Please, just tell me you are sorry.  
Please, just say you remember my child, if you do.  
Please, just let me talk about my child.  
Please, mention my child's name.  
Please, just let me cry.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS:

#### **Tuesday, October 3 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:**

7:00 PM to 8:30 PM - Open discussion

#### **Tuesday, November 7 - Monthly Chapter Meeting,**

**Potluck Dinner & Speaker:** 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM -  
Chicken & beverages will be provided; please bring a  
side dish or dessert to share. Please RSVP by Nov. 5 to  
Sally at 708-738-0396 or [psyrbrry@hotmail.com](mailto:psyrbrry@hotmail.com)

#### **Tuesday, December 5 - Monthly Chapter Meeting:**

7:00 PM to 8:30 PM - Children's Gifts - Bring an  
unwrapped gift in honor of your child and share each  
gift's significance. The gifts will be donated to  
underprivileged children

#### **Sunday, December 10 - Candle Lighting Program:**

Doors open 6:30 PM; Program at 7:00 PM. Please RSVP.  
See additional information and form in this newsletter

### Holiday and All Occasion Cards Still Available!

We're pleased to announce that we still have a limited supply of Bereaved Parents Holiday and All Occasion cards, so we're able to offer them for sale once more. The holiday cards are an assorted package of previous favorites including a wreath, an ornament, a bell, and an angel (five cards of each design). The butterfly, our symbol of hope, is uniquely featured on each of the cards. This is a general holiday greeting card with special meaning for bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents, as well as those who support them.

The All Occasion card is blank inside and the cover features an embossed white-on-white floral design with a periwinkle blue butterfly.

Printed on high-quality paper, the actual size of the card is 4"x 6". Envelopes are included. The cards come in packages of twenty. The order form is available on our chapter website. ☘



***In loving remembrance of  
Michael Walter Schulman  
April 21, 1978 until November 28, 2006***

Love changes over time,  
and our love for you is now deeper,  
and at times, more painful, as we realize anew  
how much you meant to us,  
and how different  
our lives are with you gone.

Michael, we will always miss you and love you.

All the Schulmans



## ♥ ♥ ♥ Love Gifts ♥ ♥ ♥

A Love Gift is a donation to the chapter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling. A financial contribution in any amount is appreciated. 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, birth and death dates, and the actual wording of your love gift message. Make your check payable to **BP/USA Chicagoland** and mail it to arrive **by the 10<sup>th</sup>** of the month prior to the upcoming newsletter. **The newsletter is published quarterly (January, April, July, October).**

Mail your check to:  
**Bereaved Parents of the USA  
Chicagoland Chapter  
P.O. Box 320  
Western Springs, IL 60558**

It is also recommended that you email your love gift message to the newsletter editor Sally Yarberry at [psyrbrry@hotmail.com](mailto:psyrbrry@hotmail.com).



***In loving remembrance of  
Paula Lynn Yarberry VanHorn  
October 3, 1968 until October 27, 2006***

Paula Sunshine,  
Another year has slipped away....  
The passing years do not mean I miss you less.  
I think of who you'd be now....  
And know I'd love you even more

*"For your life has lived in me,  
your laugh once lifted me,  
your word was gift to me.  
To remember this brings painful joy.  
'Tis a human thing, love, a holy thing,  
to love what death has touched."  
~ Judah Halevi*

I carry your heart in my heart.

Always and forever,  
"MamaSama and Bry"  
Sally Yarberry and Bryan Yarberry (brother)



***In loving memory of  
Frank Knapczyk Jr.  
March 28, 1967 until October 28, 1992***

*"Those we love don't go away,  
They walk beside us every day.  
Unseen, unheard, but always near,  
still loved, still missed and very dear."*

Close to our hearts, & remembered always.

Love, Mom & Dad, & Sister  
Barbara Knapczyk & Frank Knapczyk



***In loving memory of***

***My Son  
Thomas Burton***

***April 14, 1954 until August 26, 1976***

The years have passed but the memories remain.

Love, Mom  
Patricia Burton



## THE TAPESTRY OF LIFE

Richard Berman, Editor,  
BP/USA, A JOURNEY TOGETHER, WINTER 2015  
[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)

Thanksgiving at my house is always a crazy affair. With four siblings, their extended families, various cousins, odd aunts and friends who were unable to travel "home" for the holiday, on top of my own expanding family, all coming together to celebrate life in this great country. It is loud, lovely and a little bit lonely. One may wonder how I could possibly feel alone while surrounded by so many people who care about me, love me and understand the enormous loss that I've suffered, but that is the nature of loss. Sometimes it is felt most acutely when there is an abundance of joy to be shared.

I remember one year we had an especially large number as all the out-of-towners came in for Thanksgiving. A cousin, not meaning to be hurtful, commented, "How wonderful it was to have the whole family together." She, of course, was right, but I, listening with my heart instead of my ears, heard "hole" family. And that is the dilemma. No matter how many friends and family I wrap around myself there will always be a hole in my family and a hole in my heart. Like an unpainted corner in a freshly painted room, it's the part that stands out.

For many years after Brad died I was unable to enjoy the blessings of life. Even from the depths of deepest grief, however, I understood there were people patiently awaiting my return to living. Not unlike an accident victim re-learning to walk, I've had to re-learn to appreciate this big family of mine. Now I can play with the kids, ogle over the newest members, laugh at the stupid jokes (and tell a few myself), eat too much, drink (a little) too much and simply enjoy the company of people I've loved for so many years.

When I look at the tapestry of my life, when I see its grandeur and its beauty, my eyes are still drawn to the hole left by my son's death. Over time, the tapestry has grown in size, ever expanding with marriages and births and new friends and experiences, but the hole has remained. Smaller, to be sure, in comparison to the larger picture, but still there, still very much a part of who I am. And that, perhaps, is as it should be. 🍂

## Welcome

Bereaved Parents Chicagoland Chapter extends a warm welcome to the new attendees at our recent meetings. We know it is difficult to come to your first meeting.

New attendees:

- ♥ Brian Dunn, father of Gabriella (Gabby)
- ♥ Melissa Schrader, mother of Brian

We are very sorry for the reason you are here, but we are glad that you found us. 🍂



## Life Must Go On....A Navaho Prayer

Grieve for me, for I would grieve for you.  
Then brush away the sorrow and the tears.  
Life is not over, but begins anew,  
with courage you must greet the coming years.  
To live forever in the past is wrong;  
can only cause you misery and pain.  
Dwell not on memories overlong,  
with others you must share and care again.  
Reach out and comfort those who comfort you;  
recall the years, but only for a while.  
Nurse not your loneliness; but live again.  
Forget not. Remember with a smile. 🍂





# Potluck Dinner & Guest Speaker Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>



**Doors Open at 6:30PM - Dinner at 7:00PM**  
**Program begins at 7:45PM**

Please come join us for food & fellowship. We all need a night out, especially before the holiday rush begins. Hope to see you there!

The Chapter provides chicken, beverages and table settings. Bring your child's favorite dish if you wish, or another special item sure to be enjoyed by all!

**Please bring a dish (serving for 8) based on your last name:**

If your last name begins with **A-N** - please bring a **side dish or salad**

If your last name begins with **O-Z** - please bring a dessert

Guest speaker to be announced.

Siblings (high school age or older) are encouraged to attend.

**Please R.S.V.P. by November 5 to Sally Yarberry at (708) 738-0396 or**  
[psyrbrry@hotmail.com](mailto:psyrbrry@hotmail.com).

*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*

**Alan Schroeder - 22**

Oct 11, 1985 - Dec 04, 2007  
Joan & John Schroeder

**Bobby Vargas - 16**

Oct 08, 1972 - Oct 26, 1988  
Auto Accident  
Susan Vargas

**Cindy Cebczynski - 21**

Oct 18, 1983 - Nov 07, 2004  
Victim of a Drunk Driver  
Pam & Bob Cebczynski

**Dan Parmenter - 20**

Oct 15, 1987 - Feb 14, 2008  
NIU Classroom Shooting  
Gary Parmenter

**Daniel F. (Dan) Schmid - 50**

Jan 27, 1966 - Oct 11, 2016  
Heart Failure  
William (Bill) & Jean (Jeanne) Schmid

**Dominic Cairo - 8**

Oct 14, 2002 - Jun 26, 2011  
ALL/CNS Cancer  
Anna Cairo

**Donna Hark - 48**

Oct 28, 1961 - Feb 08, 2010  
Pulmonary Hypertension  
Geraldine Ploskonka

**Eric-Alan Gottung - 24**

Oct 10, 1986 - Mar 04, 2011  
Suicide  
Nancy & Eric Gottung

**Frank Knapczyk, Jr. - 25**

Mar 28, 1967 - Oct 24, 1992  
Electrocution  
Barbara & Frank Knapczyk

**Gabriella (Gabby) Dunn - 9**

Oct 08, 2007 - Oct 07, 2016  
Car Accident  
Brian Dunn

**Gregory Michael Humbert - 30**

Aug 31, 1961 - Oct 31, 1991  
Struck by Van  
Mary (Marge) Humbert

**Jacob Silver - 22**

Oct 05, 1990 - Apr 11, 2013  
Suicide  
Laureen Dunne

**Katherine Lacewell - 41**

Feb 27, 1969 - Oct 16, 2011  
Alcoholism  
Allen Lacewell

**Kerri L. Gartner - 22**

Sep 09, 1981 - Oct 24, 2003  
Auto Accident  
Ervin & Kathleen Gartner

**Lisa M. Zimmerman - 32**

Nov 24, 1971 - Oct 13, 2004  
Medication Overdose  
Carol & Bill Zimmerman

**Matthew Lane - 27**

Mar 08, 1978 - Oct 10, 2005  
Car Accident  
Joylin Lane

**Michael Atella - 60**

Oct 11, 1949 - Sep 12, 2008  
Heart Attack  
Edna Atella

**Michelle Louise Jensen - 30**

Nov 08, 1980 - Oct 13, 2011  
Drug Overdose  
Kelly Jensen

**Natalie Anne Ragusa - 27**

Oct 24, 1975 - Mar 04, 2003  
Car Accident  
George Ragusa

**Patricia Strick-Hawkins - 54**

Oct 31, 1959 - Mar 18, 2015  
Ovarian Cancer  
Ilse Strick

**Paula L. Yarberry Van Horn - 38**

Oct 03, 1968 - Oct 27, 2006  
Sepsis  
Sally Yarberry

**Robert Conway - 15**

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

**Roseanne Strick - 22**

Feb 27, 1969 - Oct 14, 1991  
Brain Aneurysm/Heart Attack/Car Accident  
Ilse Strick

**Ryan Vesely - 17**

Oct 03, 1974 - Jan 18, 1992  
Auto Accident  
Stan & Val Vesely

**Susan G. Gabrielsen - 31**

Apr 18, 1963 - Oct 14, 1994  
Breast Cancer  
Patricia Jacobi

**Thomas A. Walsh Jr - 32**

Oct 16, 1970 - Jul 20, 2003  
Unknown  
Karen Richards

**Adam Schar - 33**

Nov 23, 1976 - Jul 18, 2010  
Accidental Death  
Janet Schar

*Our Children....continued on next page*



*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*

**Aidan Samuel Wood - 4**  
Jul 17, 2003 - Nov 30, 2007  
House Fire  
Michelle & Ian Wood

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

**Brent Evans - 35**  
Dec 27, 1976 - Nov 07, 2012  
Alcoholism  
Anne & Ed Evans

**Brian Eck - 39**  
Sep 08, 1971 - Nov 08, 2010  
Enlarged Heart  
Kathy Eck

**Caitrin Paige Gadomski - 6**  
Apr 16, 2007 - Nov 17, 2013  
Cancer  
Joe & Becky Gadomski

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

**Christopher Kavanagh - 25**  
Sep 23, 1984 - Nov 15, 2009  
Undetermined  
Sherri Kavanagh

**Glenn Patrick Beach - 31**  
Nov 07, 1960 - Feb 16, 1992  
Murdered  
John & Grace Beach

**Heather Runge - 6 Weeks**  
Nov 21, 1989 - Jan 04, 1990  
Neuroblastoma  
Sandra (Sandy) Sand

**Jennifer Roley - 22**  
Nov 26, 1989 - Jan 15, 2012  
Drug Overdose  
Lynn Gantner

**Katie Elizabeth Farley**  
Nov 12, 2004  
Chromosomal Issues Incompatible w/Life  
Kelly Farley

**Megan Elizabeth Peters - 23**  
Nov 26, 1980 - Aug 31, 2004  
Drug Overdose  
Kathleen Peters

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

**Nicky Angone - 57**  
Nov 13, 1958 - Mar 26, 2016  
Cancer  
Diane Angone

**Paul Moore - 10**  
Nov 04, 1982 - Jun 08, 1994  
Drunk Driver  
Don & Julie Moore

**Phillip G. Dore - 21**  
Nov 11, 1988 - Sep 02, 2010  
Suicide  
Phil & Linda Dore

**Riley McBride - 30**  
Nov 06, 1984 - Apr 22, 2014  
Overdose  
Mary & Jim McBride

**Sarah Marie Fink - 3 ½ Months**  
Jul 11, 1977 - Nov 02, 1977  
SIDS  
Sue & Garry Fink

**Steven Glosky - 23**  
Feb 16, 1972 - Nov 13, 1995  
Suicide  
Judy & Danny Glosky

**Thomas (Tommy John) Adams - 35**  
Feb 01, 1966 - Nov 01, 2001  
Marge & Bill Adams

**Timothy Kuzmicki - 16**  
Mar 07, 1986 - Nov 13, 2002  
Motorcycle/Auto Collision  
Kathy Kuzmicki

**William (Bill) Collins - 24**  
Nov 15, 1965 - Dec 24, 1989  
Auto Accident, Hit & Run  
Suzanne Collins

**Brandon Hardy - 22**  
Aug 13, 1980 - Dec 28, 2002  
Auto Accident  
Don & Celeste Hardy

**Casey Cox - 27**  
Dec 17, 1985 - Feb 14, 2013  
Asthma  
Cynthia Cox

**Casey Reiter - 25**  
Aug 11, 1984 - Dec 15, 2009  
Heart Attack  
Sandy Tumillo

**Chris Marie Longo - 18**  
Dec 21, 1951 - Sep 26, 1970  
Brain Aneurysm  
Anthony & Margery Longo

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

*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*

**Daniel Stoothoff - 34**

Jun 03, 1970 - Dec 07, 2004  
Car Crash  
Sally Stoothoff

**Elizabeth Anne Barrett – 15 ½**

Dec 29, 1976 - Jun 29, 1992  
Hit by Van  
Kay & Phil Barrett

**Eric Fitzpatrick Bucholz - 19**

Jun 26, 1974 - Dec 24, 1993  
Electrocution  
Sue Bucholz

**Frank Gianfortune Jr - 19**

Aug 01, 1968 - Dec 06, 1987  
Auto Accident  
Ms. Adel Gianfortune

**Tim Schiefelbein - 18**

Dec 07, 1989 — Feb 24, 2007  
Car Accident  
Diane Grabowski

**Jessica Louise Lang - 23**

Mar 03, 1980 - Dec 12, 2003  
Heroin Overdose  
Kristine Lang

**John C. Crider - 44**

- Dec 24, 2009  
Helen Bapes Crider

**Joseph James Craig – 35**

Dec 05, 1974 - Dec 15, 2009  
Drowning  
Joseph R. Craig

**Josiah Weiberg - 10 Months**

Jan 16, 2009 - Dec 03, 2009  
SMA Type 1  
Alesha & Jim Weiberg

**Mariana Tunstall - 8**

Dec 29, 1999 - Jul 16, 2008  
E-Coli  
Keith & Kristena Tunstall

**Martin K. Adams – 42**

Dec 11, 1960 - Jan 06, 2003  
Marge & Bill Adams

**Marty Sobanski (Brother) - 28**

Dec 08, 1961 - Sep 05, 1990  
Seizure Disorder  
Helen Sobanski-Hennessey

**Matthew Davis - 33**

Dec 28, 1976 - Jun 10, 2010  
Unknown  
Gloria Smolek

**Michael Kosinski – 26**

Dec 17, 1986 - Jun 12, 2013  
Sudden Cardiac Arrest  
Marge & Bill Kosinski

**Nicholas Carl Pica - 21**

Dec 12, 1984 - Jul 13, 2006  
Sudden Cardiac Death  
Jane & Jerry Pica

**Noah Michael Cichorski – 2 ½**

Jun 24, 2001 - Dec 16, 2003  
Head Injury (Cause Unknown)  
Jeannine Cichorski

**Phillip Butler – 30**

Dec 29, 1982 - May 13, 2013  
Atherosclerotic Heart Disease  
Nancy Butler

**Rachel Krueger - 21**

Dec 29, 1986 - Sep 23, 2008  
Pulmonary Embolism  
Jim Krueger &  
Rose Martino-Krueger

**Richie Chow - 27**

Dec 22, 1983 - Sep 30, 2011  
Unknown  
Joyce Chow

**Ryan James Moravcik – 21**

Jan 07, 1980 - Dec 31, 2001  
Suicide  
James & Lucille Moravcik

**Sarah Lynn Moore - 5**

Dec 18, 1998 - Mar 31, 2004  
Surgical Complications  
Susan Moore

**Scott Wesolowski - 18**

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

**Sean Howard Anderson – 17**

Feb 22, 1983 - Dec 05, 2000  
Suicide  
Maureen Anderson

**Stevie Brow - 8**

Dec 13, 1964 - May 18, 1973  
Gunshot  
Roberta Brow



## 7 Things I've learned Since the Loss of My Child

~ Angela Miller, [www.stillstandingmag.com](http://www.stillstandingmag.com)

Child loss is a loss like no other. One often misunderstood by many. If you love a bereaved parent or know someone who does, remember that even his or her “good” days are harder than you could ever imagine. Compassion and love, not advice, are what’s needed. If you’d like an inside look into why the loss of a child is a grief that lasts a lifetime, here is what I’ve learned in my seven years of trekking through the unimaginable.

### **1). *Love never dies.***

There will never come a day, hour, minute or second I stop loving or thinking about my son. Just as parents of living children unconditionally love their children always and forever, so do bereaved parents. I want to say and hear his name just the same as non-bereaved parents do. I want to speak about my deceased child as normally and naturally as you speak of your living ones.

I love my child just as much as you love yours- the only difference is mine lives in heaven and talking about him is unfortunately quite taboo in our culture. I hope to change that. Our culture isn’t so great about hearing about children gone too soon, but that doesn’t stop me from saying my son’s name and sharing his love and light everywhere I go. Just because it might make you uncomfortable, doesn’t make him matter any less. My son’s life was cut irreversibly short, but his love lives on forever. And ever.

### **2). *Bereaved parents share an unspeakable bond.***

In my seven years navigating the world as a bereaved parent, I am continually struck by the power of the bond between bereaved parents. Strangers become kindreds in mere seconds- a look, a glance, a knowing of the heart connects us, even if we’ve never met before. No matter our circumstances, who we are, or how different we are, there is no greater bond than the connection between parents who understand the agony of enduring the death of a child. It’s a pain we suffer for a lifetime, and unfortunately only those who have walked the path of child loss understand the depth and breadth of both the pain and the love we carry.

### **3). *I will grieve for a lifetime.***

Period. The end. There is no “moving on,” or “getting over it.” There is no neatly-tied bow, no fix, no solution to my heartache. There is no end to the ways I will grieve and for how long I will grieve. There is no glue for my broken heart, no elixir for my pain, no going back in time. For as long as I breathe, I will grieve and ache and love my son with all my heart and soul. There will never come a time when I won’t think about who my son would be, what he would look like, and how he would be woven perfectly into the tapestry of my family. I wish people could understand that grief lasts forever because love lasts forever; that the loss of a child is not one finite event, it is a continuous loss that unfolds minute by minute over the course of a lifetime. Every missed birthday, holiday, milestone; should-be back-to-school years and graduations; weddings that will never be, grandchildren that should have been but will never be born- an entire generation of people are irrevocably altered *forever*.

This is why grief lasts forever. The ripple effect lasts forever. The bleeding never stops.

### **4). *It’s a club I can never leave, but is full of the most shining souls I’ve ever known.***

This crappy club called child loss is a club I never wanted to join, and one I can never leave, yet is filled with some of the best people I’ve ever known. And yet we all wish we could jump ship- that we could have met another way- *any* other way but *this*. Alas, these shining souls are the most beautiful, compassionate, grounded, loving, movers, shakers and healers I have ever had the honor of knowing. They are life-changers, game-changers, relentless survivors and thrivers. Warrior moms and dads who redefine the word brave.

Every day loss parents move mountains in honor of their children gone too soon. They start movements, change laws, spearhead crusades of tireless activism. Why? In the hope that even just one parent could be spared from joining *the club*. If you’ve ever wondered who some of the greatest world changers are, hang out with a few bereaved parents and watch how they live, see what they do in a day, a week, a lifetime. Watch how they alchemize their grief into a force to be reckoned with, watch how they turn tragedy into transformation, loss into legacy.

Love is the most powerful force on earth, and the love between a bereaved parent and his/her child is a life force to behold. Get to know a bereaved parent. You’ll be thankful you did.

*Continued on next page*



**5). *The empty chair/room/space never becomes less empty.***

Empty chair, empty room, empty space in every family picture. Empty, vacant, forever gone. Empty spaces that should be full, everywhere we go. There is and will always be a missing space in our lives, our families, a forever-hole-in-our-hearts. Time does not make the space less empty. Neither do platitudes, clichés or well-wishes for us to “move on,” or “stop dwelling,” from well-intentioned friends or family. Nothing does. No matter how you look at it, empty is still empty. Missing is still missing. The problem is nothing can fill it. Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, month after month, year after heartbreaking year the empty space remains. No matter how much time has passed.

The empty space of our missing child or children lasts a lifetime. And so we rightfully miss them forever. Help us by holding the space of that truth for us.

**6). *No matter how long it's been, holidays never become easier without my son.***

Never, ever. Have you ever wondered why every holiday season is like torture for a bereaved parent? Even if it's been 5, 10, or 25 years later? It's because they really, truly are horrific. Imagine if you had to live every holiday without one or more of your precious children. Imagine how that might feel for you. It would be easier to lose an arm, a leg or two—*anything*— than to live without your flesh and blood, without the beat of your heart. Almost anything would be easier than living without one of more of your precious children. That is why holidays are *always and forever* hard for bereaved parents. Don't wonder why or even try to understand. Know you don't have to understand in order to be a supportive presence. Consider supporting and loving some bereaved parents this holiday season. It will be the best gift you could ever give them.

**7). *Because I know deep sorrow, I also know unspeakable joy.***

Though I will grieve the death of my son forever and then some, it does not mean my life is lacking happiness and joy. Quite the contrary, in fact. It is not either/or, it's both/and. Grief and joy can and do coexist. My life is richer now. I live from a deeper place. I love deeper still. Because I grieve, I also know a joy like no other. The joy I experience now is far deeper and more intense than the joy I experienced before my loss. Such is the alchemy of grief. Because I've clawed my way from the depths of unimaginable pain, suffering and sorrow, again and again— when the joy comes, however and whenever it does— it is a joy that reverberates through every pore of my skin and every bone in my body. I feel all of it, deeply. I embrace and thank every blessed morsel of it. My life now is more rich and vibrant and full, not despite my loss, but *because* of it. In grief there are gifts, sometimes many. These gifts don't in any way make it all “worth” it, but I am grateful beyond words for each and every gift that comes my way. I bow my head to each one and say *thank you, thank you, thank you*. Because there is nothing— and I mean absolutely nothing— I take for granted. Living life in this way gives me greater joy than I've ever known possible.

I have my son to thank for that. Being his mom is the best gift I've ever been given. Even death can't take that away. 🍂

***Bereaved Parents of the USA Credo***

*We are the parents whose children have died. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life.*

*We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a haven where all bereaved families can meet and share our long and arduous grief journey.*

*We attend 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 the triumphs as well as the love that will never fade. Together we learn how little it matters where we live, what our color or our affluence is or what faith we uphold as we confront the tragedies of our children's deaths.*

*Together, strengthened by the bonds we forge at our gatherings, we offer what we have learned from each other to every more recently bereaved family.*

*We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA.*

*We welcome you.*



**Bereaved Parents of the USA  
Chicagoland Chapter**

Cordially invites you to attend our

**Annual Candle Lighting Observance**



Sunday, December 10, 2017  
1st Congregational Church of Western Springs  
1106 Chestnut Street, Western Springs, IL  
Chapel & Parlor, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

Program 7:00 p.m. ♥ Doors open 6:30 p.m.

During this observance, the name of each child will be read out loud. If you wish to submit a photo (5x7 or smaller), your child's picture will be shown as his or her name is read aloud. **If you have submitted a photo in the past, you must give us your permission to have the photo shown again this year.** If you are unable to attend, but wish to have your child's name read aloud, please indicate on the return form.

**Refreshments and fellowship will follow the Candle Lighting Observance. You are welcome to bring your child's favorite treat to share. Memorial tables will be available to display your child's picture or remembrance.**

Send photos to: Bob & Carol Gordon, 7717 Williams St., Darien, IL 60561-4429, (630) 971-9472  
or e-mail photos to: [FLASH22504@comcast.net](mailto:FLASH22504@comcast.net)

***Deadline for photos, 5x7 or smaller: Monday, December 4, 2017***

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**Return Form for Annual Candle Light Observance**

Please respond by Monday, December 4, 2017

Return to: Bereaved Parents USA c/o Bob & Carol Gordon, 7717 Williams St., Darien, IL 60561-4429, or  
[FLASH22504@comcast.net](mailto:FLASH22504@comcast.net)

First Name of Child(ren)\_\_\_\_\_

Last Name of Child(ren)\_\_\_\_\_

First & Last Names of Parent(s)\_\_\_\_\_

How many people will attend\_\_\_\_\_ Of those, how many bereaved siblings\_\_\_\_\_

I have enclosed a picture\_\_\_\_\_ I will send a picture\_\_\_\_\_ I will e-mail a picture\_\_\_\_\_

I give permission to use a photo I previously submitted \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (in case we have to postpone due to inclement weather)\_\_\_\_\_

**Donations to help defray costs are gratefully appreciated.**

***If you are willing to volunteer to help with planning the Candle Lighting Observance, or participate in the program, please contact Donna Corrigan:  
[silks6@aol.com](mailto:silks6@aol.com)***

**So This is Normal** ~ BP/USA, A JOURNEY TOGETHER, WINTER 2015, [www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)

Normal is having tears waiting behind every smile when you realize someone important is missing from all the important events in your family's life.

Normal is trying to decide what to take to the cemetery for Birthdays, Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Years, Valentine's Day, July 4th.

Normal is feeling like you can't sit another minute without getting up and screaming, because you just don't like to sit through anything anymore.

Normal is not sleeping very well because a thousand what if's and why didn't I's go through your head constantly.

Normal is reliving that day continuously through your eyes and mind, holding your head to make it go away.

Normal is having the TV on the minute you walk into the house to have noise, because the silence is deafening.

Normal is every happy event in my life always being backed up with sadness lurking close behind, because of the hole in my heart.

Normal is staring at every boy who looks like he is my son's age. And then thinking of the age he would be now. Then wondering why it is even important to imagine it, because it will never happen.

Normal is telling the story of my child's death as if it were an everyday, common place activity, and then seeing the horror in someone's eyes at how awful it sounds. And yet realizing it has become a part of my "normal."

Normal is having some people afraid to mention my child.

Normal is making sure that others remember her.

Normal is weeks, months, and years after the initial shock, the grieving gets worse sometimes, not better.

Normal is not listening to people compare anything in their life to this loss, unless they too have lost a child. Nothing — even if your child is in the remotest part of the earth away from you — it doesn't compare. Losing a parent is horrible, but having to bury your own child is unnatural.

Normal is sitting at the computer crying, sharing how you feel with chat buddies who have also lost a child.

Normal is feeling a common bond with friends on the computer in the UK or US but yet never having met any of them face to face.

Normal is a new friendship with another grieving mother, talking and crying together over our children and our new lives.

Normal is not listening to people make excuses for God. "God may have done this because..." I know that my child is in heaven, but hearing people trying to think up excuses as to why my child was taken from this earth is not appreciated and makes absolutely no sense to this grieving mother.

Normal is wondering this time whether you are going to say you have two children, because you will never see this person again and it is not worth explaining that my eldest child is in heaven. And yet when you say you have only two children to avoid that problem, you feel horrible as if you have betrayed your child.

Normal is asking God why he took your child's life and asking if there even is a God.

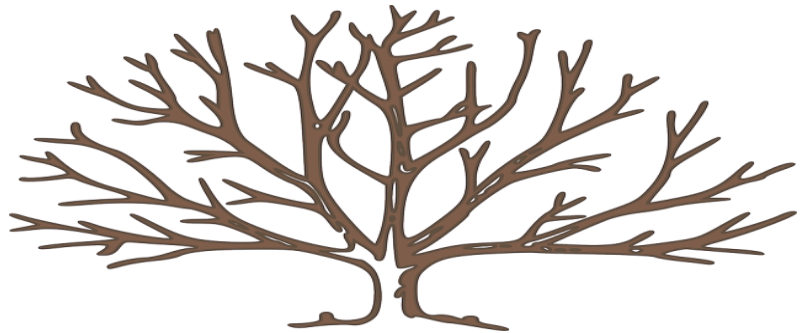
Normal is knowing I will never get over this loss, in a day or a million years. And last of all, Normal is hiding all the things that have become "normal" for you to feel, so that everyone around you will think that you are "normal." ❧

Bereaved Parents of the USA  
Chicagoland Chapter  
P.O. Box 320  
Western Springs, IL 60558



October – November – December 2017

CALENDAR OF EVENTS	
October	
October 3	<b>Monthly Chapter Meeting:</b> 7:00 PM - Open discussion
November	
November 7	<b>Monthly Chapter Meeting, Potluck Dinner &amp; Speaker:</b> 7:00 PM - Chicken & beverages will be provided; please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Please RSVP by Nov. 5
December	
December 5	<b>Monthly Chapter Meeting:</b> 7:00 PM - Children's Gifts - Bring an unwrapped gift in honor of your child and share each gift's significance. The gifts will be donated to underprivileged children
December 10	<b>Candle Lighting Program:</b> Doors open at 6:30; program at 7 PM



*People tell me that it will get easier, and that I will someday care about living again.....  
People tell me that I will remember more of the good and happy times, and less of the sad and scary times....  
People tell me that I was a good mother, and that you knew how very much I loved you....  
People tell me I will forgive myself for not keeping you safe.*

BP/USA Chicagoland on the Web: <http://www.bpusachicagoland.org/index.html>  
Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Bereaved-Parents-of-the-USA-Chicagoland-Chapter>