



Navigating the New Year while grieving can be challenging, but focusing on self compassion and honoring your loved one's memory can provide comfort and support. Understanding Grief in the New Year.

The New Year often brings a mix of emotions for those grieving. It can serve as a painful reminder of loss, stirring feelings of longing and sadness. The transition into a new year can amplify these emotions, making it essential to approach this time with kindness towards yourself. Recognizing that grief is a personal journey and that strong reactions are normal can help you navigate this period more gently.

Gentle Resolutions and Self-Compassion

Instead of traditional New Year's resolutions that may feel overwhelming, consider setting gentle intentions that prioritize self-care. This could include:

- **Allowing yourself to feel:** Embrace your emotions without judgment. It's okay to feel sadness, anger, or even moments of joy as part of your grief journey.
- **Prioritizing rest and nourishment:** Focus on what your body needs, whether that means getting enough sleep, eating nourishing foods, or engaging in gentle movement.
- **Seeking support:** Consider joining a grief support group or talking to a therapist to help process your feelings.

Honoring Your Loved One's Memory

Finding ways to honor the memory of your loved one can be a meaningful part of coping with grief during the New Year. Here are some ideas:

- **Create new traditions:** Adapt existing traditions to include memories of your loved one. For example, cook their favorite dish or share stories about them during gatherings.
- **Symbolic gestures:** Leave an empty chair at the table or create a memory box filled with photos and mementos to acknowledge their presence in your life.
- **Reflect and remember:** Use journaling to express your thoughts and feelings about your loss and the upcoming year. This can help you process your emotions and find clarity.

Conclusion

Entering a new year while grieving is a deeply personal experience. By focusing on self-compassion, honoring your loved one's memory, and allowing yourself to feel, you can navigate this time with greater ease. Remember, it's okay to take things one day at a time and to seek support when needed. You are not alone in your journey.

Author Unknown

Message from Our New Leader

My Dear Bereaved Parents and Siblings,

This chapter of The Bereaved Parents of the USA was established February 1, 2003 by Jodi Norman whose son, Christian Norman, passed away in 2001. It began as the Prince William Chapter but grew and expanded to become the Northern Virginia Chapter. Jodi has grown this chapter into something amazing and supportive unlike any other. I'm, as I know all of you are, very grateful for this and her excellent leadership. There will never be another leader like Jodi. She has been the anchor for 24 years and feels that now is the time to step down and pass the torch to someone else. After much deliberation and prayer, I have agreed to take on the role of chapter leader of the BP Northern Virginia Chapter.

I will not be able to fill Jodi's shoes but will do my best to carry on the legacy she has created. As with Jodi, it is impossible to complete tasks she has done without help and support. To make and build something up that is beneficial to all of us that are grieving parents and siblings, takes a village. We are the village! Jodi has taken on many of those roles alone when there were limited or no volunteers to help just to insure everyone received the support needed.

Jodi threw herself into making everything she did for all of us the best possible. She created the newsletter that has been sent out every 2 months and at one time every month. Initially, it was a printed newsletter, then expanded to include email. When the printed newsletter became too expensive with the rise in postage, it became primarily email. So please read your email!!!

The newsletter is only one of many things that Jodi has done. She has organized fundraisers, get-togethers such as dinner at United Buffet, potlucks, picnics, Valentine dinners, the Service of Remembrance, 2 BP National Gatherings, and most recently our chapter retreat in Richmond. She created a chapter website and facebook page. She has served on the BP National Board. Jodi has led monthly in-person and zoom meetings; and established separate support group meetings in Woodbridge and Manassas that she also attended. I'm sure I've left some things out but you get the idea. She has been the NoVa Chapter's lifeline.

Everything Jodi has done has been above and beyond. Becoming leader of this chapter is an honor for me but is also a daunting responsibility. I would greatly appreciate anyone that would be willing to please step up and volunteer to take over some of the responsibilities so as not to have one or two people handle all of them. It's a difficult task to do so.

At this time, Jodi has agreed to continue to do the newsletter but it will now be quarterly. If anyone has an interest in doing the newsletter please let me and Jodi know. Also, someone who is good at finances would be greatly appreciated to take over the role of treasurer. Another thing needed is someone who is good at and enjoys working with electronics. When we have our music and slide show at the Service of Remembrance, at times it can be temperamental. There may be other times that we need the music, too. Anything "electronical" is definitely not my forte.

There are various gatherings that we have throughout the year that need organizing and setting up. If you are interested in being on a committee or helping in any way please let me know.

I will continue to be the go to person for the BP Memorial Garden. My heart is the garden. We still need volunteers to work and help maintain it so please let me know if you are willing to help. Any help is appreciated. I do have Toni and John Payne volunteering now but more are always needed.

We have the Book Club that meets once a month and Sue Cerrone will continue leading that group.

The BP NoVa Chapter support group was established for support of everyone. This is a group that none of us ever wanted to be a part of but unfortunately we are. It doesn't matter if you are a "veteran" in grief or newly bereaved, at some point you need support. The death of a child is something one never gets over. I encourage everyone to attend an in-person or zoom meeting at least once. Even if you don't feel you need it yourself, you just may be the one person that helps someone else attending. You just may be the only one that truly connects with that person.

Becoming the leader of BP of the USA NoVa Chapter is a new adventure for me and I will try to do the best I can. I welcome all help and all suggestions to keep this the top-notch support group that it is. Don't be surprised if I contact you individually to check on you and touch base to how you can be a support to the group and how I can be a support to you. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity. I am truly blessed to be able to serve you. Please feel free to contact me by home phone (540-628-4758), cell phone (703-385-9546) and/or email (ruane.beverly@yahoo.com).

A huge thank you to Jodi Norman for her many years of excellent service. She is a role model and truly a support for all.

Love and hugs, Beverly

23rd Anniversary Dinner

Monday, February 2, 2026

6:00 p.m.

United Buffet

2942 Prince William Pkwy,
Woodbridge, VA 22192

BPUSA Northern Virginia Chapter is celebrating 23 Years of Hope and Healing and Jodi's farewell as leader! Join us for dinner at United Buffet in Woodbridge, VA on Monday, February 2nd.

Please RSVP by Friday, January 30th.
RSVP at the link below:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0948ACAE22A4F8CF8-61411728>



HOUSE OF MERCY
Food Pantry • Thrift Store • Donation Center

December 19, 2025

Dear BPUSA,

Thank you for supporting House of Mercy and everyone we aim to help in our community. We are so blessed to have you as a part of the mission of mercy. You are making a huge difference for those in need, especially during this time of extreme need. We are so encouraged by your selfless gifts.

It is because of generous partners like you that House of Mercy can continue the mission of mercy. God's love and mercy are alive! House of Mercy is an essential part of the community in Prince William County and we would not exist without the support of our volunteers, donors, and partners each year. Thank you! On behalf of the House of Mercy and the families we serve, I would like to thank you for your generous In Kind: Goods donation of 120 cake kits on 12/15/25.

Please pray for all those who serve and are served through the House of Mercy. I invite you to pray a Divine Mercy Chaplet for the work and mission of the House of Mercy. We will be praying for you as well.

Sincerely

Janis DeVore
Director of Development & Marketing

**Jiffy Lube Live
Volunteers**

**Memorial
Garden Workers**

**Send out cards for birthdays
and anniversaries**

**Newsletter
Editor**

**Web
Master**

Treasurer

Fundraising



**Special Events
Coordinator**

**Attend Support Meetings to
offer Support to Newly
Bereaved**

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.

Let Beverly Ruane know how you would like to help the chapter. Please feel free to contact her by home phone (540-628-4758), cell phone (703-385-9546) and/or email (ruane.beverly@yahoo.com).

Garden News

Hello everyone,

Even though we just through Christmas and New Year's, Spring is just around the corner! With Spring comes new life and the growth of the Memorial Garden.

As always, there will be much to do to prepare the garden for its beautiful presentation for Spring and Summer and the Butterfly Release. There is cleaning the old brush and dead plants and the garden in general, trimming, planting, mulching, and of course the never ending weeding! Watering especially during the hot dry season.

If you are interested in helping; especially, those that live closer to the garden, please let me know. I will also be contacting people to help as needed. Days to work at the garden will be sent by email. You may also receive a text or call from me.

We have to get it ready sooner than usual this year because the Butterfly Release will be on July 12th this year. We are hoping that more of the wildflowers will still be blooming. Also, by readying the garden earlier its beauty can be enjoyed longer.

Until a little later, I wish you all a Happy New Year!

Hugs, Beverly

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.

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

Zoom Meeting:
2nd Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.
Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86813541644?pwd=RDBwOWkzMmxoWXJ5NnkvT3VlY2lrQT09>

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

Ruckersville Support Group Meeting
3rd Sunday @ 2:00 pm

Four Seasons Clubhouse
Card Room
444 Four Seasons Drive
Ruckersville, VA 22968

For more information contact:
Linda Harkness 703-405-7379
harknesslm@gmail.com

Refreshments at Meetings

If you would like to remember your child's birthday or the anniversary of his or her death, please bring your child's favorite cake or cookies to the meeting that month.
Please let Beverly know that you will be bringing refreshments.

AMORe

(All Murdered Offspring Remembered)

2nd Sunday @ 3 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

Life After Loss Support Group for Suicide Survivors

"Shining A Light for Those in Darkness"

1st 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
website: www.djcfoundation.org

Sibling Support Group

**The Virtual Support Group is making
changes to the virtual meetings
and they will now be held on the**
3rd Tuesday
7:30-9:00 pm.

**If you are a bereaved sibling, over the age of
18, and are interested in participating in this
Virtual Support Group, please contact**
Amanda Hughes, Sibling Coordinator at
202-596-7573 or
siblings@bereavedparentsusa.org

March Pot Luck Dinner

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

7:00 p.m.

Valerie & Rich Larson Home

6900 Cole Timothy Court

Manassas, VA

RSVP:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0948ACAE22A4F8CF8-61413398-march>

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

**2026
NATIONAL
GATHERING
CONFERENCE**

JULY 24-26
PITTSBURGH
AIRPORT
MARRIOTT

 Bereaved
Parents
OF THE USA

Book Club

Our Book Club meets on the last Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. We will meet in person at Sue Cerrone's home, 15937 Cucumber Magnolia Way, Haymarket.

***Note Date change from Last Monday to Last Thursday of the month.**

Please email bpusanova@gmail.com, if you would like to receive emails about the Book Club. We'd really love to have more people participate.

For more information contact Sue at suebcerrone@gmail.com or call 703-819-8604. Please RSVP if you are attending.

Our book for January is Lives Unfinished, Parents' Reflections on Child Loss. The book is available on Amazon. Books for 2026 will be chosen at the January meeting, so if you have any books you recommend please bring your suggestions.

Jiffy Lube Live Volunteers

If you are interested in volunteering at Jiffy Lube Live in 2026, please let Jodi know.

Concerts begin in May and go through September or October.

Send an email to bpusanova@gmail.com if you are interested.

Attention

Newsletters will be sent out via email. If you are not already receiving our newsletters via email, please send an email to bpusanova@gmail.com with your information to include an email address.

If you do not have an email address, please let us know so we can send you a newsletter.

Grief & New Beginnings: When New Year's Feels Heavy Instead of Hopeful

Everyone's talking about fresh starts. New goals. New energy. A "new you." But what if you're not ready for new? What if you're still carrying the weight of what you lost this year—or years before? If New Year's feels heavy instead of hopeful, you're not alone. And there's nothing wrong with you.

Why Does New Year's Hit So Hard When You're Grieving?

New Year's is built around the idea of moving forward. Closing one chapter. Opening another. But grief doesn't follow a calendar. When you've lost someone—or something—important, the pressure to "start fresh" can feel impossible. How are you supposed to set goals for the future when you're still trying to get through today? The holiday also brings comparison. Everyone around you seems excited. Optimistic. Ready for what's next. Meanwhile, you might just be trying to survive the countdown without falling apart. That gap between how you feel and how you think you're supposed to feel? That's exhausting.

You Don't Have to Pretend to Be Hopeful

Here's the thing: You don't owe anyone optimism right now.

If someone asks about your resolutions and you don't have any, that's fine. If the idea of goal-setting feels laughable when you're barely getting out of bed, that's understandable. If midnight feels more like an endurance test than a celebration, you're not doing it wrong.

Grief is not a problem to fix. It's not a phase to rush through so you can "get back to normal." It's a response to loss—and it takes as long as it takes.

Trying to force hope before you're ready doesn't make the grief go away. It just adds guilt on top of sadness.

What Actually Helps When the New Year Feels Hard

You can't skip over grief. But you can move through it with a little more kindness toward yourself.

Lower the bar. You don't need resolutions. You don't need a big plan for the year. Right now, getting through the day counts. Let that be enough.

Let yourself feel what you feel. Sadness, anger, numbness, relief—grief brings all kinds of emotions, sometimes all at once. None of them are wrong. You don't have to perform happiness you don't feel.

Protect your energy. You get to say no to the party. You get to leave early. You get to skip the group text and go to bed at 9 p.m. Grief takes a lot out of you, and rest is not laziness.

Find one small comfort. Maybe it's a favorite movie. A walk outside. Ordering your favorite food. You don't have to feel joy—but you can still give yourself small moments of ease.

Connect with someone who gets it. Grief can feel isolating, especially when everyone around you is celebrating. If you have one person who understands—whether a friend, family member, therapist or support group—reach out. You don't have to explain. Just being with someone who knows can help.

Grief is normal. It's not something that needs to be "fixed." But sometimes it helps to have support—especially when the weight of it feels like too much to carry alone.

You Don't Have to Start Over to Start Somewhere

New Year's doesn't have to mean new beginnings. It can just mean another day. Another breath. Another small step forward.

If hope feels far away right now, that's okay. You don't have to force it. Grief is not the opposite of growth. Sometimes, sitting with the pain is the most important work you can do. The hope will come when it's ready—not on a deadline.

*Posted on the website of Aspire Counseling in Columbus, MO.



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



Kirsten Lynn Adler	2/21/94 ~ 10/24/10	John William Kennedy	1/16/94 ~ 8/11/18
Joseph Michael Atalla	3/19/85 ~ 1/24/22	Nicole Michelle Lee	6/22/89 ~ 1/26/08
Zaria Jasmyrn Nevaen Agee	1/28/04 ~ 6/09/19	Henry Lewis III	2/16/74 ~ 4/15/02
Ethan Arterburn	2/16/07 ~ 2/28/07	Tiffany Michelle Lewis	1/26/80 ~ 10/11/9
Suzanne Baughan	9/18/73 ~ 2/18/20	April Charlotte Lillicotch	7/27/04 ~ 2/24/20
Demitrios Bedoya	10/27/76 ~ 2/10/03	Annie McCann	1/05/92 ~ 11/02/08
Bryan Christopher Bingel	1/08/80 ~ 3/04/08	Kevin McGuinn	2/08/88 ~ 8/26/08
Christopher Wesley Blok	3/21/80 ~ 2/25/09	Emily "Tabor" McMullen	1/26/84 ~ 8/31/12
Lesly Glyn Bolton	1/19/80 ~ 10/27/16	Christine McNabb	1/13/88 ~ 2/23/08
Baron "Deuce" Braswell II	9/29/89 ~ 1/20/06	Roseann M. Meale	10/04/69 ~ 1/19/87
Alex Charles Bridwell	1/27/89 ~ 10/31/22	John Earl Medley	2/21/59 ~ 9/09/08
Kenny Brooks Jr	8/13/82 ~ 1/14/06	Michael Joseph Moore	7/13/71 ~ 1/09/09
Jason Emeric Pius Brunsman	8/21/04 ~ 2/14/24	Johnny Ray Mullins	7/11/61 ~ 1/22/02
Joseph Brendan Birkebile	6/26/89 ~ 1/11/11	Christian Paul Norman	2/04/85 ~ 6/03/01
Pamela Sue Chaiken	1/17/64 ~ 9/29/95	Jeremy Kyle Nottingham	1/25/91 ~ 11/22/21
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	Christina Lianne Panzo-Bowers	1/08/94 ~ 11/01/14
Alaina Michelle Combo	2/01/17 ~ 2/01/17	Michael Joseph Pennefather	12/09/95 ~ 2/04/08
Ryan Michael Conde	12/02/04 ~ 2/02/17	Timothy Michael John Peyton	6/13/68 ~ 2/09/17
Christopher DaSean Currin	1/04/94 ~ 1/04/22	Alice Amelia Porges	2/10/15 ~ 2/10/15
Stephen Brian Donnelly	1/08/72 ~ 2/15/18	Robert K. Pugh	1/17/57 ~ 5/23/23
Lisa Marie Donnelly	4/15/78 ~ 2/06/24	Clarke "Dani" Reese	8/31/93 ~ 2/25/07
Val Keith Ensor, Jr.	8/2/94 ~ 1/21/16	Brandon Roat	2/02/92 ~ 2/13/17
David Joseph Erickson	1/07/91 ~ 1/07/91	Chelsea Rae Rosengarth	2/02/86 ~ 1/27/02
Robert Alan Finch	7/27/70 ~ 1/02/01	John Christian Rusaw	2/04/72 ~ 6/08/23
Baja Flagg	1/07/91 ~ 3/15/20	Joshua Daniel Shirt	1/17/91 ~ 10/13/19
Antonio (Tony) Ford-Flores	2/25/89 ~ 4/15/10	Ronald Mark "Bud" Shirt	4/05/57 ~ 1/06/99
Victoria Anne Forster	1/04/89 ~ 1/04/09	Kevin Simpson	2/10/87 ~ 1/24/09
Bruce Lee Foxworthy	8/29/75 ~ 2/11/12	Ben Smith	12/22/70 ~ 1/26/03
Payton Rose Freeze	10/13/98 ~ 2/10/16	Mary Ann Smoot	3/31/84 ~ 1/17/22
Jacob Thomas Fulton	4/15/03 ~ 1/11/15	Adam Charles Sorge	5/12/84 ~ 1/04/14
Ezekiel Josiah Gales	1/30/98 ~ 6/08/20	Robert Andrew Starling	8/02/93 ~ 2/04/18
Andrew Geracoulis	10/20/99 ~ 1/07/23	Rose Ann "Rose" M. Taylor	6/02/44 ~ 1/02/23
Jacob Charles Glushefski	5/23/77 ~ 2/21/11	Shawn Terrill	2/23/82 ~ 12/03/06
Adon Gerald Grey	11/05/81 ~ 1/20/18	Dana Thrall	8/02/75 ~ 1/02/01
Gray Mason Hall	2/22/01 ~ 9/01/24	Derek M. Tierney	1/20/76 ~ 10/09/04
Kristin Marie Harkness	3/19/89 ~ 2/22/08	Caleb Milton Torres	2/11/12 ~ 2/11/12
Ashley Hoefling	8/22/85 ~ 2/08/17	Brian Floyd Weakley	1/20/80 ~ 4/19/07
Philip Reid Hottle	2/16/85 ~ 12/03/08	Christopher (Deuce) Wheeler, II	5/08/18 ~ 1/08/23
Ryan Gardiner James	2/17/99 ~ 7/06/19	PFC Robert Leon White	01/31/82 ~ 07/29/02
		Brenden Michael Wilson	1/10/98 ~ 11/10/14

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

Beverly Ruane, Leader
P.O. Box 7675
Woodbridge, VA 22195
Phone: 540-628-4758 (h)
or 703-395-9546 (c)
ruane.beverly@yahoo.com



Bereaved Parents of the USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Chapter Leadership

Chapter Leader: Beverly Ruane
Co-Leaders: Debbie & Tim Shirt
Manassas Meeting Leaders: Sue Cerrone,
Melody Ridgeway
Book Club Leader: Sue Cerrone
Ruckersville Leader: Linda Harkness
Web Site and Newsletter Editor: Jodi Norman

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.

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.

2026 Events

Mark Your Calendar and Save the Dates

Monday, February 2 – Anniversary Dinner

Wednesday, March 25 @ 7 p.m. – Pot Luck Dinner at Larson Home

Sunday, May 31 – Annual Picnic and Lotus Flower Release

June, September and November 2026 – Pot Luck Dinners at Larson Home

Sunday, July 12 – Butterfly Release

July 24-26 – National Gathering, Pittsburgh, PA

Sunday, December 13 – Annual Service of Remembrance

*Dates and Events are subject to change