



September/October 2023

caring & sharing news  
*Helping rebuild lives following the death of a child*

*Twenty Years of Hope & Healing*

Volume 20, Number 5

***Please join us in celebration of our children's lives  
as we enter this Holiday Season with  
Love, Compassion and Hope for all***

***Annual Service of Remembrance  
Sunday, December 10, 2023  
6:00 p.m.***

***First United Presbyterian Church of Dale City***

**Program will consist of readings, music, slideshow of our  
children and lighting candles in their memory**



If we do not already have your child's photo to be used in our slideshow, please send a photo to Jodi at [bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com). We want to include all the children of members of our chapter whether you are attending the service or not.

If you would like to participate in the program by doing a reading, provide music, read the names or anything else you would like to do, please let Jodi know at [bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com).

## 5 Essential Tips

### To support grieving moms to not make the same mistakes

#### I did after losing my child.

By Judy Giovangelo



#### #1

After the funeral, all family and friends will go back to their lives, leaving you feeling isolated and abandoned. Do not grieve alone. Lean in to one or two key relationships that can be there for you just to listen and let you cry on their shoulder. Let them know you are not looking to be fixed. You are not broken, but your heart is. And your heart needs to be heard and feelings need to be expressed and released. A therapist, support group or both can help a lot too!

#### #2

Loved ones surviving this loss are suffering alongside you. Your children, your spouse, parents and sibs. Even if they don't show it, they will be afraid to feel their feelings around you. Model to your loved ones that it's ok to be sad, to cry, to scream, to hurt by sharing openly. Grief is normal and natural and a part of life. This is a great opportunity to model healthy grief to your children and loved ones. Sucking it in and hiding it from them will only create more unresolved conflicted feelings for the whole family. Help them understand that your feelings are a natural and normal response to having lost your child and that you are so glad they are still here with you. Encourage them to express their feelings to you too.

#### #3

Well-meaning people, even your closest people, will say all kinds of crazy things to you to intellectualize your grief and steer you away from feeling your feelings. This may make you feel angry and hurt, adding insult to injury. Your feelings are at times like a crashing tsunami and most people will avoid you mostly because they are afraid to catch your wave. Do your best to have compassion for them and not react to their insensitivity. Forgive them, for they know not what they do. Keep feeling your feelings anyway and find someone who can listen and hold space without trying to change or fix you. Write down your feelings in a journal and share them with a trusted friend who will just listen

#### #4

You will hear the words, move on! Get over it! You will never get over losing your child. Your love for them will keep them with you always. Someday, with correct action and healing, you will learn to cope and even thrive again, and their death will no longer be OVER you! Every day, practice remembering one positive experience of your child. Talk about your child with others. This way you will feel them with you and will honor the memory of your child in uplifting ways.

#### #5

If you live on planet earth, you are no stranger to loss. Most of us incur loss throughout our entire lives. Loss of safety, loss of freedom, loss of hopes, dreams, faith, and the list goes on long before our first experience of death. We are already full of unresolved pockets of grief before the loss of our precious child. I had no idea after losing my son Ben to suicide, how huge my emotional backpack was, and after Ben, it was slowly killing me. Unresolved grief wreaks havoc on our heart, body, mind, and soul. It injects toxicity into our being and spills into our relationships in negative and damaging ways. Find a program or tools to help you communicate your hurts, resentments, guilt, shame, and deeper feelings of regret. If you don't, it will eat you alive and lead you down a giant suck hole of pain and suffering. If you do, it will lead you to healthy skills and practices to heal your broken and tender heart and not only survive but even thrive again.

# 40 YEARS LOVED

Happy Heavenly Birthday, Matthew!

You would have been 40 years old on September 7th. It's so hard to believe. All of the weddings, births, birthdays, funerals, celebrations, graduations, and things in every day life that you have missed have been happy and sad for us, wishing you could join in. I know you have been and always are with us in spirit but it's not the same as your physical presence.



There are so many things that have happened, things accomplished by your friends and family that I know you would be proud of. There were milestones this past year. You would be so proud of your niece and nephews. Xavier (your little buddy) turned 25 and graduated from George Mason University with a degree in Data Engineering. Tyler turned 21 and has a good job working at home in customer service. Owen turned 18, graduated from HS and started college at Old Dominion University this fall. Mackenzie turned 16 and is working at Smoothie King. Ethan turned 14, started HS, playing soccer, and is very talented at playing the piano. Leo will be 7 on September 29th and is enjoying second grade and playing soccer. Gram (my mom) will turn 90 on September 21st and is still going strong! Rachel and Frank celebrated their second anniversary and Monica and Jonathan their fifth anniversary. Erin is enjoying being in Florida and caring for two children. Dad and I got us a puppy named Althea Rose. She just turned 1 on September 2nd. She looks a lot like Scarlet. I know you would love her. There are so many things I could tell you but these are the highlights.

We miss you so much and will always wish you were here but look forward to seeing you again someday. We will miss you and love you forever and always. Mom, Dad, and the family

Matthew Allan Ruane "Forever 18" 9/7/83-4/29/02

## **Annual Picnic and Lotus Flower Release**

**Sunday, October 8, 2023, 4 p.m. at Locust Shade Park, Marigold Pavilion**

**Join us to remember all the children who died too soon but are still in the hearts of family and friends. As we release lotus flowers on the pond, we are reminded of the beauty that our children brought into our lives.**

**Please bring a dish to share for our Pot-Luck Picnic. Chicken, Hot Dogs, Chips and Drinks will be provided by the chapter.**

**Monetary donations are appreciated to cover the cost of the lotus flower lanterns and picnic expenses.**

**Each person will receive one lantern per child, sibling or grandchild being remembered, unless you request additional lanterns.**

**For more information contact Jodi Norman at 703-656-6999 or email:**

**[bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com)**

**RSVP at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0948ACAE22A4F8CF8-annual1>**

## 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.

## Attention

Due to the rising costs of printing and postage, this will be the last mailed newsletter. Newsletters will be sent out via email. If you are not already receiving our newsletters via email, please fill out the information form (in this newsletter) to include an email address so you can continue to receive our newsletter.

If you do not have an email address, please fill out the information form, indicate you do not have email and mail us the form.

## Tell Us Your Story

Interested in sharing your child's story for a book designed to give other Bereaved Parents hope?



We are looking for parents who would be willing to be interviewed and have their story written (with your approval) OR write your own story for submission.

Contact Sue Cerrone for more info at 703-819-8604 or [Suebcerrone@gmail.com](mailto:Suebcerrone@gmail.com)

## Photos Needed

It isn't too early to send photos of your child for our December Service of Remembrance Slide show. If I don't have your child's picture, please send to Jodi at [bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

I also am looking for photos of any chapter events over the past 20 years. I would like to put together a slideshow for the Service of Remembrance commemorating our chapter's 20-year anniversary.



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.

Anyone interested in providing refreshments at our monthly support meetings, please let Jodi know.

Looking for chapter members to write for our chapter newsletter. Articles about your grief experience, helpful tips on surviving grief, stories about your child, or poems would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to volunteer to help our chapter, please contact Jodi at [bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com) or 703-656-6999.

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.

## Manassas Support Group Meeting Starting Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup>

**Manassas Church of the Brethren  
10047 Nokesville Road, Room 207  
Manassas, VA 20110**

**For more information contact:  
Sue Cerrone 703-819-8604 or  
[suebcerrone@gmail.com](mailto:suebcerrone@gmail.com)**

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

## Caring & Sharing Meetings

### In-Person Meetings

First United Presbyterian Church  
14391 Minnieville Road  
Dale City, VA  
**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday @ 3:00 p.m.**

Manassas Church of the Brethren  
10047 Nokesville Road, Room 207  
Manassas, VA 20110  
**1<sup>st</sup> Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.**

### Zoom Meetings

**2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.**

I will send out an email with password and log in information prior to the meeting date.

For more information contact:  
Jodi Norman, Chapter Leader  
703-656-6999 (cell)  
[bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com)

## AMORe

(All Murdered Offspring Remembered)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday @ 3:00 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](mailto:ruane.beverly@yahoo.com)

## Life After Loss Support Group for Suicide Survivors

“Shining A Light for Those in Darkness”



**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Each Month**  
**1:00~2:30 p.m.**

**Meetings held at ACTS**  
**9317 Grant Ave, Manassas, VA**

For more information contact: Kimberly Fleming  
Office: 571-377-8134 or Cell: 703-349-9184  
email: [kimberly.fleming@djcfoundation.org](mailto:kimberly.fleming@djcfoundation.org)  
website: [www.djcfoundation.org](http://www.djcfoundation.org)

## Book Club

### NO MEETING IN SEPTEMBER

Our Book Club meets on the last Monday of the month at 7 p.m. We will meet both on Zoom and in person at Sue Cerrone's home, 9564 Basilwood Drive, Manassas, VA.

Please email [bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com), if you would like to receive emails about the Book Club.

The Zoom log-in will be emailed to everyone a couple days before the Book Club meets.

For more information contact Sue at [suebcerrone@gmail.com](mailto:suebcerrone@gmail.com) or call 703-819-8604. Please RSVP if you are attending in person or on Zoom.

## Sibling Support Group

**Virtual Support Meetings for  
any bereaved sibling over  
the age of 18  
will be held on the  
last Thursday of each month.**

Join Zoom Meeting  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84851846327?pwd=djJiM3VPdkFkVzFvWWtxbm80RkdWdz09>

Meeting ID: 848 **5184 6327**  
Passcode: 3EDn58

## Garden News

Happy Fall, Everyone!

We have had one hot and at times rainy summer! The garden has looked beautiful this year. Thank you to all that have volunteered to go and water, pull weeds, and generally work in the garden. Jodi and I could not have done it without you. We so greatly appreciate it. Everything was so nice for the Butterfly Release. We had such a wonderful turnout! Thank you all that participated in the program and all that came. You all made the Butterfly Release and garden more special.

We were so blessed to have the donation of a new wind chime. The other one had been anonymously donated at the beginning of the garden over 10 years ago and was worn out. The new one was donated by Wind River Chimes. It is beautiful and sounds heavenly. We are so grateful.

Also, I'd like to mention again, if you do not have one and would like a stone for your child, children or sibling, Rock-It-Creations do beautiful work and provide river rocks that stand up to the weather and last forever. I have one there but plan to bring that one home to Matthew's Garden at my house and get another one from them for the Memorial Garden.

Much of the work we do on the garden is in the late Winter/early Spring; such as trimming the bushes to ensure blossoms for the Spring/Summer, adding fresh mulch, and of course, the forever weed pulling. In the fall, we would like to clean out the dead plants (make sure because some look dead but aren't), pull weeds, plant bulbs for Spring flowers (Daffodils, Crocuses are good but not tulips because the deer love Tulips), and some trimming (such as the sprouts off of the bottom of the Crepe Myrtles), add soil around plants where needed, and general cleanup. All to ready for Spring.

We, also, want to hopefully replace the bent and split post on the arbor, add more stone to the pathway and edging along the side of the pathway. We probably won't get all this done this fall but the post we would really like to do of these 3 big projects. The post is concreted in the ground. My husband, David, will work on it but could use some help.

**We are planning a work day on October 14 at 10 am. If you can come and help, we would greatly appreciate it. October 21 will be our makeup/rain/extra day.** This garden is for all of our children so we all are a part of it.

I know our children are pleased with us having this special place to honor them. If you can come help, please let me or Jodi know.

Beverly: 703-395-9546 C

540-628-4758 H

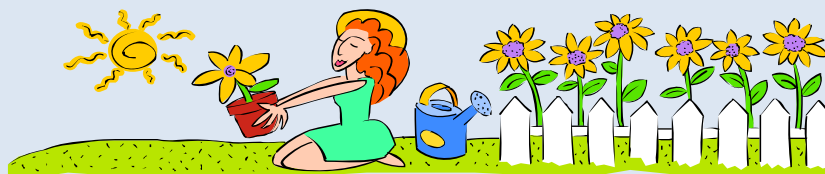
[ruane.beverly@yahoo.com](mailto:ruane.beverly@yahoo.com)

Jodi: 703-656-6999 C

[jodi.l.norman@gmail.com](mailto:jodi.l.norman@gmail.com)

Thank you all and see you soon!

Love and hugs, Beverly



### Our Children Remembered

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 September and October, please provide us with your child's information so they can be included correctly in future newsletters.

### Rock-It Creations

If you would like to have a rock in the Memorial Garden in memory of your child, sibling or grandchild, 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 loved one, <https://www.rockitcreations.com/>

If you have any questions, contact Jodi Norman at 703-656-6999 or [bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com)



## We Remember Our Children Who have Birthdays and Death Dates in September and October

Simi Abrol	9/12/84 ~ 4/01/18	William Clayton Holt	9/10/84 ~ 12/23/17
Kirsten Lynn Adler	2/21/94 ~ 10/24/10	Olivia Jean Howard	12/31/91 ~ 9/03/09
Zachary William Arnold	9/23/84 ~ 5/11/14	Devonte Lee Ivy	6/16/00 ~ 9/16/19
Pouneh Bahri	10/25/88 ~ 3/04/14	Claude Lee (Jason) Jackson III	8/20/92 ~ 9/12/15
Chad Michael Bailey	9/14/77 ~ 3/25/20	Rasheem Kuwan Jenkins	5/04/82 ~ 9/09/09
Liam Bailey-Edmondson	9/22/15 ~ 9/22/15	Cody Darrin Johnson	9/11/02 ~ 3/06/09
Scott R. Barley	12/07/81 ~ 9/29/11	Ryan George Khazmo	7/10/02 ~ 10/16/21
Stephanie Webber Bartley	9/29/87 ~ 12/20/16	Matthew Russell King	5/16/79 ~ 9/08/21
Antonino "Nino" Basile	12/13/84 ~ 10/06/12	Adriana Therese Ladino	10/31/02 ~ 3/23/19
Suzanne Baughan	9/18/73 ~ 2/18/20	Jayden William Lee	10/23/10 ~ 10/23/10
Jayden Lee Beale	9/29/08 ~ 9/29/08	Tiffany Michelle Lewis	1/26/80 ~ 10/11/96
Demitrios Bedoya	10/27/76 ~ 2/10/03	Artemis Harrison McRae	10/01/20 ~ 11/01/22
Trevor Austin Blake	10/30/01 ~ 8/11/13	Roseann M. Meale	10/04/69 ~ 1/19/97
Ashley Nicole Blue	11/23/05 ~ 10/11/19	John Earl Medley	2/21/59 ~ 9/09/08
Lesly Glyn Bolton	1/19/80 ~ 10/27/16	Annie Mirabal	8/2/84 ~ 10/27/16
Michael Booker	6/06/99 ~ 9/03/20	Jonathan Nadal	10/18/99 ~ 10/08/21
Mateo Louis Bowman	10/15/13 ~ 10/15/13	Elijah James Nealey	9/08/10 ~ 8/22/12
Parker Evan Boyd	9/15/98 ~ 6/04/08	Steven William O'Neill	9/04/75 ~ 9/06/75
Baron "Deuce" Braswell II	9/29/89 ~ 1/20/06	Kim Ouren	9/19/57 ~ 7/22/18
Clayton Kendall Breeding	10/23/77 ~ 12/12/01	Zane J Pitzvada	8/22/92 ~ 9/14/11
Alex Charles Bridwell	1/27/89 ~ 10/31/22	Tanja Marjatta Quinn	10/21/84 ~ 11/17/18
David John Butts	10/18/80 ~ 12/16/05	Kira Marie Nicklas Rippy	10/23/82 ~ 3/22/18
Jaiden Malik Carter	3/26/03 ~ 9/04/22	Marcus Daniel Robinson	12/29/07 ~ 10/04/17
Pamela Sue Chaiken	1/17/64 ~ 9/29/95	Matthew Allan Ruane	9/07/83 ~ 4/29/02
Lisa Marie Champlin	10/16 ~ 9/02	Gene "Tony" Sergent	8/10/87 ~ 9/14/07
Eduardo P "Eddy" Chavez	2/07/06 ~ 9/20/10	Joshua Daniel Shirt	1/17/91 ~ 10/13/19
Jason A. Clover	7/30/84 ~ 9/28/03	Brandon Simms	10/10/80 ~ 7/11/95
David Joseph Cobb	7/02/98 ~ 10/23/15	Mark Alexander Slough	6/26/96 ~ 10/08/15
Todd Clifford Coder	7/23/84 ~ 9/24/10	Adelacia Smalley	8/06/94 ~ 10/19/02
Jason Michael Colson	3/09/84 ~ 10/01/08	Colby Thomas Smith	5/25/04 ~ 10/11/15
Ryan Dennis Conty	10/15/20 ~ 10/15/20	Tyler Smith	9/20/92 ~ 8/01/06
Terry Lee Cunningham, Jr	9/02/94 ~ 9/30/17	Graham Thomson Stevenson	3/30/85 ~ 9/22/07
Michael A. Doyle	9/17/81 ~ 3/12/18	Margaret Jane Suliga	4/23/87 ~ 9/02/19
James "Scott" Edwards	10/16/83 ~ 9/02/20	Hazel Athena Thomas	5/07/21 ~ 10/24/21
K.J. Edwards	12/03/85 ~ 10/31/03	Bill Thompson	9/14/51 ~ 4/19/17
Brian Patrick Elero	12/30/80 ~ 10/29/01	Derek M. Tierney	1/20/76 ~ 10/09/04
Elizabeth A. Erickson	7/23/89 ~ 9/14/89	Austin Trenum	3/26/93 ~ 9/27/10
Payton Rose Freeze	10/13/98 ~ 2/10/16	Brian Trotter	11/24/94 ~ 10/17/20
Scott Michael Fulton	5/25/93 ~ 10/08/21	Ruben Chavira Urbina	4/22/02 ~ 9/15/17
Erin Gaston	9/27/80 ~ 10/31/08	Melinda "Mindy" Weakley	12/20/83 ~ 9/02/09
Andrew Geracoulis	10/20/99 ~ 1/07/23	Josh Weaver	6/17/82 ~ 9/09/09
Eric Gonzalez	10/03/02 ~ 10/05/02	Keith Alan West	9/22/66 ~ 11/25/10
John Gregory	9/21/73 ~ 6/3/13	Jessica Dove Williams	9/18/89 ~ 12/05/19
Nathan Hamilton	7/19/99 ~ 9/04/18		

## 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  
P.O. Box 7675  
Woodbridge, VA 22195  
Phone: 703-656-6999  
[bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com)



Bereaved Parents of the USA  
[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://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 [bpusanova@gmail.com](mailto:bpusanova@gmail.com) or calling Jodi at 703-656-6999.

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