



Spring 2015

# caring & sharing news

*Helping rebuild lives following the death of a child*

## Chapter Yard Sale And Bake Sale

Saturday, May 2, 2015

8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Good Shepherd UMC Parking Lot  
14999 Birchdale Ave, Dale City

Donations of items  
to sell and baked  
goods are needed!  
People to help on  
the day of the sale  
are also needed!



## Caring and Sharing Support Meetings

### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday

3 p.m.

Good Shepherd UMC  
14999 Birchdale Avenue  
Dale City, VA 22193

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday

Pot Luck Social Event  
7 p.m.

Larson Home  
6900 Cole Timothy Court  
Manassas, VA 20112  
703-791-6537

[rlarson900@verizon.com](mailto:rlarson900@verizon.com)

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday

AMORe

Murder Victims Support Group  
7 p.m.

3182 Golansky Blvd, Suite 101  
Woodbridge, VA 22192  
703-395-9546

[bruane01@verizon.net](mailto:bruane01@verizon.net)

For more information contact:  
Jodi Norman, Chapter Leader  
703-910-6277 (home)  
703-656-6999 (cell)

[bleachermom2000@aol.com](mailto:bleachermom2000@aol.com)

## “Messages To Heaven” Annual Picnic, Memory Walk & Balloon Release

Sunday, May 31, 2015

3 p.m.

Prince of Peace UMC  
6299 Token Forest Dr  
Manassas, VA 20112

Pot Luck Picnic – Bring a dish to share  
Meat and drinks will be provided



# We Remember Our Children

Who have Birthdays and Angelversary dates  
in April, May and June

<b>Charles A. (CJ) Angelos, Jr</b>	<b>5/28/85 ~ 11/18/06</b>	<b>Robert Larson</b>	<b>3/14/94 ~ 6/30/10</b>
<b>Mielen Garlit Arquines</b>	<b>12/01/68 ~ 6/04/08</b>	<b>Nicole Michelle Lee</b>	<b>6/22/89 ~ 1/26/08</b>
<b>Brandon Scott Bailey</b>	<b>6/21/79 ~ 5/31/99</b>	<b>Glen Irvin Leonard II</b>	<b>4/13/71 ~ 12/07/09</b>
<b>James “Jimmy” Barnette</b>	<b>7/11/98 ~ 6/03/06</b>	<b>Henry Lewis III</b>	<b>2/16/74 ~ 4/15/02</b>
<b>Donald “Donnie” Barrett</b>	<b>5/14/76 ~ 5/03/02</b>	<b>Robert Loiseau</b>	<b>8/22/72 ~ 5/27/93</b>
<b>Kimberly Ann Barrett</b>	<b>9/08/86 ~ 5/04/02</b>	<b>Kyle Ludeman</b>	<b>4/12/93 ~ 8/27/13</b>
<b>Mateo Louis Bowman</b>	<b>6/10/13 ~ 6/10/13</b>	<b>Derek Meffert</b>	<b>4/21/95 ~ 8/15/10</b>
<b>Parker Evan Boyd</b>	<b>9/15/98 ~ 6/04/08</b>	<b>Ella Miller</b>	<b>4/27/02 ~ 7/23/10</b>
<b>Brian Brumbaugh</b>	<b>11/09/83 ~ 5/02/07</b>	<b>Shelby Nicholson</b>	<b>4/22/92 ~ 1/07/09</b>
<b>Brandon Bundy</b>	<b>5/19/84 ~ 8/24/08</b>	<b>Christian Paul Norman</b>	<b>2/04/85 ~ 6/03/01</b>
<b>Sarah Beth Cole</b>	<b>8/06/80 ~ 4/23/11</b>	<b>Matthew Ortiz</b>	<b>4/23/84 ~ 5/13/08</b>
<b>Brandon DeWulf</b>	<b>6/20/85 ~ 6/29/09</b>	<b>Josephine Pennefather</b>	<b>6/21/03 ~ 6/21/03</b>
<b>Corey Martin Dill</b>	<b>7/25/90 ~ 5/03/07</b>	<b>Matthew Allan Ruane</b>	<b>9/07/83 ~ 4/29/02</b>
<b>Raven Gileau</b>	<b>6/23/90 ~ 4/23/10</b>	<b>Vernon Santmyer, Jr.</b>	<b>8/24/79 ~ 5/17/11</b>
<b>Antonio Ford-Flores</b>	<b>2/25/89 ~ 4/15/10</b>	<b>Courtney Sharee Shelby</b>	<b>11/23/93 ~ 5/14/01</b>
<b>Jacob Charles Glushefski</b>	<b>5/23/77 ~ 2/21/11</b>	<b>Karl Dewan Smith</b>	<b>11/20/83 ~ 4/25/04</b>
<b>Dwayne Eddie Gonsorcik</b>	<b>5/26/74 ~ 4/26/13</b>	<b>Adam Charles Sorge</b>	<b>5/12/94 ~ 1/04/14</b>
<b>Christina Gordon</b>	<b>5/08/13 ~ 5/08/13</b>	<b>Kevin Michael Stanphill</b>	<b>3/12/80 ~ 5/09/09</b>
<b>Kourtney Michelle Hale</b>	<b>5/29/80 ~ 3/14/10</b>	<b>Michael “Ryan” Stevens</b>	<b>7/07/87 ~ 5/30/07</b>
<b>Gabrielle Nicole Henderson</b>	<b>5/28/86 ~ 6/17/99</b>	<b>Neale Thompson</b>	<b>4/07/71 ~ 4/09/93</b>
<b>Taylor Isao Hubbard</b>	<b>11/21/89 ~ 5/16/10</b>	<b>Christopher Andre’ Waters Jr.</b>	<b>5/31/97 ~ 12/23/07</b>
<b>Adrienne Leigh Ingram</b>	<b>6/25/79 ~ 12/02/07</b>	<b>Brian Floyd Weakley</b>	<b>1/20/80 ~ 4/19/07</b>
<b>Derrick V. James</b>	<b>6/01/74 ~ 5/28/05</b>	<b>Josh Weaver</b>	<b>6/17/82 ~ 9/09/09</b>
<b>Rasheem Jenkins</b>	<b>5/04/82 ~ 9/09/09</b>	<b>Kyle Robert Wilson</b>	<b>5/25/82 ~ 4/16/07</b>
<b>Kashif Johnson</b>	<b>3/15/87 ~ 5/01/07</b>	<b>Tommie J. Wonnun III</b>	<b>6/14/84 ~ 6/20/03</b>
<b>Stephanie Dawn Kirpes</b>	<b>5/06/85 ~ 7/06/08</b>	<b>Franklin Conner Woodward</b>	<b>5/15/08 ~ 5/17/08</b>
<b>Leslie Ann Kramer</b>	<b>4/20/71 ~ 12/17/06</b>	<b>Stephen Wesley Wright</b>	<b>6/06/89 ~ 11/21/13</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 January, February or March, please provide us with your child’s information so they can be included correctly in future newsletters.

My Dear Matthew,

It's been 13 years now since we last saw your quirky smile and heard your witty humor. There have been so many things you have missed over the years that you shouldn't have missed. You should be here to see your niece and nephews growing up. You would be so proud of them. You would be proud of how your sisters have been able to handle the many trials they've been through. We all miss you and need you.

We miss you every second of everyday but we keep going. We know you would want us to. It's just hard sometimes. Most days, though, we laugh and smile remembering. We love you and will miss you forever.

Love, Mom and Dad and all of your family



## AMORe Meeting for Parents of Children who were Murdered

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month  
7:00 p.m.

Woodbridge Christian Church Office  
3182 Golansky Blvd., Suite 101  
Woodbridge, VA 22192

For more info contact Bev Ruane at 703-395-9546



## Chapter Fundraiser IPAD RAFFLE

Tickets: \$10 or 3 for \$25  
Drawing on May 31st

An XBOX One has been added as an additional raffle prize. All proceeds will go to running the Chapter, reaching out to newly bereaved parents and special activities of the chapter. Our goal is to raise \$1,000. Everyone's participation will be greatly appreciated. If you need tickets to sell, please contact Jodi at [bleachermom2000@aol.com](mailto:bleachermom2000@aol.com).



**Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Chapter Yard Sale  
And Bake Sale**  
Good Shepherd UMC  
14999 Birchdale Ave  
Dale City, VA

**Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>**  
**Picnic, Balloon Release  
And Memory Walk  
Raffle Drawing**  
Prince of Peace UMC  
6299 Token Forest Dr  
Manassas, VA 20112

**July 24-26**  
**BP/USA National Gathering**  
**Hartford, CT**

**Sunday, August 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**Butterfly Release**  
**at**  
**Memorial Garden**

## Garden News

Spring is here! It's so good to see the buds on the trees and the crocuses and daffodils blooming. Before we know it there will be green leaves on the trees and flowers blooming in abundance.

Visiting the Memorial Garden in the winter can make one think that there could not possibly be any life there. Then one by one buds become visible, shoots of plants begin to show themselves from the ground. Then, seemingly overnight the green and vibrant colors catch your eye.

As things begin growing, we will be better able to see what survived the winter. Hopefully, most of the plants, if not all will return. In the front of the garden, wildflower seeds were sewn last year, which presented us with a beautiful display of flowers. They should have reseeded so we will have an abundance of flowers this year.

There was a pleasant day earlier this year so my daughter, Rachel, and I went on the spur of the moment to the garden and pruned the Butterfly Bushes. We ran out of time to cut the grasses back and haven't been able to coordinate time and a nice day (there haven't been too many) since then. I know there will be nice days soon so I may be able to again on the spur of the moment, go up there again.

We will have things to do at the garden. I'm sure the weeds will be one of the first things to grow, so they will need to be pulled. Some things may need to be trimmed. New plants will need to be planted to replace those that didn't survive the winter. Of course, there is always need for new mulch. We also, need to replenish some of the stone in the walkway.

Donations of time, money and plants are always welcome to keep our garden maintained so everyone can enjoy its peacefulness. Workdays will be scheduled to clean up, plant, spread mulch, water and whatever else may need to be done for the garden. When these days are scheduled you will be notified.

It's difficult for one or two people to accomplish everything that needs to be done to maintain the garden, it would be appreciated if anyone that has an interest in the garden could pitch in to make it beautiful! It is there for everyone to enjoy! If you visit the garden and see a weed or two, go ahead and pull them. It only takes a minute!

If you do not have a memorial stone for your child in the garden and would like to have one, Jodi and I have information for ordering one, which includes a small donation for the garden upkeep. Once you have your stone, you may place it wherever you wish in the garden.

Anyone interested in helping with the garden can contact me at home 540-628-4758 or on my cell 703-395-9546.

You will be able to get in touch with me better at home, as cell reception at my house is not very good. Thank you in advance and I look forward to seeing you all helping at the garden.

~ Beverly Ruane ~



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

Go to <http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org> to get all the information on the 2015 Gathering in Hartford, CT. Now is the time to book your hotel and make your airline reservations (if you plan to fly). Jet Blue still has \$68 round trip flights from Reagan National Airport to Hartford! Check it out!

The Tony Brown Foundation is offering a scholarship for one parent to attend the Gathering. This is for first-time attendees. Go to the BP/USA website to check out the details to apply for the scholarship!

## Webmaster Needed

Our Chapter website is in desperate need of being updated. If you have the skills needed to be a Webmaster, we really could use your help and computer skills. We already have a site on Fat Cow but it has not been updated since 2011. We would like to include photos and bios of our children and use the site to keep our members up-to-date on what is going on in the chapter. This is a great way to do something in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling.

If you are able to help us with this very important project, please call Jodi at 703-656-6999 or email [bleachermom2000@aol.com](mailto:bleachermom2000@aol.com).

## Yankee Candle Fundraiser

BP/USA NOVA Chapter is partnering with Yankee Candle Fundraising. They are the world's #1 candle brand and they offer a wide range of premium candles, fragrances, and décor items at a very wide range of prices. The most important thing to know is that **40% of every sale goes to BP/USA NOVA Chapter!** The prices on the candles and other items are the same prices that you would pay at any retail store. There are a number of beautiful butterfly items in the Spring & Summer Collection!



**Yankee Candle Fundraising offers two ways to shop – catalog and on-line.** We are asking you to help us sell two ways as well – order yourself and contact friends and family to order, too. Yankee Candle products make perfect gifts. Order on-line for Mother's Day delivery!

**Online Shopping:** Visit [www.yankeecandlefundraising.com](http://www.yankeecandlefundraising.com) and enter **Group Number: 990078671** in the "Start Shopping" box. Then shop for catalog items and online exclusives to help raise money for the chapter. To invite friends and family to participate, fill out the "Signup to be a seller" form and use the group number to register. Simple instructions allow you to send informational e-mails to friends and family. Items they order will ship directly to them. The online shopping is currently available and will run through the

**Catalog Shopping:** Online shopping is the easiest but for those who do not do online shopping, a catalog is available. This beautiful full-color catalog provides excellent photographs of the candles, flameless wax warmers and many accents and décor items. Some of the pages have scented circles that you can get rub to release the fragrance! The catalog sale will only run for a 2-week period – June 1-15. Delivery of the ordered products will take 2-4 weeks from the end of the sale period.

Catalog packets will be available to pick up at BP/USA NOVA chapter events and meetings. If you would like me to send you a packet please contact Jodi at 703-910-6277 or email me at [bleachermom2000@aol.com](mailto:bleachermom2000@aol.com).



Bake Sale

## Yard Sale and Bake Sale

May 2, 2015

8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Good Shepherd UMC



As you are doing your Spring Cleaning and come across items that you would like to get rid of, think of us! One person's junk is another person's treasure! All donations are tax deductible and we will be able to give you a receipt for your donation!

We are also in need of people to bake for the Bake Sale. All kinds of goodies are needed – cupcakes, cake pops, pies, brownies, bars, cakes, cheesecake, cookies, muffins, bread – if you can make it we will sell it! Please individually wrap your items or if you plan to sell cakes or pies whole please wrap them well.

We will also be selling our raffle tickets.

Anyone available to help on the day of the Yard & Bake Sale, we can use your help!

Ask your family and friends to help!

Things are needed to help display the items. We can use tables, clothing racks, shelves, tarps, and canopies. If you have any of these items that we can borrow, please contact either Bev or Jodi.

Anyone interested in making signs we could use your creative talents!

We will also be getting together on Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> to sort items to be ready for the sale on Saturday morning. Please let us know if you are available to help out on Friday.

If you have any items to donate please contact Bev Ruane at 703-395-9546 or [bruane01@verizon.com](mailto:bruane01@verizon.com) or Jodi Norman at 703-910-6277 or [bleachermom2000@aol.com](mailto:bleachermom2000@aol.com).

## VACATION *In the Summer Sun*

By Susan Pressler



How many of us remember this early 60s song by Connie Francis? Thinking of summer, this song just popped into my head. Some of us are now enjoying vacations in the summer sun—we have lived in the past and sadness a very long time and have come to realize that life does go on. We understand that our child would want nothing other than our continued happiness and appreciation of every new day. Thinking of vacations early after the death of our child is, we believe almost blasphemous. How can we possibly even think about seeking fun in the sun? We feel we are destined forever to stay home, mired in the muck of our grief and despondency.

Perhaps early on in your grief, forgetting the vacation may not be such a bad idea. There is a lot involved in vacation—from packing (we can't even decide what to wear today—how can we manage to pack for a week?) to the tiniest details. Our minds truly may not be capable of handling any or all of the plans. We are distracted and driving in unfamiliar towns could be unsafe. Traveling in perfect sanity is difficult. Let's not fool ourselves. It requires concentration of the kind we lack in our early grief. It may be better and safer for us to travel to our neighbors' houses and forget about going any further than a mile or two in our own neighborhoods.

Try going to a local park. Bring a comfy lounge chair, sunglasses, a book or music, something cool to drink and some fruit. Go alone—try to get someone to watch your children, if necessary. Kick off your shoes and let the grass wiggle up between your toes (remember what that feels like?) Let yourself relax and drift off into your own reveries. If we must vacation, it does not mean that we love our children any less. We will not betray our love for them by enjoying a few days away from home. Expect to be sad occasionally—it goes with us, wherever we travel but so does the love.

You need not feel guilty (although you probably will) that you are having fun when your child is not with you. Try to welcome the distractions of being away from home. Try to see everything through your child's eyes—with excitement and anticipation. Try to have the fun they would have, even for a short time. And remember, your child lives in glory. Let him/her share their glory with you in the form of peaceful moments, happy memories and delightful days in the summer sun.

## Learning to Live with A BROKEN HEART

By Mel Giniger, LA Chapter, BP USA

*Eleven years ago, on July 29th, 1989, my life changed forever. That was the day my beloved Amanda, my eighteen-year-old daughter, was killed in a car crash. How has her death affected and altered my life?*

*I have learned that there are no guarantees in life. I have learned to appreciate and live each day as though it was my last. I have learned that I can't make bargains with a higher power. I have learned to recognize and separate what is really important from the trivial and unimportant.*

*I have learned that to assign blame or place guilt cannot change events, nor can it help the healing. I have learned how to listen and be sympathetic to people who are hurting. I have learned that having a sense of humor does not keep me from feeling the pain of Amanda's death.*

*I have learned that dealing with the death of a loved one is healthier than not confronting the pain. I have learned that, as a result of this tragedy and the pain I have felt, a new "me" has emerged. I have learned to live with the new "me",*

*I have learned to live with a broken heart.*



## **MAY: The Unusually Difficult Month**

By Bettie-Jeanne Rivard-Darby



For the bereaved parent, May is frequently the cruelest month. The month of May offers the rest of the world a promise of another carefree summer, swimming, family vacations, relaxation, reading, cook-outs and picnics, trips to the lake and so much that is inherent in our culture.

Yet May also brings memories of our children. The common denominator for mothers (and fathers) is Mother's Day. This tradition was wonderful when our children were alive; now the direct mail and newspaper advertising, sentimental television spots, in-store promotions, cards and letters and the count-down to the day itself are very cruel reminders of our lost children. Who will remember us on Mother's Day?

This will be my fourth Mother's Day without my son. I miss him terribly all year long, but May and December are the worst months for me. First we have Mother's Day, then my son's birthday and throughout the month I am bombarded with invitations for high school and college graduations each one reminding me of what once was. My son finishing grade school, high school, college, graduate school. Each was accompanied by a ceremony. All the ceremonies rush into my mind as I realize how much of myself is my memories and those memories are very entwined with my son's life. A big part of me died with him that night in December.

Three years ago I was overwhelmed, sobbing, still occasionally in deep shock. My mind was mush, my heart was crushed and I did not have the will to do much more than quietly weep. It was my first Mother's Day without my son, the first birthday that he wasn't here, the first Memorial Day Weekend without him. I was paralyzed. May would never be joyful for me again. What to do.... what to do. I ask myself this question each April as we begin the ramp up to the longest month.

This year, I am counting out the last days of April and wondering how I will handle it. I am not worried about it; I am just wondering. I have gotten used to the transformation that has taken place in my mind, heart and soul. I experienced a slow spiritual awakening which accompanied a deep, deep sense of loss over which I have no control. I go with it.

There are questions that we must ask ourselves. The answers are unique to us. Collectively we know this is a month to dread; individually we have our own memories and our own methods of coping. Collectively we lean on each other for hope, comfort and support. Individually, we each walk our own road depending on how many circumstances of life are in our month of May: Mother's Day, Memorial Day, birthdays, death anniversaries, graduations, weddings, baptisms, first communions, confirmations, How we handled the beginning of summer, the end of the school year.....all of these events can bombard us in May.

The memories float into our minds like a mist that thickens into a heavy fog. We are enveloped in our fog of memories; the before death years come to us in a hodgepodge of the happiest times and clash with the reality of now. These are our memories, our children and ultimately our choices. And there seems to be little joy we can take from this month of memories.

Once again, we make the decision. If we are not ready to acknowledge Mother's Day, we shouldn't do it. If we are facing other days in May that will tear at our hearts, we must plan for it. Some of us prefer to be alone and isolated. Others of us prefer to be with friends or family. Some of us go to the cemetery, others go to the park. Some read, watch movies, sit on the deck or simply rest. Others take a weekend trip, which puts them into a different state of reality.

There are as many choices as there are parents who have lost their children.

Consider your options.

Be honest with yourself.

Don't be pushed into anything.

Take control.

We each move forward toward hope at a different rate and in a different way. This is not about meeting the expectations of others; this is a personal journey toward peace and hope. It is your journey.

I will always miss my son. I will always feel deep sorrow at his uncompleted life. But I know that he would want me to move forward, move back into the sunshine that is life on this earth. I'm working on it. Be patient with me. This is the most difficult road I have ever walked, but I am in motion, moving mostly forward and seeking something akin to peace, hope and tranquility. I will always be a work in progress.

## 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

Jodi Norman, Leader  
P.O. Box 7675  
Woodbridge, VA 22195  
Phone: 703-910-6277  
[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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Northern Virginia Chapter  
P.O. Box 7675  
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