

Chapter Newsletter—BPUSA-St. Louis

Bereaved Parents of the USA

MAY-JUN 2022

VOLUME 45 - NUMBER 3

**WE MISS
YOU**

INSIDE

PAGE

Love Gifts—Thank you	2-3
I Understand Poem-by Lorna Korte	4
July 2022 BPUSA Gathering	5
I Am More	6-7
Time to “spring clean” your grief	8
A newsletter for teens and adolescents	9
Mother’s Day	10
Father’s Day	11
Dear Uncomfortable	12
Meeting Schedules	13
Telephone Friends	14
BPUSASTL Board Representation	15

I used to spend day's thinking about your birthday.
What presents to buy, what meal to make.
Now I spend weeks trying to figure out how to spend the day
without you.
Balloons in the air, lanterns in the night sky, pictures shared on
Facebook.
Perhaps listening to your favorite music and remembering...you.
I will sit quietly, and I will hold you close to my heart.
I will smile and I will cry.
My smile will be for all the joy you brought into my life.
The tears will be for you, because you're gone and I miss you.

Lorna Korte
Eric's mom

I will always
wonder who
you would
have been.



In Loving Memory of
Eric Korte

Thank you
for your
love gifts.



In Loving Memory of
Julie Ann Bardle

Julie, forever 32. Happy earth birth-
day. We miss your giggles and your
hugs. I love you tons and tons!

Love, Mom & your sister Janet

*Another Spring comes around,
new birth, new life
appears from the ground.*

*And aren't we excitedly set
after the boldness of winter
to soak up as much sun as we can get.*

*New season, new hope,
do we dare
to find a reason to help us cope.*

*We are so vulnerable,
but do we dare
accept that we could be "comfortable..."*

*In the knowledge
that life just transforms
and always goes on.*



Rosie Umhoefer

Poem by Rosie's mom
Rosann Umhoefer

**Thank you
for your love gift**



I UNDERSTAND

You're afraid.
It's okay.
I understand.
I am a reminder of the worst thing that can happen.
Your child can die.
My child did die.
It terrifies you so you avoid me.
Even the slightest eye contact makes you uncomfortable.
After all, it could invite me to talk about my son.
That would be too hard.
For you that is.
For me it would be such a gift.
There are still traces of his life to be shared.
Stories to tell and stories to hear.
He left so many beautiful memories behind.
I cherish those now.
That's how he remains with me.
That's how I survive.
After all, death is real.
His death is real.
It can happen.
It has happened.
To me...
Not to you.
Try not to be afraid.

Written By:
Lorna Korte, Eric's mom
BPUSAStL



In Loving Memory of
Eric Korte





Bereaved Parents of the USA

27th Annual Gathering Conference

JULY 22-24 ♥ ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

NATIONAL GATHERING 2022



Le Méridien St. Louis Clayton Hotel
7730 Bonhomme Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63105

Questions? Contact:
Barbara Dietrich, BPUSA Gathering Coordinator
e-mail: bpusagatheringcoordinator@gmail.com

BPUSA Website:
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Announcing Our Keynote Speakers

Beth D'Angelo ♥ Diane Bergeron ♥ Crystal Webster ♥ Angela Kennecke



Please join us at Le Méridien St. Louis Clayton Hotel July 22-24, 2022, for a weekend of hope, healing and support as we remember our children, siblings and grandchildren together.

There are no words for the loss of a child, a sibling, a grandchild... just Before and After.

Our annual Gathering Conference is designed to help bereaved parents and their families understand that they are not alone in their grief. There are two full days of keynote speakers, workshops, meals together, entertainment, and memorial ceremonies plus a closing ceremony on Sunday morning. Attendees come away better informed about the grieving process, more aware of hope and promise, and affirmed by meeting new friends who travel the same path. *Detailed information and registration is available on our website www.bereavedparentsusa.org/annual-conference/annual-gathering-conference.* Although not a requirement to attend the conference, the Le Méridien St. Louis Clayton Hotel is offering a special \$129 rate per room for 1-4 occupants if booked by June 15, using the hotel link from the BPUSA website.

REGISTRATION:

- Adult (18 and up) – Early Registration is \$75 by June 1st and \$95 after June 1st
- Full-time student/Active Military (ID required at check-in) – \$50

I AM MORE by Lexi Behrndt

You are not the struggles you have faced.

At least, that's what I've been trying to discover and teach my own heart. I am not the things I've seen, the things that have happened to me, the scars I wear. Trauma and loss and grief are such complex beasts that while I've experienced them, I am not going to even pretend to understand them. Our hearts weren't made to be splayed open, but they sometimes are, and it's our job to figure out how to carry our stories, bruises and breaks and all.



What I've learned is simple. No matter how many awkward conversations I've had, how many times I've had to share about myself with a new person, and I stumble around the conversation. No matter how many people may view me differently, no matter how differently I may view myself, the truth is this: I am more than all of that. I am more than the suffering, the grief, the pain. I am more than any circumstance. I am not defined by my struggle, though I am certainly shaped by it.

To free myself, I needed to learn that I am not those things.

I am not the pain I carry.

I am not the suffering I've endured.

I am not the shame that I feel sometimes at having a life that doesn't fit neatly in the lines.

I am not bitterness, anger, or woundedness — those things I'm currently healing from.

I am not the girl who X, Y, or Z. (Fill in the blank with any experience.)

I am not the strength it has taken me to get here.

I am not the seconds, minutes, hours, days, or years I've endured pain.

I am not my mistakes, my failures, or my shortcomings.

[The list could keep going.]

Why am I sharing this? Why is there a need to? Because I'm not the only one who forgets there is a heart behind the scars. I'm not the only one who is navigating the muck to free my heart from all the layers. I'm not the only one.

Last week, I spoke at a retreat with others who also had a child die. Every time I show up to speak somewhere, it never fails— my own inadequacy always hits because hello — I am not someone who has special knowledge or who understands life or who really knows what she is doing. So, I did the only thing

I AM MORE, continued from page 6

I could do — I shared my heart and I asked them to share theirs. We talked about identity. We talked about healing. We talked about dreaming and growing and purpose in life.

It's an awkward thing, navigating life when yours has been turned upside down, rediscovering who you are in the midst of it all, dreaming again and realizing that you have purpose even through the pain.

When we shared about our hoping and dreaming and wishing again, I was finally able to put into words this transformation that has happened in the midst of healing.

**I am not defined by my struggles. (I have to remind myself of this sometimes daily.)
I am also not defined by my goals, my accomplishments, or any other fleeting thing.**

My dream is this and the woman I want to be is this: a woman who, in whatever she does, is not marked by her scars, any bitterness or anger or pain, but who is marked by love, by grace, by deep, steady joy, no matter the circumstance.

I don't want to know myself as my struggles. I don't want others to know me as that either. I want them to know me and see a heart that loves deeply and purely, wherever it's at, whatever it's doing, in big ways and small.

I am not the struggles I have faced.

I am not a broken story.

I am marked by love, the love I've received from God, the love I have for the ones I hold so close, and the love that I want to wrap the world with.

And in that, I am being set free.

You are not the struggles you faced. You are more.

Who are you?

TRIVIA night was a great success this year. There were a total of 31 tables. Much fun was had by all. Special thanks to all the workers...Judges Mike & Jeanne Francisco and Courtney, Registration Michelle, Mulligans/runner Teresa DeMarco, Pictures/runner Courtney Lehmann 50/50 Ann Marie and Steve Salyer, Raffle baskets, Debbie Brauch and Pam Kirn (Terre's sister). Thanks to our trivia Master Brian and The Knights of Columbus for our great venue and service.

And thank you to Terre Rosciglione & Courtney Lehmann, our trivia coordinators, for the many hours they spend pulling these events together. And most importantly, **THANK YOU** to everyone who attended and supported this fundraiser.





Time to “spring clean” your grief



By: Megan Meade-Higgins, LMSW

LOVINGLY LIFTED FROM HOPELine NEWSLETTER, MARCH 2022

Winter is finally almost over! Trees are budding, animals are coming out of hibernation- even people are “thawing out” after the long, cold days of winter. It’s time to get ready for spring!

After A Loss

The death of a loved one can feel like bitter days of winter. You go into hibernation, and turn inside yourself to cope with your pain and sorrow. It may be months before you pick your head up and look round and realize you’ve been immersed in your grief for so long that you’ve tuned out everything else: your family, your friends, even the change of seasons. You can only just now start to look around and move a little more outside yourself. This is what I call the heart and souls “spring awakening.” It is the time in your grief journey when your heart and soul begin to “bud” with little shoots of hope- where you can recall your loved one’s death and still feel sorrow, but you also begin to remember the joy of your relationship.

“Spring Cleaning”Your Heart and Soul

You will feel a momentum inside you when it is time to start “spring cleaning” your grief. Many people in your life may think they know when it’s best for you to start this process. Friend and family may tell you to “get over it and move on,” often before you are ready. But only you will know when the time is right. Respect your own timeline for grief; it will be different from everyone else’s.

One suggestion for everyone, however; **DO NOT DO ANYTHING DRASTIC FOR ONE YEAR.** The first year after a loved one dies is full of “firsts:” first holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. Your loved one’s death is often too new and the grief too overwhelming for you to make any major decisions such as moving, changing careers or beginning a new relationships. Let yourself ease back into life. How you feel right after a death and how you will feel in a year will be different. Commit to the one-year rule, and when that is over, take a deep breath and take stock of your life. Where are you now?

The “Stuff” Does Not Equal the Person

One really great way to do this “spring cleaning” is with someone who loves you and understands this bittersweet time. Reminisce about your loved one. As you go through their belongings, tell stories of the life you shared with that person. There is comfort in the shared joy and sadness this task will bring. Sometimes, knowing you are helping others can relieve some of the grief you are feeling. Many people give away some of the stuff they clean out to charities so that the gift of your loved one’s life can go on. Keep your most treasured, favorite items to celebrate the life of the person who has died, and if you want, display them proudly!

Time by yourself can often be good for “spring cleaning” your heart and soul, too. Alone times gives you the chance to reflect on your life with your loved one, and start thinking about where you are headed. Lots of people will tell you it will take time, but you’ll get “back to normal.” A very important thing to understand about losing a loved one is that you will never be “back to normal.” Things can never be exactly the same as when your loved one was alive. Instead, you will have to go on without that person physically in your life and create a “new” normal. Your loved one will always be with you, but now, it will be in a different way as you learn to live in the world without them there. How will it all turn out? No one knows... you cannot control the future or plan too far in advance. Make small changes, lean on your friends and family for support, and take it one step at a time. You CAN do it!

Seasons Change, But Love Never Dies

The death of a loved one is devastating. But death and loss are NOT the final word. Seasons change, and with death, relationships change too. But in the circle of life, spring always follows winter, and new life grows from the greatest despair and loss. Embrace your pain, and when you are ready, do some “spring cleaning” and start letting it go. Your emptiness will be filled with new gifts and ways of loving.



Dear Friends,

Vol 1 #1 4/2022

Welcome to the first "Hope for Teens and Adolescents" newsletter!

This page is a forum devoted to all Teens, Adolescents, and Young Adults who are experiencing grief due to the death of a loved one. We will cover a wide range of topics over time, and each newsletter will focus on a certain issue(s) as we navigate through grief. I call this our "griefjourney".

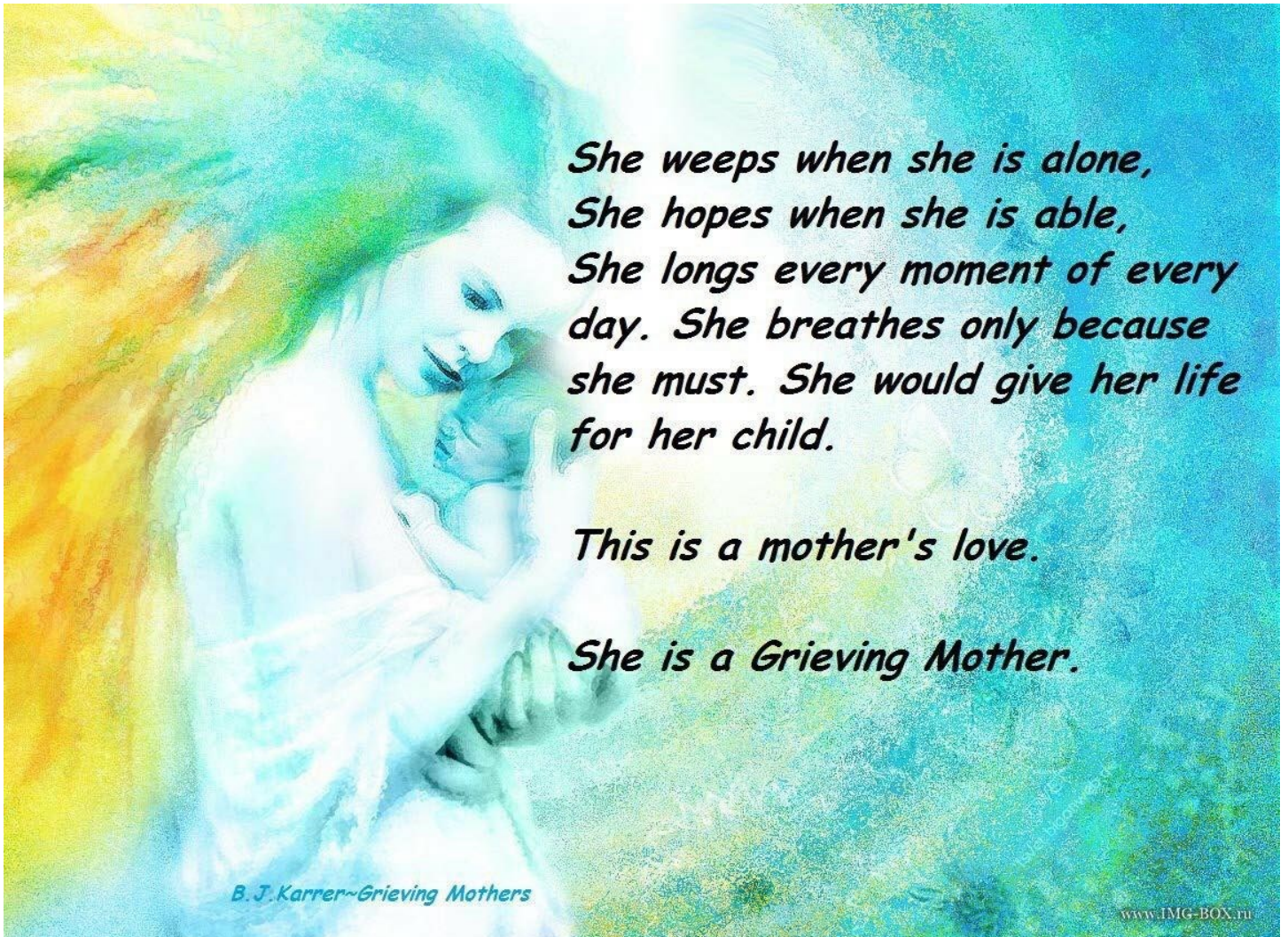
Each griefjourney is unique, no two are alike; therefore it is important to remember that there is no one right way to grieve. Grief is a **feeling** process, not a logical process. In other words, we can't "think" our way through grief; it is a journey that must be experienced and felt. Since feelings don't necessarily have to make sense, we must trust our griefjourney to lead us to places of healing. So when we are having a bad (or difficult) day, or don't understand why we reacted in a certain way, we are not "going crazy", but experiencing the very essence of grief. During these hard times, we have to realize that our journey will have its ups and downs, and that we will eventually get to a better place. How long will this take? There is no time line; we need to have faith that our journey will take as long as it takes, and some periods will feel OK, while other times will be very difficult. We must persevere through the tough parts, and appreciate it whenever our journey feels more manageable and a little better.

Take Care,

Mark

P.S.: This is **your** newsletter. I invite your questions, comments, and ideas. If you have any, please forward them to: mail@hopeforbereaved.com

THINKING
OF YOU ON
MOTHER'S
DAY



THINKING
OF YOU



fb/grievingmothers

*It must be very difficult
To be a man in grief,
Since "men don't cry" and "men are strong"
No tears can bring relief.
It must be very difficult
To stand up to the test
And field calls and visitors
So she can get some rest.
They always ask if she's all right
And what she's going through
But seldom take his hand and ask
"My friend, but how are you?"
He hears her crying in the night
And thinks his heart will break
And dries her tears and comforts her
But "stays strong" for her sake.
It must be very difficult
To start each day anew
And try to be so very brave -
He lost his baby too. . .
-Eileen Knight Hagemeister*

Dear Uncomfortable,

Was it something I said? Should I not mention they're dead? I'm sorry I've made you uncomfortable. But for a moment that makes me angry... that somehow my loss and my grief is about you. It's about your feelings now and not mine. My emotions are now a burden to you. And then I get insecure. Do I talk about my loss too much...? Do you cringe and think... oh here we go again. I'm not asking for attention, I'm not hoping for more, I'm just trying to talk about them... Because talking about them is the only thing that keeps the memory alive. I'm not trying to make you feel uncomfortable, but if you are... imagine how I feel.

-Someone grieving



I Live
every single day
WITHOUT
one of my children..

facebook.com/thecarsonproject

MEETING TIMES & PLACES

*****Call for meeting status*****



BUSINESS / FACILITATORS MEETINGS	LOCATION	DATE	TIME
ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME! CONTACT: Mike & Jeanne Francisco 636.947.9403	BJC Hospital St. Peters Medical Center Bldg. 1 St. Peters, MO 63376	Contact Mike & Jeanne. Meeting dates vary depending upon unforeseen events.	9:00 AM

GROUP MEETINGS	MEETING LOCATION Some are currently on pause pending COVID restrictions	FACILITATOR(S)	DAY	TIME
St. Peters / St. Charles, MO	Knights of Columbus Hall 5701 Hwy N Cottleville, MO 63304	Mike & Jeanne Francisco 636.947.9403	1st Thursday - Please contact facilitators for meeting status	7:00pm
St. Peters / St. Charles, MO—Siblings Facilitator	Same as above	Samantha Schaefer 636.293.1099	Same as above	7:00pm
West County Group St. Louis, MO	Shaare Emeth 11645 Ladue (Ballas & Ladue) St. Louis, MO 63141 Library -	Jacque Glaeser 636.236.5103 jlynn63021@yahoo.com ****Please email or call for meeting status.	Fourth Tuesday, members will be emailed reminders. ***Contact facilitator for schedule.	7:00pm
SPECIALIZED MEETINGS	MEETING LOCATIONS All may be on pause pending COVID restrictions—phone facilitators	FACILITATOR(S) / CONTACT(S)	DAY	TIME
SOUL: (Surviving Overdose and Understanding Loss)	Please call for meeting times/location/and or zoom	MaryAnn Lemonds 314.282.7453 (landline) 314.330.7586 (cell) survivingOUL@gmail.com	Please call for meeting times/location/and or zoom	
Life Crisis Center Survivors of Suicide	9355 Olive Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63132	314.647.3100	Wednesdays	7:00 pm
PALS: Parents affected by the loss of a child to suicide	St. Luke’s Hospital (Hwy 141 & 40) St. Louis, MO 63017	Linda Fehrmann Currently meeting online 314.853.7925 lindafehrmann36@gmail.com	4th Saturday	10:30 am
Survivors of Suicide	Provident Behavioral Health	Linda Fehrmann, Call to confirm meetings 314.853.7925	1st & 3rd Monday	6:30 pm
Trees of Righteousness Grief Support Group—Any loss	Christian Hospital in the main lobby conference room—Please call Johnnie for correct location, dates and times	Johnnie Coleman 314.740.3602	3rd Tuesdays	6:00pm to approx. 7:30pm
BPUSA Virtual Bereaved Sibling Chapter — Ages 18+	Please email bpvirtualsiblingchapter@gmail.com for the zoom link.	Katie Alger 845-443-0614	Last Thursday of the month	7:00pm

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

BPUSA ST. LOUIS CHAPTER CO-CHAIRS:

Mike & Jeanne Francisco

Landline: 636-947-9403

Accident, Auto	Theresa DeMarco	636.544.3478
Accident, Non-Vehicular	Bill Lagemann	573.242.3632
Adult Sibling	Samantha Schaefer	636.293.1099
Drugs/ Alcohol	MaryAnn Lemonds	314.330.7586
Grandparents	TBD	
Child with Disability	Linda Frohning	314.721.5517
Illness	Marilyn Kister	636.634.6019
Jefferson City	Sandy Brungardt	314.954.2410
Murder	TBD	
Only Child /Single Parent	Donna Arnold	314.608.3655
Suicide	Linda Fehrmann	314.853.7325

As always, for up-to-date information on BPUSASTL events, visit www.bpusastl.org

Representation in Lieu of Meetings

Franklin County, MO	Bill & Vicki Lagemann	573.242.3632
	Cindy Morris	314.954.1810
Tri-County, MO	Brenda Wilson	573.438.4559
OPEN ARMS (Parents Left Behind)	Kathy Dunn <i>kathydunn333@yahoo.com</i>	314.807.5798

Newsletter Submissions

Cut-off date for our next issue is

June 15, 2022

Send your submissions (poems, articles, love gifts) to:

Newsletter
PO Box 1115
St. Peters, MO 63376

or to :

snowwhite6591@gmail.com

Your writings may help someone.



OUR COMMITMENT



Part of **BPUSASTL's** commitment to you is that we are the space where our parents and families communicate. Printed in your newsletter are articles to educate and ones that are private expressions of writers. We offer our writings only for your reflection. Sometimes serving nature or establishing routines signal solace to the writer. Often they turn to religion or spirituality for comfort and guidance.

BPUSASTL share these insights not only for your contemplation but also to acknowledge our community's many and rich sources for strength and hope.



Children of BPUSASTL's Board Representation



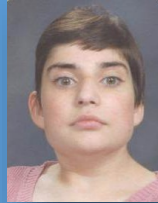
Julie Bardle
Daughter of
Marilyn Kister
Newsletter
Editor



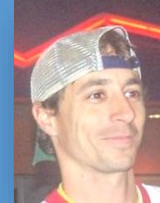
Joseph DeMarco
Son of
Theresa DeMarco
Treasurer



Jennifer Francisco
Daughter of Jeanne
& Mike
Francisco
St. Peters Group
Facilitators
& Co-Chairs



Natalie Frohning
Daughter of
Linda Frohning



Mickey Hale
Son of
Jacque Glaeser
W. County Group
Facilitator &
Secretary



J. P. Rosciglione
Son of Terre
Rosciglione
Trivia
Coordinator



Patrick Salyer
Son of Anne Marie
and Steve Salyer



Rosie Umhoefer
Daughter of
Rosann Umhoefer



Matthew Wiese
Son of Kim Wiese



Arthur Gerner / Emily Gerner
Son & Granddaughter of
Margaret Gerner
Founder of BPUSASTL

Children of BPUSASTL's Special Events



J. P. Rosciglione
Son of Terre
Rosciglione
Trivia
Coordinator



Aaron Cole
"Aaron's Ms.
Courtney"
Trivia Coordinator

Danny Brauch
Brother of
Samantha
Schaefer
St. Peters Group
Sibling Facilitator



If you wish to make a love donation - IN ANY AMOUNT - We will include a picture of your child(ren) (See page 2 & 3 of this newsletter)

NAME _____

PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____ NAME OF CHILD(REN) _____

BIRTH DATE(S) _____

ANGEL DATE(S) _____

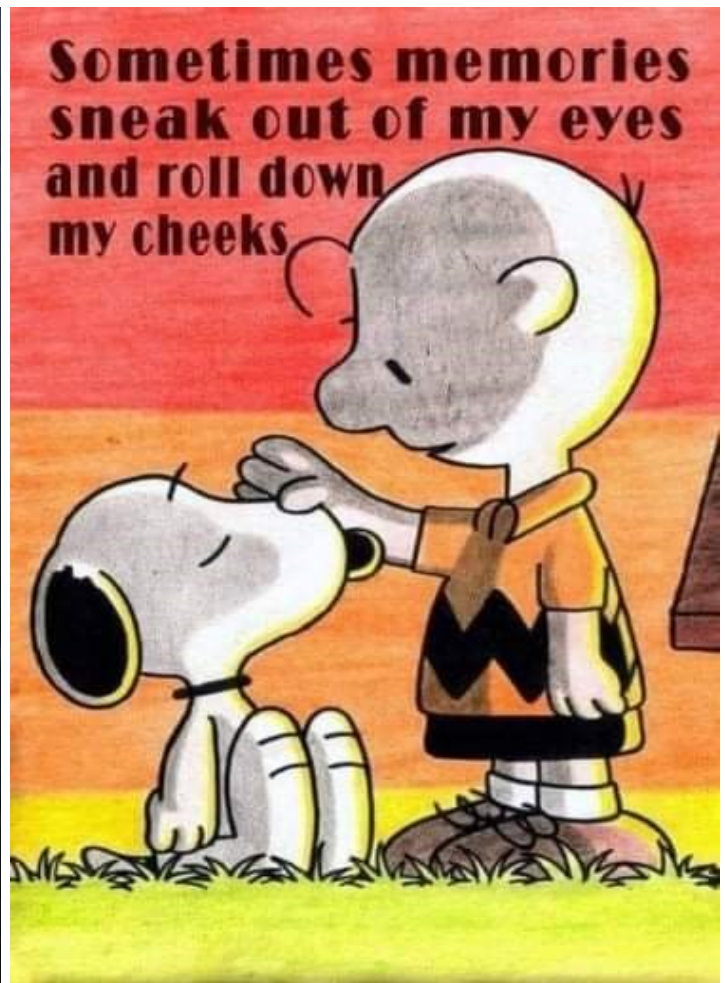
I WOULD LIKE A LOVE GIFT DEDICATED TO MY CHILD(REN) IN THE MONTH OF: _____

I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE IN LOVING MEMORY OF _____



facebook.com/heaven garden

Rain falls because the
clouds can no longer
handle the weight.
Tears fall because the
heart can no longer
handle the pain.



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