



Volume 19 Number 5

September/October 2022

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



Annual Picnic and Lotus Flower Lantern Release

**Sunday, October 9, 2022
5:00 p.m.**

**Locust Shade Park – Marigold Pavilion
RSVP by October 1**

On Sunday, October 9, 2022, join us at our Annual Picnic and Lotus Flower Lantern Release 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 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 unless you request additional lanterns.

To RSVP or for more information contact Jodi Norman at 703-656-6999 or email: bpusanova@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
4th Sunday @ 3:00 p.m.

Zoom Meetings

2nd 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

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

Sibling Support Group

Our National BPUSA Sibling Coordinator,
Katie Alger, will be facilitating a
Zoom Support Meeting for
any bereaved sibling over the age of 18.

**Zoom Meetings will be held on the
last Thursday of each month**

If you or your surviving children are interested in participating in the Sibling Support Group, please email Katie at bpvirtualsiblingchapter@gmail.com for the zoom link.

Life After Loss Support Group for Suicide Survivors

"Shining A Light for Those in Darkness"
Last Wednesday of Each Month
7:00-8:00 p.m.

Parents of Suicide Loss Support Group

1st Sunday of the 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
website: www.djcfoundation.org



Book Club

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.

We will choose a new book each month, all books will deal with grief and loss.

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 or call 703-819-8604. Please RSVP if you are attending in person or on Zoom.

Restaurant Social Outings

Restaurant Social Outings will be starting on Monday, September 19th.

A great way to meet other parents who understand this journey that we are on. We will be going to different restaurants in Woodbridge or Manassas. We will be meeting for these dinners every other month on the **1st Monday** of the month starting in November.



Our first restaurant outing will be on Monday, September 19th at 6:00 p.m. at Olive Garden, 14405 Gideon Dr, Woodbridge, VA 22192. Please RSVP with an email to bpusanova@gmail.com or call Jodi at 703-656-6999. We will need a count for the restaurant so please RSVP by Sunday, September 18th.

If you have any suggestions on restaurants please let us know.

Hope you will join us!

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

Save the Dates & Plan to Attend
BPUSA National Gathering
July 20-23, 2023

At
Hilton Washington Dulles Hotel

Check out our Chapter Website

<http://www.bpusanova.com>

You will find all announcements regarding our chapter on the website. Also, please check your email and Facebook for Chapter Announcements. The easiest way to get the word out about Chapter happenings is via the internet. If we do not have an email address for you, please email bpusanova@gmail.com with your email address.



Our website has a “We Remember Our Children” section and we need your help to update this page. Please write a bio for your child and submit a photo or a collage of photos. We would like to have all the children of our chapter included on this page. Please send submissions to Jodi at bpusanova@gmail.com.

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

*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 4, 2022
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. 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

Happy Heavenly Birthday, Matthew! You would have been 39 years old on your birthday, September 7. The last year of your 30's. You've missed so many birthday celebrations for yourself and the rest of the family. Your niece and nephews know you as if they were here when you were alive. You are still alive in our lives even if you are not physically on earth. Thank you for the many signs you send. They are very comforting. I look forward to them every day. We will do something special for your birthday. We always "give you a gift" by giving to someone else. We will always celebrate and remember you. We all miss you and love you.
Mom, Dad, Sisters, All Family and Friends



Grief's Likeness to Fall - What is Lost, What is Left, What is Possible

As we prepare for a transition into cool mornings and early sunsets I have been taking the time to reflect on how nature beautifully represents our mission at Austin Grief. As the trees let go of their leaves in preparation for a season of rest and recovery, it allows me to reflect on what is left, and what is possible.



What is lost?

I always look forward to the first signs of fall; the leaves begin to slowly change, brisk mornings, and the sun begins to change from a penetrating light to a hazy glow. As the season progresses, the leaves begin to change into vibrant colors and slowly release from the trees. Within weeks we are left with empty branches, cool days, and a sense of stillness. I am reminded of how we can associate this transition with the initial phase of grief. Grief can leave us empty without our loved one. The way in which our lives have completely changed from vibrant life to numbness and pain. When grief informs our whole world, it can leave us lonely and desperate for connection to our roots and core. In nature the experience of fall is very purposeful. Trees need to let go of their leaves in order to prepare for the harshness of winter. In grief, we sometimes need to preserve our core for a period of time in order to one day grow again.

What is left?

As nature begins to prepare for winter, preservation becomes critical. Every last bit of sunshine and water is stored in order to survive a cruel winter. What we see in the outside world may be empty branches, brown grasses, and flower blooms falling away. However, the internal experience is a very different process. Everything is still very much alive and fully functioning. As we move into the "what is left" phase of grief, this can be a similar experience. While our life will never be the same again, grief work can help us slowly identify what is left in our lives. Our core group of friends, family, and support help us nourish and preserve, but they can help us grow. They can help us remember that through loss, we can rediscover life and remember there is still love and connection in our lives.

What is possible?

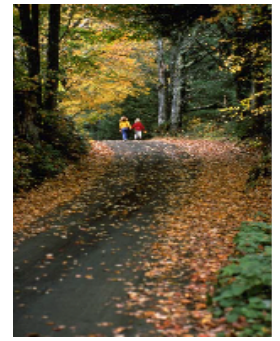
As fall transitions into winter, we are left with a period of bleakness. It feels as if nothing is ever going to grow again. Survival is a battle for months. However, this period has purpose. The leaves fall down to the forest floor to provide enough nourishment for the earth's soil to grow more leaves for when spring arrives. Each year when the laurels grow and the bluebonnets begin to emerge again, I am reminded of what is possible. In the final phase of grief, we are reminded that we can find meaning and joy in life again. We can transform our experience of the harshness into nourishment for our souls. Far too often, we fear the dark and adore only the light. The same can be said for grief. What I try to remember is we need balance and perspective as this is what allows for our experiences to be whole.

These symbolic associations are powerful reminders that Mother Nature has an incredible influence on our lives. Death forces us to examine the purpose of life. At Austin Grief we strive to connect and empower those mourning to invest in life again. We believe that our connections to our loved ones are not gone, but our relationship may be different. With balance and purpose, we can allow ourselves to love and trust again.

The Austin Center for Grief & Loss

How to live through the Fall Season of Grief

It's Fall. Excuse me for stating the obvious. But sometimes our grief is not as obvious to others when the season is full of vibrancy and celebrated change. Due to our loss we are trying desperately to adjust to changes we never signed up for. If anyone is a little too cheery, we might find ourselves slinking back into our shadows, trying to self-soothe the pain.



When you can't see the colors

So, what does the Fall season teach us about our grief? Nearly all across the nation, vibrant fall colors catch people's attention, sometimes skipping a heartbeat for the sheer beauty of it all. But not for us. At least not for some of us. Our senses are dimmed, as if an internal rheostat turned down the illumination of life all around us. This seasonal interlude between the heat of summer and the chill of winter lacks luster, appeal, awe, and notice. For us, the season of our personal pain interferes greatly with the physical capacity to see, hear, and feel the vibrancy of Autumn.

You are not alone

Would you allow me, a fellow grief-path traveler, to share some of my memories of living numb and mute, in the shadows of my pain? You are not alone. This season of grief for me happened in the late Summer and early Fall (around 7 months after our son's death). Food had little flavor or appeal. The beauty of nature appeared dim and uninspiring. Color that would have normally attracted me, went unnoticed. I called that time my "*despair of sadness*." Numb and listless, I stepped through the days with a deep ache that nothing could soothe.

Hope through change

If you find yourself disengaged with others, nature, and even yourself I want to give you hope. The thing about seasons is that they change. Slowly, the summer heat subsides, fall breezes and gentle cleansing showers refresh the dry, dusty environment. Fall offers a season of reflection with our grief. We might find ourselves with a little more time to cozy up with our journal pages or your [Comfort for the Day](#) book. Sweaters come out, along with scarves and boots. And eventually, the rain or snow take over. (I know some places this Fall have already been deep in snow.) The change in the seasons, assures us that our grief will change too. But grief is different than seasons in that we can make choices that will help us grieve through each change with intentionality. Seasons don't have that choice.

Coming to life again

Winter changes things up again. Much of nature goes dormant. There is a waiting. And the cycle continues until we have moved through each season of the calendar. Likewise, our season of malaise, despair, reflection, growth, or waiting will also merge into a different season of grief. I can't say what the next one will be for you, but I can let you know that ***IF*** you pay attention to this season, find new ways to interact with the numbing pain, releasing your emotions by expressing your heart and tough stuff on paper, you will move forward. Try some art, a new hobby, or even gardening, and you will one day realize that a bird's trill ignites something in your soul. You heard it with your heart. You will notice that food has more flavor, and music is joyously pleasing. You will discover the previous disengagement has been overtaken by genuine interest in the lives of others around you.

The hope of the seasons

Sometimes just knowing that grief has its seasons helps. It's like gathering a little blanket of comfort and hope that we will not remain stuck in the current "*despair of sadness*." If you take note of the rosy cheeks of a child who just came in from frolicking in the leaves, be encouraged deep inside, your grief is changing and you will move past muted tones, muffled laughter, or mild flavors.



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

Simi Abrol	9/12/84 ~ 4/01/18	Olivia Jean Howard	12/31/91 ~ 9/03/09
Kirsten Lynn Adler	2/21/94 ~ 10/24/10	Devonte Lee Ivy	6/16/00 ~ 9/16/19
Zachary William Arnold	9/23/84 ~ 5/11/14	Claude Lee (Jason) Jackson III	8/20/92 ~ 9/12/15
Pouneh Bahri	10/25/88 ~ 3/04/14	Rasheem Kuwan Jenkins	5/04/82 ~ 9/09/09
Chad Michael Bailey	9/14/77 ~ 3/25/20	Cody Darrin Johnson	9/11/02 ~ 3/06/09
Liam Kody Bailey-Edmundson	9/22/15 ~ 9/22/15	Matthew R King	5/16/79 ~ 9/08/21
Scott R. Barley	12/07/81 ~ 9/29/11	Adriana Therese Ladino	10/31/02 ~ 3/23/19
Kimberly Ann Barrett	9/08/86 ~ 5/04/02	Jayden William Lee	10/23/10 ~ 10/23/10
Stephanie Webber Bartley	9/29/87 ~ 12/20/16	Tiffany Michelle Lewis	1/26/80 ~ 10/11/96
Suzanne Baughan	9/18/73 ~ 2/18/20	Annie Mirabal	8/2/84 ~ 10/27/16
Jayden Lee Beale	9/29/08 ~ 9/29/08	Roseann M. Meale	10/04/69 ~ 1/19/87
Demitrios Bedoya	10/27/76 ~ 2/10/03	John Earl Medley	2/21/59 ~ 9/09/08
Trevor Austin Blake	10/30/01 ~ 8/11/13	Jonathan Nadal	10/18/99 ~ 10/08/21
Ashley Nicole Blue	11/23/05 ~ 10/11/19	Elijah James Nealey	9/08/10 ~ 8/22/12
Lesly Glyn Bolton	1/19/80 ~ 10/27/16	Michael Sean O'Berry	9/13/94 ~ 12/15/97
Mateo Louis Bowman	10/15/13 ~ 10/15/13	Steven William O'Neill	9/04/75 ~ 9/06/75
Parker Evan Boyd	9/15/98 ~ 6/04/08	Kim Ouren	9/19/57 ~ 7/22/18
Baron "Deuce" Braswell II	9/29/89 ~ 1/20/06	Zane J Pitzvada	8/22/92 ~ 9/14/11
Clayton Kendall Breeding	10/23/77 ~ 12/12/01	Kira Marie Nicklas Rippy	10/23/82 ~ 3/22/18
David John Butts	10/18/80 ~ 12/16/05	Marcus Daniel Robinson	12/29/07 ~ 10/04/17
Lisa Marie Champlin	10/16 ~ 9/2	Matthew Allan Ruane	9/07/83 ~ 4/29/02
Pamela Sue Chaiken	1/17/64 ~ 9/29/95	Gene "Tony" Sergeant	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 ~ 7/14/95
David Joseph Cobb	7/02/98 ~ 10/23/15	Mark Alexander Slough	06/26/96 ~ 10/08/15
Todd 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
K.J. Edwards	12/03/85 ~ 10/31/03	Hazel Athena Thomas	5/07/21 ~ 10/24/21
Elizabeth A. Erickson	7/23/89 ~ 9/14/89	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
Payton Rose Freeze	10/13/98 ~ 2/10/16	Austin Trenum	3/26/93 ~ 9/27/10
Scott Michael Fulton	5/25/93 ~ 10/08/21	Brian Trotter	11/24/94 ~ 10/17/20
Erin Gaston	9/27/80 ~ 10/31/08	Ruben Chavira Urbina	4/22/02 ~ 9/15/17
Eric Gonzalez	10/03/02 ~ 10/05/02	Melinda "Mindy" Weakley	12/20/83 ~ 9/02/09
John Gregory	9/21/73 ~ 6/3/13	Josh Weaver	6/17/82 ~ 9/09/09
Nathan Hamilton	7/19/99 ~ 9/04/18	Keith Alan West	9/22/66 ~ 11/25/10
William Clayton Holt	9/10/84 ~ 12/23/17	Jessica Dove Williams	9/18/89 ~ 12/05/19

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
Website: bpusanova.com



National Website: 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 feel 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 or calling Jodi at 703-656-6999.

Bereaved Parents of the USA
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