



# caring & sharing news

*Helping rebuild lives following the death of a child*

## *Tonight I Hold This Candle*

*By Alan Pedersen*

*Tonight I hold this candle  
In memory of you  
Hoping someday, somehow,  
My love will shine through.  
I close my eyes lost in the glow  
There are so many things  
I want you to know.  
This candle says I love you –  
This candle says I miss you.  
This candle is saying I remember you.*

*When I'm holding it toward heaven,  
It feels like you are near.  
If you're looking down tonight,  
And see this candle burning bright,  
It says I'm wishing you were here.*

*In the glow of this candle  
I can almost see your smile  
And it carries me away  
for a little while  
To another time, another place  
When all it took to light up my world  
was your beautiful face.*

*Someday, someday I'll see you again  
I'll hold you in my heart until then.  
This candle says I love you –  
This candle says I miss you.  
This candle is saying I remember you.*

*When I'm holding it toward heaven,  
It feels like you are near.  
If you're looking down tonight  
And see this candle burning bright,  
It says I'm wishing you were here.*

## *That Their Light May Always Shine . . .*

*The Bereaved Parents of the USA  
Northern Virginia Chapter  
Invites you to the  
2014*

*Annual Service of Remembrance  
Saturday, December 6, 2014  
7 p.m.*

*Prince of Peace United Methodist Church  
6299 Token Forest Drive  
Manassas, VA*



*Please RSVP by  
Saturday, November 29  
703-656-6999*

*Due to the Holidays, we will not  
be having our Sunday meetings on  
November 23<sup>rd</sup> or December 28<sup>th</sup>.*

***The Annual Service of Remembrance provides an opportunity for parents, grandparents, siblings, relatives and friends to remember our precious children. Please join us in celebration of our children's lives as we enter this Holiday Season with Love, Compassion and Hope for all.***

***DEADLINE TO RSVP AND SUBMIT PHOTOS FOR THE SLIDE PRESENTATION IS SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2014***

***If you would like to participate in the program please let Jodi know by November 29<sup>th</sup>. We need people to help by lighting candles, providing music or doing a reading.***

***For more information or send photos, contact:  
Jodi Norman, 2816 Noble Fir Court, Woodbridge, VA 22192  
Email: [bleachermom2000@aol.com](mailto:bleachermom2000@aol.com)  
Phone: 703-656-6999***

### **Candles in the Night**

A heart broken by the death of a child can never be healed. As parents we try every way that can be thought of to cope with the loss, but the void will always be there. At first that emptiness seems to take your breath away and most times we wish it would.

This becomes different with the passage of time. It never goes away, but at some point we learn to live with it, and in fact this horrible feeling becomes a lifeline of sorts. One of our biggest fears is to forget our children. Forget how they looked or how their voices sounded. The smiles and tears that blur together to make a child. This emptiness in effect becomes a constant yearning to remember our children.

Our hearts force us to find ways to fill that void to maintain our role as parents. Some are as simple as visiting the cemetery and some are as complex as changing our entire lives, dedicated to the memory of our child. In between are the many rituals we create or borrow from others to honor the memories and to keep our child's name alive.

Lighting a candle and saying a child's name keeps their memory burning bright. It means we are struggling to cope with this unwanted role of bereaved parent in the only positive manner we can. We will most certainly shed tears every time and we will still miss our child, but we are doing something that allows the world to hear our child's name and for that one moment the candle means so much more than anyone else could ever understand.

For a fleeting second that is our universe and every memory we have comes flooding back to us as we see the flame through tears, distorting it into something magical. It's the only gift we can give our children. This is as close as we can get to our child now. A tiny, flickering flame that can warm the heart and it's nice to think that perhaps they can see it also. It's a beacon, our light in the window, our shining star in the darkness. It's an opening of our hearts and a way to share our grief.

We gather to honor the memories of our children and to share this bond of lighting a candle for the children all over the world. We miss them so much.

*Jim Lowery*



# *We Remember Our Children*

*Who have Birthdays and Angelversary dates  
in November and December*

<b>Charles A. (CJ) Angelos, Jr</b>	<b>5/18/85 ~ 11/18/06</b>	<b>Michael Sean O'Berry</b>	<b>9/13/94 ~ 12/15/97</b>
<b>Mielen Garlit Arquines</b>	<b>12/01/68 ~ 6/04/08</b>	<b>Angela Oliver</b>	<b>11/07/67 ~ 1/06/11</b>
<b>Scott R. Barley</b>	<b>12/07/81 ~ 9/29/11</b>	<b>Michael Pennefather</b>	<b>12/09/95 ~ 2/04/08</b>
<b>Clayton Kendall Breeding</b>	<b>10/23/77 ~ 12/12/01</b>	<b>Kylene Marie Privett</b>	<b>12/14/83 ~ 8/13/07</b>
<b>Brian Brumbaugh</b>	<b>11/09/83 ~ 5/02/07</b>	<b>Ronald Douglas Ralph, Jr.</b>	<b>7/17/66 ~ 11/04/02</b>
<b>David John Butts</b>	<b>10/18/80 ~ 12/16/05</b>	<b>Courtney Sharee Shelby</b>	<b>11/23/93 ~ 5/14/01</b>
<b>David Justin Combs</b>	<b>11/22/79 ~ 11/23/01</b>	<b>Jacqueline Simoes</b>	<b>11/05/66 ~ 3/15/06</b>
<b>Christina Lynn Curtis</b>	<b>3/01/74 ~ 12/25/07</b>	<b>Ben Smith</b>	<b>12/22/70 ~ 1/26/03</b>
<b>K.J. Edwards</b>	<b>12/03/85 ~ 10/31/03</b>	<b>Karl Dewan Smith</b>	<b>11/20/83 ~ 4/25/04</b>
<b>Brian Patrick Elero</b>	<b>12/30/80 ~ 10/29/01</b>	<b>Jerry Damon Taybron</b>	<b>11/21/75 ~ 8/18/07</b>
<b>Rhonda Lynn Flannery</b>	<b>7/31/63 ~ 11/10/01</b>	<b>Shawn Terrill</b>	<b>2/23/82 ~ 12/03/06</b>
<b>Ahmad Givon Glenn</b>	<b>3/06/83 ~ 12/04/06</b>	<b>Derek M. Tierney</b>	<b>1/20/76 ~ 10/09/04</b>
<b>Olivia Jean Howard</b>	<b>12/31/91 ~ 9/03/09</b>	<b>Christopher Andre' Waters Jr.</b>	<b>5/31/97 ~ 12/23/07</b>
<b>Taylor Isao Hubbard</b>	<b>11/21/89 ~ 5/16/10</b>	<b>Melinda "Mindy" Weakley</b>	<b>12/20/83 ~ 9/02/09</b>
<b>Adrienne Leigh Ingram</b>	<b>6/25/79 ~ 12/02/07</b>	<b>Stephen Wesley Wright</b>	<b>6/06/89 ~ 11/21/13</b>
<b>Leslie Ann Kramer</b>	<b>4/20/71 ~ 12/17/06</b>		
<b>Glen Irvin Leonard II</b>	<b>4/13/71 ~ 12/07/09</b>		
<b>Sara Lott</b>	<b>11/01/95 ~ 7/23/08</b>		
<b>Bobby McClanahan</b>	<b>11/30/57 ~ 7/10/68</b>		
<b>Brenda McClanahan</b>	<b>12/25/61 ~ 9/30/10</b>		
<b>Ronald McCorn</b>	<b>8/14/75 ~ 12/09/04</b>		
<b>Darren McKeever</b>	<b>12/7/80 ~ 11/19/98</b>		

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

## Thanksgiving

On Thanksgiving Day we will say a prayer,  
With family and friends gathered there,  
Thankful to all be together,  
Sharing the holiday with each other.

There will be a place set at the table for you,  
Knowing you will be joining us too,  
Looking down from heaven above,  
Surrounding us with your love.

Your physical absence will be keenly felt,  
But your spiritual presence will be felt  
throughout,  
You never missed a holiday while you were  
here,  
Death won't keep you from being near.

Happy Thanksgiving, dearest one,  
We are so blessed you were our son,  
We thank God for the gift of you,  
And remember you in all we do.

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## THANKFULNESS

Denis Paz, *Where Are All The Butterflies*

That great Victorian poet, Alfred  
Tennyson, wrote these famous lines:

*I hold it true, whate'er befall;  
I feel it, when I sorrow most;  
'Tis better to have loved and lost  
Than never to have loved at all.*

These sentiments feel true for me. I miss  
so much my son Charles' presence; I  
grieve for the growth that he never will  
experience; I weep for the potential  
unfulfilled. Yet despite the pain of his  
death, despite knowing that his future lies  
in the past, I am thankful for those few  
years when I rejoiced in his presence. It is  
far better that he was and is no more than  
that he had never been at all.



## Holidays

The holidays are a particularly poignant time of year,  
With friends and family gathering near,  
We have fond memories of holidays past,  
Amazed the years go by so fast.

In our minds a movie plays,  
Of the many wonderful holidays,  
We smell the turkey and taste the pies,  
And sip hot apple cider with happy sighs.

Sometimes we travel, sometimes stay home,  
So very fortunate if we're not alone,  
Good spirits and laughter fill the air,  
With hugs and sharing everywhere.

Catching up on the latest news,  
Remembering old family stories too,  
It's these special memories that remain in our hearts,  
Softening the pain when loved ones depart.

Cook up a feast and say a prayer,  
For our many blessings and be aware,  
Cherish each moment and give praise,  
For the blessing that love brings to our days.

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## That First Christmas

By Margaret Sylvia, Grafton, VA

That first Christmas after Robin died I was determined that we would have a tree regardless of our sorrow and pain. We were like zombies, but what an injustice it would be to let our precious, awesome girl spoil her favorite time of year! Lots of thought went into getting the perfect sparkling white three-foot tree. Ornaments had to of course be beautiful, sparking, and whimsical. They must be unique...It had to reflect her!! We shopped for weeks for garland and just the right twink lights. There are fairies and angels, puffy feather balls, silver snowflakes, crystal spheres, and tiny pink bows. The tree shirt is pink tulle. Now each year we add a "daughter" ornament. It's this "Robin" tree that warms our hearts each year.

## "Tears"

By Washington Irving

There is a sacredness in tears. They are not a mark of weakness, but power!  
They speak more eloquently than 10 thousand tongues. They are messengers of  
overwhelming grief, of deep contrition and unspeakable love.

## Behold The Empty Place

I called my God in question  
Lord, how can this thing be?  
To let the wicked woodsman  
Cut down this precious tree  
Thou could have took an older tree  
That wind and time had worn  
Why take this young and perfect one,  
That never fruit had borne?

On whispering wings of silent thought  
My God then answered me,  
Who told thee that the woodsman  
Had harmed our perfect tree?  
I've had this tree transplanted,  
Removed it from thy face  
Look to where the young tree stood  
Behold the empty place.  
Yes, I have land more suited  
For such a wondrous tree  
And one so full of promise  
I wanted close to me.

Poem by Eugene S. Hunt

*A special Holiday wish for Tommy J. Wonnum III  
from his mom, Fran Wonnum*

## A Solitary Journey

Helen Steiner Rice

Grief is a solitary journey. No one but you knows how great the hurt is. No one but you can know the gaping hole left in your life when someone you know has died. And no one but you can mourn the silence that was once filled with laughter and song. It is the nature of love and of death to touch every person in a totally unique way. Comfort comes from knowing that people have made the same journey. And solace comes from understanding how others have learned to sing again.

## A Holiday Message: Special Handling, Please

I was handed a package the other day.  
It was wrapped securely to be mailed away.  
Attached to the outside as plain as could be  
Was a simple note for all to see:

Please rush through the holiday season;  
Too painful to open for any reason!  
Contained within, find one bereaved heart  
Fragile, broken, falling apart.

Tried to go shopping the other day;  
The hype of the season blew me away.  
Sat down to write cards,  
That was insane.  
Couldn't find the list  
Or think of my name.

People say, "Come over,"  
"Be of good cheer."  
"Celebrate the holidays,"  
"Prepare a New Year."

But my grief overwhelms me  
Like waves in the sea.  
Can they cope with my crying;  
An unsettled me?  
I don't have any holiday cheer,  
Decorations, traditions, big family meal,  
I can't do it this year.

Do you know how I feel?  
Guilty and frustrated!  
I've let everyone down!  
Our holiday celebrations  
Used to be the best in town!

So just ship me away  
Address unknown  
When my grief is over,  
I might fly home.

Signed: Bereaved Heart

*Written by Mary J. Pinkava  
(published in Bereavement magazine,  
November/December 1990)*



Find us on:  
**facebook®**

A facebook page has been set up for our chapter. Members can join our group at [http://www.facebook.com/Bereaved Parents of the USA/Northern VA Chapter](http://www.facebook.com/BereavedParentsOfTheUSANorthernVAChapter) 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.

### AMAZON.COM

Did you know that BP/USA is an affiliated member of Amazon.com?

This means that if you visit BP/USA before making an Amazon.com purchase, and click on the Amazon link on the page, that BP/USA will receive a percentage of all sales. The use of this link does not increase the cost of your purchase. Four to 13% of the sales price comes back to BP/USA.

Go to [bereavedparentsusa.com](http://bereavedparentsusa.com).



### Website

We are going to be updating our website and we would like to include biographies and photos of the children of our chapter. Please email photos and written information about your child to [bpusa.nova@yahoo.com](mailto:bpusa.nova@yahoo.com).



Bereaved Parents of the USA  
**2015 NATIONAL GATHERING**  
HARTFORD, CT • JULY 24 - 26

## Upcoming Events

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday**

**3:00 p.m.**

Caring and Sharing Meeting  
Good Shepherd UMC  
14999 Birchdale Avenue  
Dale City, VA 22193  
**(No meeting in Nov. or Dec.)**

**Nov.20 & Dec.11**

**7 p.m.**

Pot Luck Social Event  
Larson Home  
6900 Cole Timothy Court  
Manassas, VA 20112  
703-791-6537  
[rlarson900@verizon.com](mailto:rlarson900@verizon.com)

**Saturday, December 6**

**7 p.m.**

Annual Service of Remembrance  
Prince of Peace UMC  
Manassas, VA

### Sponsor the Newsletter

If you would like to sponsor the newsletter in memory of your child, we are requesting a donation of \$40 for a full page and \$20 for a half page. Please provide pictures, stories, poems, letters to your child, or anything you would like to put in the newsletter.

Please contact Jodi Norman if you have any questions. Submissions can be emailed to [bpusa.nova@yahoo.com](mailto:bpusa.nova@yahoo.com). Please send check to BP/USA NOVA Chapter to P.O. Box 7675, Woodbridge, VA 22195.

### We Need Your Help!

There are dozens of tasks that go into running our chapter and our special events, from helping set up the meeting room, helping with the Memorial Garden, planning special events, and fundraising, to working on outreach and public relations. We need your help! If you feel you are now in a place in your grief journey where you can help and give back to the chapter in little or large ways, please contact Jodi Norman, 703-910-6277 or email: [bleachermom2000@aol.com](mailto:bleachermom2000@aol.com). 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.

## 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

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P.O. Box 7675  
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[bpusa.nova@yahoo.com](mailto:bpusa.nova@yahoo.com)



Bereaved Parents of the USA  
P.O. Box 622, St Peters, MO 63376  
[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 [bpusa.nova@yahoo.com](mailto:bpusa.nova@yahoo.com) or calling Jodi at 703-910-6277.

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