



caring & sharing news

Helping rebuild lives following the death of a child

2019 Programs

Below is a schedule for 2019 (subject to change):

January 13 – Service of Remembrance

February 10 – Making Grief Meaningful Video

March 10 – Program to be Announced

April 14 – GPS Hope with Laura and Dave Diehl

April 27 - Hope & Healing Conference in Annapolis, MD

May 4 – A Day with Alan Pedersen in Fredericksburg, VA

May 12 – Mother's Day (No Meeting)

June 9 – Program to be Announced

July 14 – Program to be Announced

August 2-4 – National Gathering in St. Louis, MO

August 11 – Program to Be Announced

August 18 – Butterfly Release at Memorial Garden

September 8 – Kristi DiFilippo, LCSW, Capital Hospice

September 22 – Chapter Picnic

October 13 – Program to Be Announced

November 10 – Program to Be Announced

December 1 – Service of Remembrance

December 8 – Program to Be Announced



Laura and Dave Diehl

Sunday, April 14

3:00 p.m.

**First United Presbyterian
Church**

A Day with Alan Pedersen

Saturday, May 4, 2019

10 a.m. ~ 3 p.m.

Fredericksburg, VA



Alan Pedersen is an award-winning speaker, songwriter and recording artist. His inspirational message of hope and his music have resonated deeply with those facing a loss or adversity in their lives. Since the death of his 18-year-old daughter Ashley in 2001, Alan has traveled to more than 1,300 cities speaking and playing his original music. Alan is currently on the road with The Angels Across the USA Tour where he will speak and perform in over 100 U.S. cities in 2019.

Hope & Healing Conference

We are not alone. We walk together with Hope
In our hearts.

April 27, 2019, 8 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.

Calvary United Methodist Church

301 Rowe Blvd, Annapolis, MD 21401

Registration fee: \$35 per person. Continental breakfast and lunch included.

For more information contact:

Carol Tomaszewski, 410-519-8448 or AnnapolisConference@gmail.com

There is a meeting for everyone! Join us at one of these meetings!

Caring and Sharing Support Meetings:

2nd 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)
bleachermom2000@aol.com

Support Meeting in Annandale VA
1st Thursday of Every Month
7 p.m.

Annandale United Methodist Church
6935 Columbia Pike
Annandale, VA 22003

For more information about this meeting please contact Emily
Slough at emilygps@verizon.net.

Or Jodi Norman at 703-656-6999
bleachermom2000@aol.com

AMORe

(All Murdered Offspring Remembered)

3rd Wednesday @ 6 p.m.
3182 Golansky Blvd, Suite 101
Woodbridge, VA

**A support group meeting for parents whose children
have been murdered.**

For more info contact:
Beverly Ruane
540-628-4758 (h) or 703-395-9546 (c)
ruane.beverly@yahoo.com

Overdose and Substance Abuse Support Group

First Sunday of Every Month
2:00 p.m.

American Legion Post 28
17934 Liming Lane, Triangle, VA 22172

**A support group meeting for parents whose children
have died from Drug Overdose or Substance Abuse.**

For more information please contact:
Jodi Norman at bleachermom2000@aol.com
or call 703-656-6999
or
Kathie Kelly at tcffred@yahoo.com or 540-220-4325

Support Group for Parents with No Surviving Children

2nd Saturday of each month at 2:00 p.m.
North County Government Bldg.
Reston Police Station
12000 Bowman Towne Drive
Reston, VA

For more info contact: Nancy Vollmer 703-860-8587



Life After Loss Support Group for Suicide Survivors

"Shining A Light for Those in Darkness"

Last Wednesday of Each Month
Central Public Library
Community Room
8601 Mathis Avenue
Manassas, VA 20110

For more information contact: Kimberly Fleming
Office: 571-377-8134 or Cell: 703-349-9184
email: kimberly.fleming@djcfoundation.org
website: www.djcfoundation.org

Free Grief Counseling

Capital Caring Hospice of Fredericksburg is offering short term grief counseling free of charge to bereaved parents. The Fredericksburg office provides services to Dumfries, Triangle, Stafford, Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, Locust Grove, Caroline County and King George County. Please contact Kristi DiFilippo, LCSW at 540-735-0972 if you are in need of grief counseling. Check out their website: capitalcaring.org

NATIONAL GATHERING 2019



Bereaved Parents USA

August 2-4 ♥ St. Louis, Missouri

Our sincere sympathy to the following families:

***The Hoefling Family** on the death of John's father and Ashley's grandpa, John (Jack) Hoefling, Sr. on October 24 at the age of 93.*



***The Ruane Family** on the death of David's father and Matthew's grandpa, Joseph Ruane, Jr. on November 27 at the age of 95.*

***The Woodward Family** on the death of Ricky's father and Conner's grandpa, Alvin Woodward Sr. on December 31 at the age of 82.*



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 than we give.

I could really use volunteers to plan our special events (Picnic/Balloon Release and Service of Remembrance). 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 bleachermom2000@aol.com or 703-656-6999.

I am looking for submissions for a booklet to give to newly bereaved parents. If you would be willing to write about how BPUSA has helped you on your grief journey, it would be greatly appreciated. Please email submissions to Jodi at bleachermom2000@aol.com.



Please Check E-mails & Facebook

Almost all of our Chapter Communication is done via email. Please check your emails at least once a week. Everything from the newsletter to Chapter Announcements are sent through email. It would also be helpful to respond to all emails sent regarding the Chapter. That lets me know that you did see the email and that I have a correct email address – a simple “got it” would be better than no response at all!

It would also be helpful if you would join our private Facebook page. Please check this page on a regular basis. A Facebook page has been set up for our chapter. Members can join our group at Bereaved Parents of the USA/Northern VA Chapter. This is a closed group for privacy purposes, so nothing posted here will go into your regular News Feed for your regular FB friends to see. Request to join the group and approval will be sent to you.

Check Out Our Website <http://www.bpusanova.com>

I need everyone's help in updating our website. If you have not already done so, please write a bio of your child and include a photo or a collage of pictures to include in “Our Children Remembered” Section.

Beginning in January 2019, for a \$20 donation, we will feature your child during his or her birth month. Please provide a photo of your child. Your child will be featured for the full month. Please send submissions, by the 15th of the month prior to the month your child will be featured, to Jodi at bleachermom2000@aol.com.

A NEW YEAR, A NEW START

www.coastalhospice.org

2019

A new year is a new beginning. It is a time when many people make plans and formulate resolutions designed to improve their lives. But when we are grieving, our tendency is to stand at the threshold of a new year looking back rather than forward. Our loss defines our life and obscures thoughts of the future. We fear that walking through the door into a new year means leaving our loved one behind. Moving forward may seem to be an act of betrayal or abandonment. We may fear forgetting or letting go. And yet, we stand on the precipice of 2019 and our life moves on. Though we might not be ready to embrace it, one undeniable offering of a new year is hope. One writer said, "Hope is hearing the music of the future. Faith is having the courage to dance to it." Each breath is an acknowledgement that the last chapter in our life story has yet to be written. Each day is another opportunity to grow and move toward healing. Each new moment is pregnant with hope. The decisions we make in those moments shape us and our future. Ironically, the things that most often fill our resolutions are the very things that help us most in our grief: getting plenty of rest, eating healthy, exercising regularly and connecting more closely with others. Yet, change is not easy, especially change weighed down by our grief. How do we move forward? One word: Courage.

Webster defines courage as "the mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear or difficulty." The journey of grief is difficult beyond measure. We hope that as you venture into 2019 you find the courage to embrace the new opportunities that are before you, persevere in spite of the challenges you face, and seek help from fellow travelers when you need it. For many of us, the last thing we feel now is courageous. Yet, as Mary Ann Radmacher writes: **"Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, I will try again tomorrow."**

We Never Really

Get Over Devastating Loss.

In the thick of it, we almost stop breathing; sometimes even wishing we could. And we know deep within that we will never be the same. Yet, one day we feel the sun on our face again. We find ourselves smiling at a child or a joke or a memory. And at that moment, we realize we are finding our way back. Changed forever? Yes. But also softer, deeper, more vulnerable and more loving too. And we are breathing again.

Begin With Yes.com Healing Hugs

I Heard Your Voice In The Wind Today - Unknown

I heard your voice in the wind today
and I turned to see your face;
The warmth of the wind caressed me
as I stood silently in place.

I felt your touch in the sun today
as its warmth filled the sky;
I closed my eyes for your embrace
and my spirit soared high.

I saw your eyes in the window pane
as I watched the falling rain;
It seemed as each raindrop fell
it quietly said your name.

I held you close in my heart today
it made me feel complete;
You may have died...but you are not gone
you will always be a part of me.

As long as the sun shines...
the wind blows...
the rain falls...
You will live on inside of me forever
for that is all my heart knows.

9 Things I Learned (Again) in 2018

By Gary Roe - Caring for Grieving Hearts

I don't know about you, but I'm sad today. Six friends of mine died this year, including a young neighbor across the street. Two other friends lost teen sons to suicide. Our family's beloved optometrist was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). My 15-year-old son battled cancer (thankfully, that story is going well so far) And, of the aforementioned deaths, four of them occurred this month. Add to this numerous other challenges and obstacles, many of which were painful and confusing, and I have to say that this year has been a tough one.

Here's what I've learned. It seems I glean the same lessons, over and over again.

1. Life is about relationships.

We come out of the womb needy, dependent, and looking to attach. We're designed to connect – to love and be loved. Our lasting joys and regrets revolve around people.

2. Life is full of surprises, and not all of them are pleasant.

Life is a bit like a never-ceasing, unpredictable roller-coaster. It can be fun, thrilling, terrifying, and even dangerous. I get surprised often. Almost nothing works out according to my plans.

3. Death and loss don't discriminate based on gender, race, age, income, or education.

Death is the great equalizer. When it knocks, all wedges that have been driven between us disappear. Categories and stereotypes become meaningless. As wise King Solomon said over 3000 years ago, "Death is the destiny of every man, and the living should take this to heart."

4. Loss can be stunning, devastating, and traumatic.

I'm amazed at the human heart. Love can run so deep. It can crash through every barrier and endure unbelievable suffering. For hearts wired for connection, separation can be crushing.

5. Anything can happen to anyone at any time.

No one is immune from illness, tragedy, or suffering. We wonder what's next. We wait for the other shoe to drop. If we're not careful, we can go internal and start existing in fortress mode. Out of fear, we can cease to really live.

6. None of us are superhuman.

We are all vulnerable. Our hearts are resilient but are also regularly under assault. Our pain is not merely physical, but mental, emotional, and spiritual as well. We need each other desperately.

7. I'm not in control of what happens to me or to those I care about.

I have influence, yes. Control? No. All I seem to be in control of are the thoughts I let take up residence in my mind and the resulting words and actions that flow from them. The battlefield for overcoming pain and loss with gratitude and goodness is my mind. How I see, interpret, and think about things is huge.

8. How I respond to what happens matters – for myself and those around me.

How I deal with the unwanted surprises of life is important. When rocked by loss or uncertainty, I need to breathe deeply and return to the things I know are true. I remember the words of my college mentor: "It's not what happened, but how you interpret and respond to what happened that matters now." How I respond to life and loss matters more than I realize.

9. Life is about showing up, listening, and loving as best I can.

I control almost nothing, yet I can make a difference. I can show up. I can set aside my agenda and listen – and then listen some more. I can enter another's world, even if only for moment, and love them there.

No matter what...

No matter what, *I can still love.*

No matter what, *I can choose to meet life's challenges with kindness, compassion, and forgiveness (toward both myself and others).*

No matter what, *I can grieve deeply and authentically, and still serve.*

I don't know what you learned in 2018, but chances are some of the above resonates with you. You can relate. If pain and grief have been major for you this year, please know that healing is possible.

I'm glad we're in this together.



Forget New Year's Resolutions - Writing a Gratitude List Instead Has Real Health Benefits

By Natasha Warren-James

Instead of looking to achieve or gain something in the year ahead, being thankful for what we already have can bring many mental health benefits

January is often a time to set goals and get enthusiastic about making the most out of a brand-new year. Writing a list of resolutions can signal the beginning of some positive change, and can act as a powerful motivator. However, objectives aren't always met. Perhaps the items on the list are unrealistic or vague, or perhaps life just gets in the way, and priorities change. In contrast to the traditional New Year's resolutions list – where we are looking ahead and planning what we hope to achieve in the future – a gratitude list looks to our present and our past – which can be as recent as the last 24 hours. Gratitude has become a popular research area within Positive Psychology in recent years, and its benefits for mental well-being have been found to be far-reaching.

JOURNALING: WHY IT'S BRILLIANT, HOW TO START, AND WHAT TO WRITE ABOUT

In his publications, Dr. Robert Emmons, a professor of psychology at the University of California and a leading expert on gratitude research, suggests there are two layers to gratitude. The first is recognizing that there is good in the world, and good in our own lives. The second layer is realizing that much of this goodness is not thanks to us, but because of other people, and that we should feel and express appreciation for this.

Research has shown that expressing gratitude increases recorded levels of happiness and well-being; experiencing positive emotions has been seen to decrease negative emotions – or even undo them entirely. For example, people who experience high levels of gratitude have been found to have low levels of jealousy. It's difficult, after all, to feel jealous of others if you're too busy being grateful for your own good fortune.

By exercising gratitude, we're free to be present in the moment and feel good about our own lives. This is not to say that if we are grateful we are apathetic about our own future, or that expressing gratitude means never thinking about setting goals or making changes. Rather, gratitude creates a kind of balance to the way we see our own experiences, which, unsurprisingly, helps to make us feel more optimistic and satisfied with life.

GROWING PAINS: TAKE BACK CONTROL – DON'T LET ANXIETY RULE YOUR LIFE – IT CAN BE DONE

As well as helping us feel better, practicing gratitude can improve our interpersonal relationships.

Given that a large part of being grateful involves thinking about how other people have helped us, and feeling thankful towards them, it makes sense that the exercise would improve relationships.

By feeling grateful towards others, it's likely we will treat them better, be more forgiving and kinder; and in doing so, relationships are bound to flourish.

So how do we become more grateful, and by extension, reap all the positive rewards that research suggests are possible? Psychologists, including Emmons, suggest that we should take an active role in bringing gratitude into our lives.

GROWING PAINS: HOW TO STAND UP FOR YOURSELF - ASSERTIVENESS IS A SKILL THAT CAN BE LEARNED

Writing a gratitude journal every night before going to sleep is one way to do this; and taking time for deeper reflection may generate a higher level of positive emotions than just quickly listing items. Try asking yourself – why am I grateful for this thing? Who and what contributed to it, and how did that come about? You don't necessarily need to look far to find something to be grateful for. You might notice how delicious your lunch is, and feel grateful because it's benefiting you by giving you energy or making you happy. You might then consider all the elements that, together, made this lunch possible: the farmers and optimal weather conditions that grew the crops; the delivery people who brought the produce to the shop; the chef (if you didn't cook yourself) ... the list just goes on and on.

Start by thinking of just three things to write about in your gratitude journal, every night, and see if you notice any positive changes, this new year and every day that follows.



We Remember Our Children Who have Birthdays and Death Dates in January and February



Kirsten Lynn Adler	2/21/94 ~ 10/24/10	Tiffany Michelle Lewis	1/26/80 ~ 10/11/96
Ethan Arterburn	2/16/07 ~ 2/28/07	Kevin McGuinn	2/08/88 ~ 8/26/08
Demitrios Bedoya	10/27/76 ~ 2/10/03	Emily “Tabor” McMullen	1/26/84 ~ 8/31/12
Bryan Christopher Bingel	1/08/80 ~ 3/04/08	Christine McNabb	1/13/88 ~ 2/23/08
Christopher Wesley Blok	3/21/80 ~ 2/25/09	John Earl Medley	2/21/59 ~ 9/09/08
Lesly Glyn Bolton	1/19/80 ~ 10/27/16	Michael Joseph Moore	7/13/71 ~ 1/09/09
Baron “Deuce” Braswell II	9/29/89 ~ 1/20/06	Johnny Ray Mullins	7/11/61 ~ 1/22/02
Kenny Brooks Jr	8/13/82 ~ 1/14/06	Shelby Nicholson	4/22/92 ~ 1/07/09
Joseph Brendan Birkebile	6/26/89 ~ 1/11/11	Christian Paul Norman	2/04/85 ~ 6/03/01
Christopher Chapman	8/01/88 ~ 1/13/07	Angela Oliver	11/07/67 ~ 1/06/11
Eduardo P “Eddy” Chavez	2/07/06 ~ 9/20/10	Joseph Christopher Page	1/26/88 ~ 2/07/08
Barbara Dawn (Dotson) Cleary	12/3/66 ~ 1/21/18	Timothy Michael John Peyton	6/13/68 ~ 2/09/17
Ryan Michael Conde	12/02/04 ~ 2/02/17	Christina Lianne Panzo-Bowers	1/08/94 ~ 11/01/14
Stephen Brian Donnelly	1/08/72 ~ 2/15/18	Michael Joseph Pennefather	12/09/95 ~ 2/04/08
Robert Alan Finch	7/27/70 ~ 1/02/01	Alice Amelia Porges	2/10/15
Antonio (Tony) Ford-Flores	2/25/89 ~ 4/15/10	Brandon Roat	2/02/92 ~ 2/13/17
Victoria Anne Forster	1/04/89 ~ 1/04/09	Chelsea Rae Rosengarth	2/02/86 ~ 1/27/02
Bruce Lee Foxworthy	8/29/75 ~ 2/11/12	Kevin Simpson	2/10/87 ~ 1/24/09
Payton Rose Freeze	10/13/98 ~ 2/10/16	Ben Smith	12/22/70 ~ 1/26/03
Jacob Thomas Fulton	4/15/03 ~ 1/11/15	Adam Charles Sorge	5/12/84 ~ 1/04/14
Jacob Charles Glushefski	5/23/77 ~ 2/21/11	Shawn Terrill	2/23/82 ~ 12/03/06
Kristin Marie Harkness	3/19/89 ~ 2/22/08	Dana Thrall	8/02/75 ~ 1/02/01
Ashley Hoefling	8/22/85 ~ 2/08/17	Derek M. Tierney	1/20/76 ~ 10/09/04
Philip Reid Hottle	2/16/85 ~ 12/03/08	Caleb Milton Torres	2/11/12
John William Kennedy	1/16/94 ~ 8/11/18	Brian Floyd Weakley	1/20/80 ~ 4/19/07
Nicole Michelle Lee	6/22/89 ~ 1/26/08	Brenden Michael Wilson	1/10/98 ~ 11/10/14
Henry Lewis III	2/16/74 ~ 4/15/02		

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 January and February, please provide us with your child’s information so they can be included correctly in future newsletters.

Bereaved Parents of the USA Welcome

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

We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a safe space where grieving families can connect, share our stories, and learn to rebuild our lives.

We attend meetings whenever we can and for as long as we find helpful. We share our fears, confusion, anger, guilt, frustrations, emptiness, and feelings of hopelessness, knowing these emotions will be met with compassion and understanding. As we support, comfort and encourage one another, we offer hope and healing. As we confront the deaths of our loved ones, our shared grief brings us to a common ground that transcends differences, building mutual understanding across the boundaries of culture, race, faith, values, abilities, and lifestyle.

Together we celebrate the lives of our children, siblings, and grandchildren, sharing the joys and the heartbreaks as well as the love that will never fade. Together, strengthened by the bonds we create, we offer what we have learned from one another to every bereaved family, no matter how recent or long ago the death.

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

Chapter Contact Information

Jodi Norman, Leader

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Woodbridge, VA 22195

Phone: 703-656-6999

Bleachermom2000@aol.com



Bereaved Parents of the USA

www.bereavedparentsusa.org

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 can offer friendship and support.



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 bleachermom2000@aol.com or calling Jodi at 703-656-6999.

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