

ST. LOUIS CHAPTER  
 BEREAVED PARENTS U.S.A.  
 P.O. Box 1115  
 St. Peters, MO 63376

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED  
 POSTMASTER: Dated Material  
 Contained within... please do not delay!

NON-PROFIT ORG  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 ST. LOUIS, MO  
 PERMIT #3659

July • August 2011

St. Louis Chapter Newsletter

# Bereaved Parents USA

*The day the Lord created hope was probably the day he created Spring.*  
 —Bern Williams

July • August 2011



## Golfing for our Angels

*In loving memory of our children*



*If you have moved, please notify us of your new address so you will continue to receive this publication!*

### Bereaved Parents of the USA Credo

**W**e 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 BP/USA to provide a haven where all bereaved families can meet and share our grief journeys. We attend monthly gatherings whenever we can and for as long as we believe necessary. We share our fears, confusions, 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 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 to each other and to every more recently bereaved family. We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA. We welcome you.



#### What:

**Golfing for Our Angels** an annual **BPUSAStL** fund-raiser

#### Where:

**The Golf Club at Wentzville**  
 9 Pro Shop Drive  
 Wentzville, Mo 63385

#### When:

**Saturday, September 24, 2011**  
 1 P.M. Start

#### How:

**2 ways to participate**

*Sponsor* a Hole in your child's name.

*Join/form* a team & **golf!**  
**GFA forms on page 2 & 3**

#### Details Details

#### Details:

Checks payable to: **BP/USA**  
 for info call **314-574-3733**  
**GFA forms on page 2 & 3**

Golfing for Our Angels 2011.....	1
Golf Forms.....	2 & 3
Margaret's Corner .....	8-10
July 4th .....	4
St. Louis Bulletin Board.....	6
StL Board & Facilitators Children .....	7
"The Dragonfly" .....	10
Sibling Page.....	11
Telephone Friends & Calendar .....	12
Toddler & Infant .....	13
Love Gifts.....	14
Meeting Times and Places .....	15

# Golfing for Angels

In loving memory of our children

Saturday Sept. 24th 2011



## The Golf Club at Wentzville

9 Pro Shop Drive Wentzville Mo 63385

1:00 P.M. Shot Gun Start

4 Person Scramble

Entry Fee \$ 360.00 per team

or \$ 90.00 per person

(individual will be placed in a foursome)

Limited to the first 36 teams – First Place in 3 Flights

Tournament includes: golf, cart, supper and beverages, closest to pin on three par 3's, long drive men and women and attendance prizes.

## \$ 20,000.00 Hole-in-One

Optional Skins Game and Mulligans

Call (314) 574-3733 For inquiries

### Team Entry Form

Make checks payable to: **BP USA** TaxId #43-1744852

Mail Checks and Team Entry Forms to: **BP USA**

Please have entries in by **Sept 16 th** PO Box 1115

We will take late sign ups day of the tournament as space allows.

St Peters Mo 63376

Player Name	Address	Phone	E-mail
-------------	---------	-------	--------

1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____

The Bereaved Parents of the USA (BP/USA) is a National Organization designed to support parents and their families who are struggling to survive their grief after the death of a child. Most families feel a need, after they have endured this most devastating life crisis, to have some order restored to their lives. BP/USA provides an atmosphere where personal change, growth and a positive resolution of grief can occur. Your support of this event will allow us to continue to provide:

- 65 chapters throughout the United States
- 50,000 newsletters sent annually
- Self-funding /self supporting
- An all-volunteer organization
- local website - bpusastl.org
- Over 10,000 parents visit our website each month
- Weekly meetings conducted by volunteer facilitators
- Telephone hotline provided (314-878-0890)
- Holiday candlelight in Memory of our Children
- National Website - bereavedparentsusa.org

## Meeting Times & Places

### BOWLING GREEN Group

(3rd Thursday, 7-9 PM)  
Prairie Edge Garden Center,  
18011 Business 161 S.  
Bowling Green, MO 63334  
**Fac:** Bill & Vicki Lagemann  
(573)242-3632

### Bowling Green's Sibling GROUP

(Meet time same as Bowling Green)  
**Fac:** Wendy Koch (573)822-6123

### ST. PETERS /St Charles Group

(1st Thursday, 7:00 PM)  
Knights of Columbus Hall  
5701 Hwy N, Cottleville MO  
**Fac:** Mike & Jeanne Francisco  
(636) 947-9403

### St. Peters' SIBLING GROUP

**Fac:** Nikki Boswell  
nichole.boswell@gmail.com  
(Meets same time as St Peters)

### TROY, MO Group

(2nd Tuesday, 7 PM)  
Ingersoll Chapel in Troy  
**Fac:** Cindy Morris (636)462-9961

### Tri-County Chapter

(2nd Thursday)  
First Baptist Church  
402 North Missouri St  
Potosi, MO 63664  
**Fac:** Brenda Wilson (573)438-4559

### JEFFERSON COUNTY Group

(1st Thursday, 7 PM)  
St Rose Catholic Church,  
Miller & 3rd St  
Desoto, MO  
**Fac:** Ginny Kamp (636)586-8559

### WEST COUNTY Group

(4th Tuesday, 7 PM)  
Shaare Emeth Congregation,  
11645 Ladue (Ballas & Ladue)  
St. Louis MO 63141  
**Facs:** Judy Ruby (314)994-1996  
Arlene Thomason (314) 401-2510

### NORTH COUNTY Group

(3rd Saturday, 9:30 AM)  
Coldwell Banker  
Gundaker Bldg (rear)  
2402 North Hwy 67  
Florissant, MO  
**Fac:** Pat Ryan (314)605-3949

Volunteer interpreter for hearing impaired, call ahead!

### CRESTWOOD Group

(2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00PM)  
Chads Coalition Building  
(Formerly Montgomery Bank)  
180 Crestwood Plaza,  
(9200 Watson Rd.)  
St. Louis, Mo. 63126

**Fac:** Sandy Curran (314)518-2302  
**skc4pets@gmail.com**

### SO. COUNTY Fenton Group

(2nd & 4th Monday, 7 PM)  
Abiding Savior Lutheran Church  
4355 Butler Hill Rd.  
St. Louis, Mo 63128  
**Fac:** Kathy Myers (636)343-5262  
Co: Darla McGuire (636)671-0916

### So County Sibling Group

**Fac:** Stephanie Dunn

### A WARM, WELCOME TO NEWCOMERS

We understand how difficult it is to attend your first meeting. Feelings can be overwhelming; we have all experienced them and know how important it is to take that first step.

Our stories may be different, but we are alike in that we all hurt deeply. We cannot take your pain away, but we can offer friendship and support. Bring a friend or relative to lean on if you wish. ■

### BPUSA StL Chapter's

Business • Facilitators  
Meetings: July 9<sup>th</sup> & August 13<sup>th</sup>  
Saturday @ 9:00 AM  
BJC Hospital - St. Peters  
10 Hospital Drive  
Room A/B  
St. Peters, MO 63376

All interested in how our chapter operates are welcomed! **Questions?**

**Call:** Cindy Morris  
(636) 462-9961

### ADDITIONAL MEETINGS

#### Parents of Murdered Children:

Meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues 7:30 p.m.  
St Alexius Hospital  
3933 S Broadway  
Mata Weber (618) 972-0429  
Butch Hartmann  
(314) 487-8989

#### LIFE CRISIS CENTER:

(Survivors of Suicide)  
2650 Olive St,  
St. Louis, MO 63103  
Meetings: Weds 7:00 p.m.  
(314) 647-3100

#### P.A.L.S. (Parents affected by the loss of a child by suicide)

Meetings:  
4<sup>th</sup> Sat at 10:30 a.m.  
St Lukes Hospital (141 & 40)  
St. Louis, MO  
Linda Ferhmann  
(314) 853-7925  
Survivors of Suicide  
Baue Funeral Home  
620 Jefferson St, St Charles,  
Mo 63301  
Meets: 1st & 3rd Monday  
Linda Ferhmann  
(314) 853-7925



*In Memory of*  
**Sharon Rene Przybylski**  
*Love Dad, Nancy, & Kristy*



*In Memory of*  
**Jason Matthew Snyder**  
March 27, 1986– June 1, 2006  
*Always in our hearts. Love, Mom, Dad, Lonny & Laura*



*In Memory of*  
**Ronnie Zykan**  
*Love, Mom*  
—Mary Zykan

*love gifts, donations received*

**BPUSAStL**  
*acknowledges donations made*  
— Sharon Delaloye  
— Courtney Lehmann



*In Memory Of*  
**Jennifer Ameli Daugherty**  
*Love Mom, Dad*



*In Memory of*  
**Jorge Tumialan**  
August 11, 1975—  
October 18, 2001  
*We love & miss you Mami & Papi*



*In Memory of*  
**Raymond Reis**  
January 8, 1991— November 21, 2007  
*Love Mom* —Cathy Reis

**What Is A Love Gift?** A love gift is a **TAX DEDUCTIBLE** donation made in your child's memory to **BPUSAStL**. We are a self-supporting organization that runs entirely with a volunteer staff. For that reason, fundraising efforts and tax deductible donations like Love Gifts, Golfing for Angels, Web Sponsorship, Web Memorials, and other events pay all of our expenses.

If you'd like to have your child's photo printed and do not have a picture on file, please send a photo along with a self addressed stamped envelope to:  
**BPUSAStL, Lovegift, PO BOX 1115 St. Louis, MO 63376**  
Make checks payable to **BPUSAStL**.

# Golfing for Angels

*In loving memory of our children*

**Saturday Sept 24, 1:00 pm start**



**The Golf Club at Wentzville**  
9 Pro Shop Drive Wentzville Mo 63385

The Bereaved Parents of the USA (BP/USA) is a National Organization designed to support parents and their families who are struggling to survive their grief after the death of a child. Most families feel a need, after they have endured this most devastating life crisis, to have some order restored to their lives. BP/USA provides an atmosphere where personal change, growth and a positive resolution of grief can occur. Your support of this event will allow us to continue to provide:

- Gold Sponsorship - \$ 1200.00**  
*Includes four golfers, recognition on the banner and on all dining tables*
- Silver Sponsorship - \$ 1000.00**  
*Includes four golfers, recognition on the banner and on all refreshment golf carts.*
- Bronze Sponsorship - \$ 800.00**  
*Includes two golfers, recognition on the banner and three hole sponsor signs.*
- \$ 20000.00 hole in one sponsor \$ 400.00**  
*Includes ,recognition on the banner and large 24x36 sign at \$ 20,000.00 hole.*
- I am unable to participate, but would like to make a donation of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_*
- I would like \_\_\_\_\_ # dinners only @ \$20 each*
- I would like to donate goods/services.*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 65 chapters throughout the United States
- 50,000 newsletters sent annually
- Self-funding /self supporting
- An all-volunteer organization
- local website - bpusastl.org
- Over 10,000 parents visit our website each month
- Weekly meetings conducted by volunteer facilitators
- Telephone hotline provided (314-878-0890)
- Holiday candlelight in Memory of our Children
- National Website - bereavedparentsusa.org

**Yes, I would like to sponsor a hole at \$75.00**  
*-we can put your child's picture or your company information on your sign. All we need is a photo, your business card, or company logo.-*

## Golfing for Angels

*In loving memory of our children*

**Brian Gregory Klocke**  
**B- we miss you so much!!**  
**Who needs wheels when you can have wings.**



Love Mom, Dad, Rob, Jessie and your baby Alyssa

*You get a 18x24 sign in full color.*  
*Email your photos or logos to gklocke@att.net*

*Your sign to read: \_\_\_\_\_*  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to BP USA and send to:**  
**Tax Id #43-1744852** BP USA  
PO Box 1115  
St Peters Mo.  
63376

*For information or donation pick up call:*  
**Greg Klocke @ 314-574-3733**



## Fireworks are Like the Love in our Hearts

—Jane Oja, TCF, Central Oregon Chapter

July brings Central Oregonians lingering blue skies, lazy afternoons and the Fourth of July celebration, complete with the grand fireworks finale bolting from the top of Pilot Butte. This was one of my son's favorite holidays. When he was six I asked him why fireworks were so special to him. He said, "The lights explode in the dark and make the whole

sky light up!" That was obvious. I said "Hum?" He gave me one of his "Oh mom" looks, then went on to say, "The fireworks are like the love in our hearts, we should always try to spread our love out to others." I knew then and I still am aware today that profound wisdom comes from the lips of our children. From that summer on, in my mind, fireworks have been a triumphant testament of love's enduring power and wonder. I miss my son, Joshua terribly. I comfort myself knowing that his wisdom and kindness were precious gifts in my life.

Wherever you are on the Fourth of July, I hope that the splendor of sparkling fireworks might comfort as you acknowledge that the love you hold dear for your child is the light that is able to shine through you. We all have known grief well, yet as compassionate friends we need not walk alone in the darkness. We can lighten the path for others. ■

### JULY'S CHILD

Fireworks race toward heaven brilliant colors in the sky. Their splendor ends in seconds on this evening in July, "Her birthday is this Saturday," I whisper with a sigh, She was born this month, she loved this month and she chose this month to die. Like the bright and beautiful fireworks glowing briefly in the dark they are gone too soon, and so was she—having been, and left her mark. A glorious incandescent life, a catalyst, a spark... Her being gently fit my path and softened all things stark. The July birth, the July death of my happy summer child marked a life too brief that ended without rancor, without guile. Like the fireworks that leave images on unprotected eyes. Her lustrous life engraved my heart with love that never dies. ■ —Sally Migliaccia, TCF LI, for Tracey Lvnne

## The Fourth of July

—Karen Lynch, 2010 TCF South Bay, CA

The Fourth of July is now spent without you, this favorite day is now only dark and blue.

The day with picnics has only clouds and rain No sun will shine to ease this pain.

The BBQ sits abandoned and cold No longer used for your treats of old.

No swimming, no baseball, no games do we play. No ice cream or watermelon makes pain go away.

The fireworks display does not seem as bright The colors are dull and give off no light.

This is the part of the day that you loved most, With star bursts and rockets that flew higher than the rest.

The Fourth of July, this party each year Is now just a day, this has become so very clear.

It gives me no joy without you here. Your holiday of choice—we miss you my dear. ■

## A Daddy's Love

You will always live in your daddy's heart, and he will always hold you there.

In his eyes there will always be a tear, but in his eyes you will be there.

His hand will always remember the last time your tiny hand was in his.

His arms will always ache from when he held you last now only filled with emptiness.

Your daddy's heart will never forget his little girl. ■

—Author unknown

Reprinted from: BPUSA Anne Arundel Co MD



## Infant & Toddler Page

Parade Magazine, June 11, 2006 —

Keanu Reeve's daughter was stillborn in 1998 and the "love of his life" the baby's mother died instantly in a car accident in 2001.

This is an excerpt of the article:

*Bolstered by success onscreen, actor Keanu Reeves is determined to find joy.*

## I Don't Want To Flee From Life

—Dotson Rader

"Grief changes shape, but it never ends. People have a misconception that you can deal with it and say, 'It's gone, and I'm better.' They're wrong. When the people you love are gone, you're alone. I miss being part of their lives and them being part of mine. I wonder what the present would be like if they were here—what we might have done together. I miss all the great things that will never be. Damn it! It's not fair! It's absurd.

All you can do is hope that grief will be transformed and instead of feeling pain and confusion, you will be together again in memory, that there will be solace and pleasure there, not just loss."

When asked if loss had changed him, he replied,

"Much of my appreciation of life has come through loss. Life is precious. It's worthwhile."

Reprinted from BPUSA Tampa Bay FL 2006

"Grief changes shape,  
but it never ends."

—Keanu Reeve

In the rising of the sun  
and its going down,  
we remember them.

In the blowing of the wind  
and in the chill of winter,  
we remember them.

In the opening buds  
and in the rebirth of spring,  
we remember them.

In the rustling of leaves  
and in the beauty of autumn,  
we remember them.

In the beginning of the year  
and when it ends, we remember them.

When we are weary  
and in need of strength,  
we remember them.

When we are lost  
and sick at heart,  
we remember them.

So long as we live, they too shall live,  
for they are now a part of us, as  
we remember them.

—Hebrew Union Prayer Book



## Telephone Friends

### BPUSA StL:

Linda Ferhmann ..... (314) 878-0890

### Accident, Automobile:

Katie VerHagen ..... (314) 576-5018

### Accident, Non Vehicular:

Bill Lagemann ..... (573) 242-3632

### Adult Sibling:

Mark VerHagen ..... (314) 726-5300

### Drugs or Alcohol:

Patrick Dodd ..... (314) 575-4178

### Grandparent:

Margaret Gerner ..... (636) 978-2368

### Child with Disability:

Lois Brockmeyer ..... (314) 843-8391

### Illness, Short Term:

Jean & Art Taylor ..... (314) 725-2412

### Illinois Contact:

BPUSA StL is looking for a volunteer

### Jefferson County Contact:

Sandy Brungardt ..... (314) 954-2410

### Murder:

Mata Weber ..... (618) 972-0429

Butch Hartmann ..... (314) 487-8989

### Only Child:

Mary Murphy ..... (314) 822-7448

### Suicide:

Sandy Curran ..... (314) 518-2302

### Single Parent:

Mary Murphy ..... (314) 822-7448

## GRIEF AND VACATION TIME

—Elizabeth B. Estes TCF, Augusta, GA

Vacation time, like holidays, can be especially painful for bereaved parents. Caught up with normal demands of making a living or keeping a household going, we have less time to think than we do on vacations, especially the “take it easy” kind at a hideaway tucked away somewhere.

In the summers following Tricia’s death, I found vacations could bring a special kind of pain. We avoided going to locales where we had vacationed with her at one time, I thought Williamsburg might be off my list forever since we had an especially happy holiday there with her and her younger sister. I tried it one summer three years later and found that she walked the cobbled streets with me. Now that nine years have elapsed and the searing pain has eased, maybe I can let the happy memories we shared in Williamsburg heighten the pleasure of another visit there.

For the first few years after Tricia’s death, we found fast-paced vacations to be best at places we had never been before. The sheer stimulation of new experiences in new places with new people refreshed us and sent us home more ready to pick up our grief work. That is not to say when we did something or saw something that Tricia would have particularly enjoyed, we didn’t mention her.

I tried it one summer three years later and found that she walked the cobbled streets with me.

We did, but it seemed less painful than at home. One caution: do allow enough time for sleep. Otherwise, an exhausted body will depress you. Charles and I have found that an occasional separate vacation (or weekend) is helpful. This, too, is an opportunity to change our stride, to experience the world a little differently. One experimentation with this may have stemmed from a reevaluation of priorities. Life is too short to miss a trip associated with a special interest. A writer’s workshop that might bore Charles is no longer off limits to me, anymore than his going alone to a postal convention. Allow yourself space since you are not grieving at the same rate. When I go by myself, I take only my memories, not his and mine, and any response to them is different. I have often found this helps straighten out my thinking.



We’ve said it a hundred times: you have to find your own way, your own peace. Let vacation time be another try at that, but do give yourself a break in choosing the time and locale where that can be accomplished. Don’t be afraid of change; it helps with your reevaluation of life. ■

## Recovery

I walked the lonely road through grief in anguish and despair, and learned to face realities I thought I couldn’t bear.

Some pieces of my heart and soul were lost when I lost you, but now I’ve grown a different self that time has helped renew.

I’ve kept the sweetest memories and let the heartache go, your life is lived through my life now.

It’s love that makes it so. ■

*Shirley Grant, TCF, Needham, MA*

# St. Louis Bulletin Board

## WWW Honor your Child Support **BPUSAStL**

The St. Louis Chapter of BPUSA offers three ways to honor your child while supporting the good works of **BPUSAStL**

- 1. Sponsor our webpage:** To sponsor the St. Louis Chapter website and place your child's picture on the Home page with information announcing the special day and link to your child's virtual memorial page.
- 2. Include your child in our Virtual Memorial:** To add your child's picture and a one page story in our Virtual Memorial in our Meet Our Children web area
- 3. Honor your child in our newsletter:** If you would like to have your child's picture in the next issue, please contact our newsletter editor [email] for further details.

## Corrections

Please notify  
us of  
ommissions  
or  
mistakes!

*Part of **BPUSAStL's** commitment is to be a space where our parents and families can communicate. Printed in your newsletter are private expressions of writers. We offer their writings only for your reflection. Sometimes observing nature or establishing routines signal solace to the writer. Often they turn to religion or spirituality for comfort and guidance. **BPUSAStL** shares these insights not only for your contemplation but also to acknowledge our community's many, rich sources for strength and hope. ■*

## Newsletter Submissions

### Cut off date for

September October

Newsletter

**August 9th**

Send your submission to:

Newsletter

PO BOX 1115

St. Peters, MO 63376

If sending picturer include

a self addressed

stamped envelope

and make checks payable

to **BPUSAStL**

Thankyou!

See You There!



# Sibling Page

**MAD,  
SAD,  
BAD...  
GLAD??**

**A**t the recent TCF Victoria Residential Weekend, Claire Kuhnell facilitated a workshop entitled "Siblings: The Forgotten Mourners". In introducing the subject, Claire (who is group leader of the Canterbury Siblings Group) read out some literature from the book, *Sibling Grief: Healing after the Death of a Sister or Brother* (2006, Universe, Inc.). Written by P. Gill White, the book includes a section on categories of feelings that are commonly experienced by adults, adolescents and children after the death of a sibling. While we workshop attendees could understand the categories of mad, sad, and bad we were a little mystified by the category, **glad**. *Glad* for what exactly?

Well, in looking at some of associated feelings with **glad**, the category soon made a little more sense. Overall the feeling categories seem very comprehensive, and reveal the variety of levels grief can be experienced on. They certainly inspired discussion...

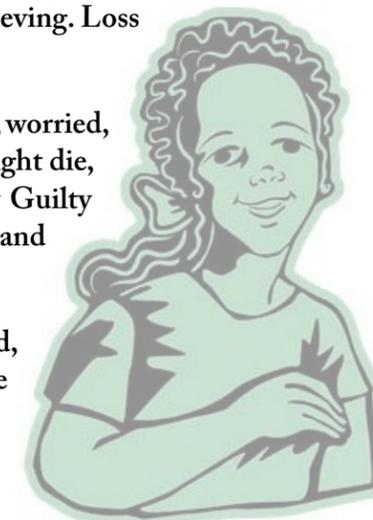
**MAD:** includes angry, bitter, ripped off, outraged, annoyed, furious, resentful, disappointed, frustrated, enraged, fed up, irritated, defensive, sarcastic. Feelings not being acknowledged Feeling different from peers Being over protected

**SAD:** includes grief-stricken, regretful, remorseful, hurt, empty, hopeless, lonely, upset, unloved, rejected, worthless, tearful, needy, forgotten, broken hearted Loss of companionship and a future with their sibling Loss of the parents while they were grieving. Loss of innocence or identity

**BAD:** anxiety and guilt, ashamed, anxious, frightened, torn, disturbed, worried, tense, dissatisfied, troubled, responsible... Fear that someone else might die, or you might die the same way Fear of change Fear of going crazy Guilty about something you said to your sibling guilt of going on with life and fear of forgetting your sibling

**GLAD:** Peaceful, happy, connected, inspired, relieved, serene, loved, Feeling loved and supported by family and friends Appreciating life and relationships more fully Feeling connected to our sibling ■

*Lovingly lifted from the December 2010/January 2011 issue of Brothers and Sisters, an arm of TCF Victoria*



# Margaret's CORNER

Margaret Gerner, MSW

## Anger

### Anger

Anger is a normal human emotion. It is as normal as sadness, fear, joy, or laughter. But in our society any display of negative emotion, especially anger, is unacceptable. Most of us suppress anger, or try to. Sometimes we become so good at suppressing anger that we no longer recognize anger in ourselves.

Some years ago, Theodore Isaac Rubin, M.D., wrote a book called *THE ANGRY BOOK*. (I don't know if it is still in print) In his book he discusses at length, why we suppress anger and the effect of this on us physically and mentally. Dr. Ruben says: "So many of us are afraid to feel, afraid to express feelings, and afraid to have other people angry towards us. ... We can allow only so-called acceptable feelings to come through and then only with great care, constriction and trepidation."

Dr. Ruben calls the ways in which we suppress the normal, natural free feel and flow of anger "perversions". Some of these "perversions" are: "Putting it Down", "Putting it off", "Putting it on", and "Diluting it".

"Putting It Down" is the result of many years of practice. The person is completely unaware that she has had a feeling of anger at all

A typical statement by one who automatically down her anger is: "Oh, I never get angry."

In the perversion of "Putting It Off" the idea is that if you delay anger long enough maybe it will go away. The person consciously or unconsciously delays feeling anger and responding to it until the time comes when it will be safer to feel and to express it. A typical statement of this type of person is: "Why don't I think of the right thing to say until it's too late?"

"Putting It On" is the type of perversion that allows us, most of the time unconsciously, to remove anger towards ourselves, another person or event, that we are angry with, and place that anger on a person or event that is less threatening.

In "Diluting It" the anger is usually felt, but every kind of intellectual rationalization is used to render impotent. Examples of dilutions are: "He must be sick." "I know he can't help it, so I can't get angry with him." or "I just do something else and the feelings go away."

Though some of us use one perversion more than another, we all combine them to some extent,

as the various perversions are not mutually exclusive. Dr. Ruben tells us that: "Perverted anger twisted into grotesque forms must eventually poison one's self as well as one's relationships with others." This is especially true for the grieving people. It is necessary to look at our own conscious anger at the death of our loved one and see how we have handled it. This anger, if it is suppressed can be the unknown stumbling block that will prevent us from healthy recovery. It is important that each of us look carefully at the progress of our grief to see what we are doing with our anger. We need to look at the very good possibility of suppressed anger.

My own "perversion" of anger led me to write a very kind and forgiving note three days after my son's death to the woman who ran over and killed him. I did not feel anger towards this woman, but for years I had an irrational, but intense anger towards my sister in another state who had a son just the same age as Arthur. I strongly believe that my husband's leaving the scene of Arthur's death to change clothes and not being there with me when I needed him so badly, was the beginning of a deep unconscious anger towards him that ultimately led to the end of our marriage.

A mother whose faith had been very strong before her child died, became obsessed with her religion afterwards. She constantly ran to church. It was not hard to see ▶



Emily & Arthur Gerner

▶ that she was angry with God for taking her daughter, but since she did not feel she could possibly be angry with God, she had to prove to herself and to others that she was not angry with Him by running to church all the time.

These are but two examples of how we twist our anger towards ourselves or someone else in order to make the anger acceptable. But in doing this we delay or even halt our recovery.

Through unexpressed anger, or inappropriately expressed anger vented on those we love we can destroy our marriage or emotionally cripple our children.

Many of us think that any show of anger is the same as violent temper tantrums. This is not true. Anger displays can be very mild to powerful expressions, and all levels in between. In reality, it is only the anger fed by the build up of tensions and buried angers that lead to uncontrolled explosions.

Dr. Ruben tells us that there is a difference between feeling angry, recognizing it and telling someone else about it, and taking it out on others. He says that the most important thing is to know and accept angry feelings. It is only after we accept angry feelings without judgment as to whether they are "good" or "bad", plus the ability to express the anger, will we then be able to make a choice regarding the expression of that anger.

Recognizing suppressed anger involving the death of our loved one, towards others or ourselves is important. If we continue to suppress our anger involving our love's death, not only will we not be able to successfully resolve our grief, but also it can manifest itself in physical, mental or emotional illness. (Most people do not recognize that depression is anger that we turn in on ourselves.)

The first step in the process of ridding ourselves of anger is awareness that we are angry, and at what or whom. The next is to ask ourselves if we can do anything to let the other know of our anger. Then we need to vent our anger. The best way to do that is



Anger

Turn the shower on full blast and scream out your anger, or drive carefully to a remote place where you can roll up the windows in your car and beat the steering wheel and scream at the top of your lungs.

to tell ourselves or the other that we feel angry with them. Remember—healthy anger does not hurt or become violent. It is only suppressed anger that gets out of control.

Remember also that good relationships such as with a spouse or another family member will not be ruined by constructive anger that clears the air. If we did not care for them we would be indifferent to them and

would not waste the energy that anger takes. If we feel we cannot tell someone face to face of our anger, another way is to write that person a letter, saying all the angry things we feel. Put it away for a month. Take it out and reread it, then put it away again. Keep doing this until you feel less and less anger at each reading. Then tear it up and throw it away. What you have done, even though you have not directly confronted the individual with your anger, is to have expressed your anger and gotten it out.

Whether we will admit it or not, for some of us it is unthinkable to be angry with God. Why? We may think it is disrespectful. Others of us may be fearful of what God will do to us. God knows we are angry with Him anyway, so why not tell Him. He can take it.

Not only that, my being angry with Him and telling Him so is an affirmation that I have a relationship with Him. If this is a problem for you talk with a clergy person about it. I am sure that he or she will tell you that it is quite acceptable

There are valid reasons why we feel anger in our grief. We may be angry with ourselves because we regret what we did or did not do for our loved one. Sometimes we are angry at the unfairness of our love's death. Another valid reason for anger is the powerlessness we feel. There are many reasons for our anger that are justified and right. The important point is to recognize and express it rather than let it consume and destroy us, as it surely will.

All of us are familiar with the physical energy and tension that we experience when we are angry. A practical suggestion for dealing with that energy and

continued on 10 ▶

# THE DRAGONFLY

Once in a little pond, in the muddy water under the lily pads, there lived a little water beetle in a community of water beetles. They lived a simple and comfortable life in the pond with few disturbances and interruptions.



Once in a while, sadness would come to the community when one of their fellow beetles would climb the stem of a lily pad and would never be seen again. They knew when this happened, their friend was dead, gone forever.

Then, one day, one little water beetle felt an irresistible urge to climb up that stem. However, he was determined that he would not leave forever. He would come back and tell his friends what he had found at the top.

When he reached the top and climbed out of the water onto the surface of the lily pad, he was so tired, and the sun felt so warm, that he decided he must take a nap. As he slept, his body changed and when he woke up, he had turned into a beautiful blue-billed dragonfly with broad wings and a slender body designed for flying. So, fly he did! And, as he soared he saw the beauty of a whole new world and a far superior way of life to what he had never known existed.

Then he remembered his beetle friends and how they were thinking by now he was dead. He wanted to go back to tell them, and explain to them that he was now more alive than he had ever been before. His life had been fulfilled rather than ended.

But, his new body would not go down into the water. He could not get back to tell his friends the good news. Then he understood that their time would come, when they too would know what he now knew. So, he raised his wings and flew off into his joyous new life! ■

**Anger** *continued from 9* ▶ tension is to physically expend it. Some ways to do that is through strong physical action such as jogging or running. Punching a punching bag or pillow is helpful. Turn the shower on full blast and scream out your anger, or drive carefully to a remote place where you can roll up the windows in your car and beat the steering wheel and scream at the top of your lungs. Buy some old dishes at a garage sale. Throwing them, one at a time, at a basement or garage wall will expend a lot of energy. However you do it, it is important to release the pent up anger. Don't worry about losing control. You won't. Even the most "in control" person will again be in control after the energy has been spent. You will feel exhausted and relieved.

Try a daily release in order to avoid a build up of anger and its resultant stress. Exercising regularly is one way of doing that. Another way, and one I find especially effective, is to write daily in a journal. This way you can write out all your feelings and direct your anger to whomever you feel anger towards.

For some, putting anger into positive action is very helpful. Parents of murdered children can do this by working for changes in the legal system or for victims of crimes. Working for stiffer drunk driving laws can be another way. There is much to be done or changed in our society. Take the energy of your anger and put it to good use.

After the anger is vented and released there is only one thing that will put the matter to rest—**FORGIVENESS**. Yes, we must forgive ourselves, we must forgive our spouse, or the doctor or others we believe are involved in our loved one's death. In some cases, we must even forgive the *continued on 7* ▶

## Anger *continued from 10* ▼

deceased herself. (I do not know if we can say we "forgive" God. Each of us has to work out our ideas about that.)

Grief is not easy to resolve. Of the many manifestations of grief, anger is one of the most difficult to deal with, but it must be worked through if healthy resolution is to be arrived at.

It takes time and work. Be patient with yourself, but keep plugging away and eventually you will work through your anger—and ultimately, your grief. ■

—Margaret H. Gerner, MSW

## Children of BPUSASTL's Board Members & Facilitators

Michael A. Maixner  
son of  
Bob Maixner



Michael Yackly  
son of  
Victoria Kellison

Jennifer Francisco  
daughter of  
Jeanne & Mike  
Francisco



Brian Klocke  
son of Greg Klocke

Donnie Lagemann  
son of  
Bill & Vicki  
Lagemann



Jeffrey Morris  
son of Cindy Morris

Jeff Ryan  
son of Pat Ryan



Leah Eisenberg  
daughter of  
Jamie Ryan

Brett Alan Blanton  
son of Barb Blanton



Ryan Arnold  
son of  
Donna Arnold

Joel Fehrman  
son of  
Linda Fehrman



Brian Ruby  
son of Judy Ruby



Michael & Kristen  
son &  
daughter in-law  
of Sandy Curran



Daniel Kohler  
son of  
Arlene Thompson