

MAKING MOTHER'S DAY AND FATHER'S DAY SPECIAL

Here are a few hints to help you through these days after the loss of a child.

- 1. Pamper yourself-this is a special day in your life. You are a parent forever and your child is your child forever.
- 2. Do what you need to do-what helps you. Grieve your way.
- 3. Be with those who surround you with love, not demands or advice.
- 4. Plan ahead-do things that make you feel good or give you a moment's peace.
- 5. Start new rituals to make new memories.
- 6. Share your thoughts with family members; decide together what the day should include. (If you are alone, find a good friend.)
- 7. Include deceased children in the day-through prayer, lighting a candle, telling stories about them, looking through pictures, planting flowers or a garden, doing a good deed, writing about them, making their favorite recipe.
- 8. Join with another bereaved family to honor this day and have mutual support.
- 9. Start a garden or add to a special garden in memory of your child.
- 10. Use this day to plant spring flowers so you can always see your child in each bloom and each bouquet that you cut.
- 11. Visit the cemetery if that helps your heart on this day.
- 12. Plant a flower or shrub that will come to bloom this time of year.
- 13. Do something special for someone else or something special in your child's name Listen to music that makes your heart feel good.
- 14. Cook some favorite recipes that your child enjoyed or cooked for you.
- 15. Buy a present for yourself from your child and enjoy the comfort it brings you.
- 16. Write a poem or article in memory of your child, sharing memories or whatever has helped you.
- 17. Attend a family gathering of relatives their love and support can give you a lift on this day.
- 18. Make a booklet of favorite poems that help your heart, and give copies to dear relatives and friends in memory of your child.
- 19. Take part in a special church ceremony honoring Mother's Day and Father's Day.
- 20. Pray to your child-talking is the best medicine and prayer is simply talking.
- 21. Set aside some special time to grieve, unloading all the frustration and sadness that can envelop you on such a day giving you time to meditate alone.
- 22. Write a letter to your child, telling what's in your heart (perhaps some unfinished business or some new blessing that has enriched your life).
- 23. Allow the tears to flow- crying is healing and allows a release for your feelings.
- 24. Think of a way to "share your child with the world"-making sure his or her memory lives on. 25. Give and get plenty of hugs.

~ Elaine Stillwell, Rockville Centre, NY



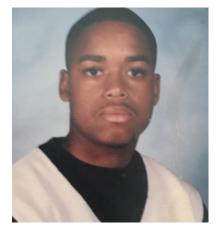


This page is dedicated to the memory of Tommie J. Wonnum, a wonderful son, brother, grandson, nephew, cousin and friend. Rising sophomore in college, who planned to travel the world and help as many as he could along the way. At the age of 19 a different plan was created and the impact of his valuable life lives on. With the loss of our Tommie we miss so much joy. It's still so hard to imagine true

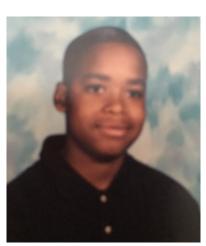
happiness without him being here. I remember when he asked me for a Nintendo or Xbox, he said "Mom it would mean so much." I went to the PX (post exchange) and ordered the box. The days leading up to Christmas I told him that it was such a hot item I couldn't find one. On Christmas Day, his brother gave him games for the box and said "we will find one." He looked so disappointed! We let him open a few other gifts and he finally opened up the gift with the game. He jumped almost to the ceiling, smiled and laughed. Tommie and his big brother stayed up all night playing. Loved, missed, appreciated and a life celebrated! In our hearts forever. Love Mom and family



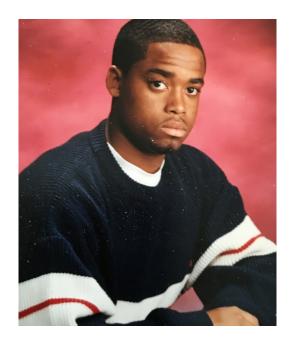




2017 marks the 10th year a scholarship has been given out at Potomac High School in Dumfries, VA in Memory of Tommie. The scholarship is presented to a well-rounded, community involved student with strong leadership and proven academic achievement.



REST IN PEACE





We Remember Our Children

Who have Birthdays and Death Dates in May and June

Charles (CJ) Angelos, Jr	5/28/85 ~ 11/18/06	Adrienne Leigh Ingram	6/25/79 ~ 12/2/07
Zachary William Arnold	9/23/84 ~ 5/11/14	Derrick V. James	6/01/74 ~ 5/28/05
Mielen Garlit Arquines	12/01/68 ~ 6/04/08	Rasheem Kuwan Jenkins	5/04/82 ~ 9/09/09
Brandon Scott Bailey	6/21/79 ~ 5/31/99	Kashif Johnson	3/15/87 ~ 5/01/07
James "Jimmy" Barnette	7/11/98 ~ 6/03/06	Robert Larson	3/14/94 ~ 6/30/10
Donald "Donnie" Barrett	5/14/76 ~ 5/03/02	Nicole Michelle Lee	6/22/89 ~ 1/26/08
Kimberly Ann Barrett	9/08/86 ~ 5/04/02	Robert Loiseau	8/22/72 ~ 5/27/93
Parker Evan Boyd	9/15/98 ~ 6/04/08	Christian Paul Norman	2/04/85 ~ 6/03/01
Brian Brumbaugh	11/09/83 ~ 5/02/07	Josephine Pennefather	6/21/03
Brandon Bundy	5/19/84 ~ 8/24/08	Vernon Santmyer, Jr.	8/24/79 ~ 5/17/11
Brandon DeWulf	6/20/85 ~ 6/29/09	Courtney Sharee Shelby	11/23/93 ~ 5/14/01
Corey Martin Dill	7/25/90 ~ 5/03/07	Adam Charles Sorge	5/12/94 ~ 1/04/14
Raven Gileau	6/23/90 ~ 4/23/10	Colby Thomas Smith	5/25/04 ~ 10/11/15
Jacob Charles Glushefski	5/23/77 ~ 2/21/11	Kevin Michael Stanphill	3/12/80 ~ 5/09/09
Dwayne Eddie Gonsorcik	5/26/74 ~ 4/26/13	Michael "Ryan" Stevens	7/07/87 ~ 5/30/07
Christina Gordon	5/08/13	Beckett Josef TePaske	4/04/12 ~ 5/12/15
John Gregory	9/21/73 ~ 6/03/13	Josh Weaver	6/17/82 ~ 9/09/09
Kourtney Michelle Hale	5/29/80 ~ 3/14/10	Christopher Andre' Waters Jr	5/31/97 ~ 12/23/07
Gabrielle Nicole Henderson	5/28/86 ~ 6/17/99	Kyle Robert Wilson	5/25/82 ~ 4/16/07
Olivia Rose Cecilia Henry	5/27/02 ~ 5/26/12	Tommie J. Wonnum III	6/14/84 ~ 6/30/03
Desmend Holmes	6/16/06 ~ 7/21/15	Franklin Conner Woodward	5/15/08 ~ 5/17/08
Quincy Holmes	5/18/05 ~ 7/20/15	Stephen Wesley Wright	6/06/89 ~ 11/21/13

We apologize if there are any mistakes in the "We Remember Our Children" section. If we spelled any names incorrectly, have any dates incorrect or your child's name is not listed and has a birthday or death date during the months of May and June, please provide us with your child's information so they can be included correctly in future newsletters

Memorial Gardens In Memory of Your Loved One

Planting a memory garden in honor of a deceased loved one can bring comfort to family and friends. This can be an area where those left behind will feel closer to their loved one. Memory gardens also can be created to honor the memory of a group or an event, or they can be planted to recognize the living, commemorating various milestones in the person's life. Some memory garden ideas follow.

Contemplative Space

Memory gardens can be peaceful spaces where people come to meditate or spend quiet time in contemplation of the person, event or group to which **the garden is** dedicated. Memory gardens can include benches to provide comfortable seating. A fountain or waterfall can create a wonderfully tranquil atmosphere. The gurgling water will help block out the sounds of nearby traffic or other noise.

Flowers and Plaques

Since memory gardens are meant to invoke thoughts of those to whom the space is dedicated, use items in the space to remind visitors of the person or event. If the garden is private, for instance, at a family home, then include the person's favorite plants and flowers. For a public space, use a plaque to "dedicate" the garden. A plaque attached to a bench or near the garden's entrance can provide a brief statement about the person or event in whose memory the garden was planted. Use other plaques or stepping stones to convey the significance of the plantings, sculptures or other garden objects. Include on these favorite quotes or poetry passages that the person being memorialized enjoyed.

Photographs

Purchase sealed glass photograph frames designed for outdoor use into which you can place photos of the person or event being memorialized. Choose photos of the person or event that had particular meaning to convey the bond shared. Framed photos can be placed on outdoor, all-season end tables.

Bring Life to the Memory Garden

Squirrel feeders, hummingbird feeders and other wildlife feeding stations add life, movement, color and sound to a memory garden. Bird baths and fish ponds are another enjoyable way to bring life and joy to the garden space.

Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve.

inhabited by our children's spirits and by our shared grief,a sharing which helps us all heal and continue living."

~ Earl Grollman

~ Bill Brown, Elizabeth's Daddy

"It inspires me to be in the space

"Let yourself feel good again, laugh with friends, have fun. Living your life to the fullest is not betrayal of a memory but fulfillment of a promise to someone who would want only the best for you." "The reality is that we don't forget, move on, and have closure, but rather we honor, we remember, and incorporate our deceased children and siblings into our lives in a new way. In fact, keeping memories of your loved one alive in your mind and heart is an important part of your healing journey."

- Karen Katafiasz

~ Harriet Schiff, author of The Bereaved Parent



REFLECT . . . and be inspired by our inspirational speakers who offer hope for the future. Learn about the mourning process and how to move forward in your grief during our interactive workshop sessions.

RENEW ... old friendships and make new connections with fellow bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents who understand what you are going through. Take off your "mask" and share your grief in a safe and affirming environment.

REMEMBER... your child as you take part in our Candle Lighting Ceremony and Slide Show Presentation. Honor their memory by taking good care of yourself during this healing weekend.

Join us for a weekend of Hope and Healing!

Hello, everyone!

It's Springtime and the flowers, leaves, and weeds are in full swing. Saturday, May 6, workday was postponed because of the weather. Thank you, Dwain McMullen for taking it upon yourself to go in the rain to pull weeds and spread mulch. Every little bit helps. Anyone at any time can go and do the same thing. We don't have to have a scheduled workday. When you go and see something that needs to be taken care please go ahead and do it.



Facing the garden, in the front on the left, there are wildflowers growing. It may be difficult to distinguish between the flowers and weeds. If you are unsure, there are plenty of weeds in the rest of the garden! Especially, with the rain we've been having.

Speaking of rain, the workday scheduled for May 6 was cancelled due to the rain. It has been rescheduled for Saturday May 20 at 9:00. Hopefully, the weather will hold and it will be warmer.

We have weeds to pull and mulch to spread. We plan to plant some colorful flowers to brighten the garden up even more. The bushes are growing and some flowers blooming. Unfortunately, we had the Redbud on the back-left die. We didn't even have a harsh winter. Therefore, it will need to be dug up, carried away and replanted. For this we will need strong people to dig it up, move it and replant it. One person cannot do it alone.

We need to get the garden looking as nice as it always does and that takes work by more than 1-2 people. The quicker we get it finished (although weeds need to be pulled all season), the quicker we can enjoy it. It will also be ready for the Butterfly release on Sunday August 20.

If you would like to participate in the Butterfly release program please let me know. I will be asking others that do not volunteer. You can pick something to read or I can choose something for you.

I look forward to seeing you at the workday and the Butterfly release. This garden belongs to all our children. It's a labor of love!

Hugs, Beverly

Caring and Sharing Support Meetings:

4th Sunday @ 3 p.m. First United Presbyterian Church 14391 Minnieville Road Dale City, VA

For more information contact: Jodi Norman, Chapter Leader 703-656-6999 (cell) <u>bleachermom2000@aol.com</u>

AMORe

(All Murdered Offspring Remembered) 3rd Wednesday @ 6 p.m. 3182 Golansky Blvd, Suite 101 Woodbridge, VA

For more info contact: Beverly Ruane 540-628-4758 (h) or 703-395-9546 (c) <u>ruane.beverly@yahoo.com</u> Garden Work Day Saturday, May 20th At 9:00 a.m.

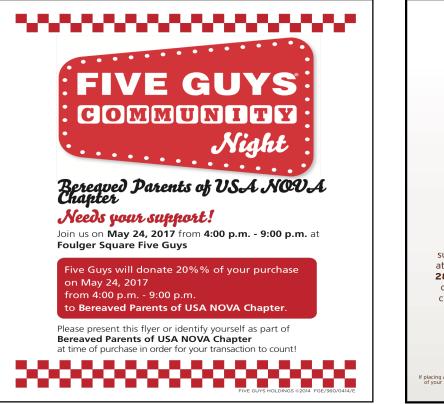
BPUSA Memorial Garden On the grounds of Benedictine Sisters of Virginia Monastery 9535 Linton Hall Rd. Bristow, VA 20136

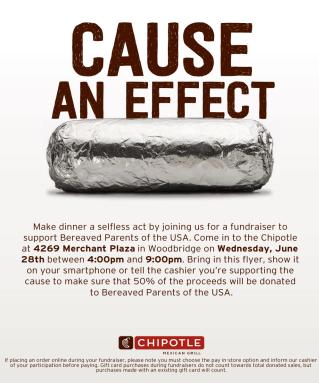
Rock-It Creations

If you would like to have a rock in the Memorial Garden in memory of your child, we highly recommend that you order through "Rock-It Creations." The rocks are river rocks and will last a life-time! Your rock can be personalized and customized. Please order the large size rocks, either the custom or standard rocks, for our Memorial Garden. There is no shipping charges or taxes on the rocks.

Go to Rock-It Creations' website to order a rock in memory of your child, <u>http://www.rockitcreztions.com</u>.

If you have any questions, contact Bev Ruane at 540-628-4758 or <u>ruane.beverly@yahoo.com</u>.





Thank you to everyone who supported BPUSA/NOVA Chapter at our monthly restaurant fundraisers. We have a couple more coming up, so please mark your calendars and spread the word to family and friends so we have a successful Fundraiser! These are very easy fundraisers as no one has to sell anything – just come out to eat! We all love to have a night that we don't have to cook for our families!



There are dozens of tasks that go into running our chapter and our special events. If you feel you are now in a place in your grief journey where you can help and give back to the chapter in any little way, we would love your help. Most of us find that when we reach a point of giving back to those who come after us, we gain far more then we give.

I could really use volunteers to plan our special events (Picnic/Balloon Release, Butterfly Release and Service of Remembrance). Volunteers are also needed to help with the Gathering, which we are hosting, August 4-6. Other areas of need are in Fundraising, Publicity, Outreach, and helping at the Memorial Garden.

If you would like to volunteer to help our chapter, please contact Jodi at <u>bleachermom2000@aol.com</u> or 703-656-6999.

Our sincere sympathy to the Howard Family on the recent death of Mary's Brother, Bill Sy Thompson on April 19, 2017.



Check out our Chapter Website

http://www.bpusanova.com

IMPORTANT: With our new website and publishing our newsletter on the website, your child's name, birthdate and death date may be on the website. If you have any objection to your child's name and information being on the website please let Jodi know possible as soon as at bleachermom2000@aol.com.

Bereaved Parents of the USA Credo

We are the parents whose children have died. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life. We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a haven where all bereaved families can meet and share our long and arduous grief journey. We attend month gatherings whenever we can and for as long as we believe necessary. We share our fears, confusion, anger guilt, frustrations, emptiness and feelings of hopelessness, so that hope can be found anew. As we accept, support, comfort and encourage each other, we demonstrate to each other that survival is possible. Together we celebrate the lives of our children, share the joys and the triumphs as well as the love that will never fade. Together we learn how little it matters where we live, what our color or our affluence is or what faith we uphold as we confront the tragedies of our children's deaths. Together, strengthened by the bonds we forge at our gatherings, we offer what we have learned from each other to every more recently bereaved family.

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

Chapter Contact Information Jodi Norman, Leader P.O. Box 7675 Woodbridge, VA 22195 Phone: 703-656-6999 Bleachermom2000@aol.com



Bereaved Parents of the USA www.bereavedparentsusa.org

can offer friendship and support.

Someone Cares About You If you are receiving this newsletter and have never attended one of our meetings, it is because someone who cares about you feels that our newsletter may help you on your journey through grief. We're sorry for the reason you are receiving this newsletter but invite you to attend our monthly meetings. We cannot take away your pain but we

Attention: If you do not wish to continue to receive this newsletter or be on our mailing list, please let us know by mailing back the address label from this newsletter, by emailing <u>bleachermom2000@aol.com</u> or calling Jodi at 703-656-6999.

Bereaved Parents of the USA Northern Virginia Chapter P.O. Box 7675 Woodbridge, VA 22195