# Chapter Newsletter—BPUSA-St. Louis \*\*Bereaved Parents\*\* May-Jun 2023 of the USA

# NATIONAL GATHERING 2023 Forever in my heart Bereaved Parents of the USA July 21-23 Hilton Washington Dulles Hotel Herndon, VA www.bereavedparentsusa.org

#### **VOLUME 46 - NUMBER 3**





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Saturday, April 29, 2023, at Progress West Hospital

Barnes-Jewish St. Peters & Progress West

#### FOUNDATION



Thank you to BPUSAStL board members for braving the cold, wind and a wee bit of sunshine to distribute BPUSA brochures. The *Ribbon of Hope* event brings support & awareness to the Siteman Cancer Center. Check out our new table cover!





Left to right: Marilyn Kister, Theresa DeMarco, Anne Marie Salyer, Jeanne & Mike Francisco, Kim Wiese, Rosann Umhoefer







Starting June 2023

## BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA

#### **MEETING DATES/TIMES**

<u>Third Saturday</u> of every month, 1pm - 3pm

#### MEETING LOCATION

Scenic Regional Library 60 Wildcat Drive Wright City, MO 63390

#### Facilitated by Bereaved Parents:

- Anne Marie 972-740-9702
- ♦ Marilyn 636-634-6019

There are many words to describe our grief.
Yet they all cry out that we need relief

Today I feel like it's my protective shield to guard me from all the issues with which I can't deal.

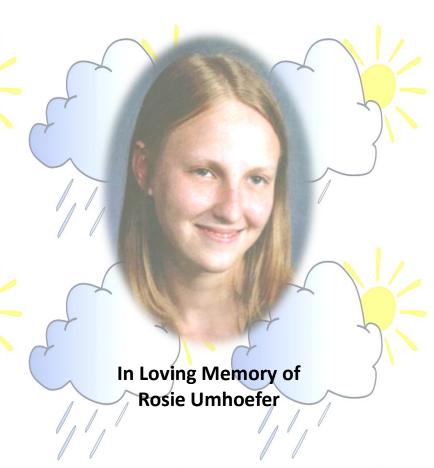
To leave the house or just stay home, to socialize or spend time alone.

To soak up the sun or pull down the shades, and sit quietly in my thoughts till the end of day.

Should I prepare a meal or just have another cup of tea? Is it time to think of others or just focus on me?

Such simple choices that we face everyday for grieving parents trying to find their way.

By Rosann Umhoefer, BPUSAStl





Time does not really heal a broken heart; it only teaches a person how to live with it.

Cry all you want, Laugh when you can.

Unknown



#### How to Handle Mother's Day

Written by Clara Hinton

Special days of any kind can be especially difficult for anyone who has lost a child. The first year following the loss of a child is often filled with days of dread and fear when anniversary dates and holidays approach. Mother's Day is a holiday that is one of the most dreaded holidays of all. A mother grieving the loss of her precious child often spends weeks in fearful waiting of the day, wondering how she will every make it through.

There is no real way of avoiding Mother's Day. The stores are filled with gifts made and designed especially for mothers and children. Advertisements for gifts on the radio and in the newspaper bombard us every day for weeks prior to Mother's Day. Card and flower shops experience their busiest season of the year on Mother's Day. Reminders of this special holiday are everywhere!

The pain of facing Mother's Day without a child can be the most lonely pain a mother will every know. There is an empty ache that becomes increasingly more evident as the day approaches, and there seems to be no way to find relief. It is wise to share these feelings with other family members and friends rather than to avoid the topic. By sharing how you feel, you can alert others to be more sensitive to your needs during this painful day of sad reminders. Sit down with your family and discuss what you would like to do for Mother's Day. Remember that this is not a time to worry about hurting other's feelings, but rather a time to make your wishes known.



Remind yourself often that there is no right or wrong way to handle Mother's Day. Some mothers have found it helpful to go away on a mini weekend trip, totally avoiding any church service, special meals, or family gatherings that will be too painful to attend.

Other mothers choose to do something special in memory of their child such as take a walk to a quiet place, or read a special poem,

Many choose to use Mother's Day as a special day to plant a flower or a tree in memory of their child who has died. Seeing something growing is often a visible reminder of the ongoing love a mother has for her child.

Whatever you choose to do, remember not to set expectations too high for the day. Plan to do something that is healing for you, but realize that you will still experience a wide gamut of emotions, and many tears will fall.

Because grief is exhausting mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually, be sure to eat nutritious food for the day, hydrate yourself with lots of fluids, and allow yourself time to rest and be replenished. Grief work is the hardest work you will ever do!

By planning ahead for Mother's Day, you have already crossed a big hurdle in your walk through child loss. Telling others that this is going to be a difficult day for you is a way of building up a support system that will help you get through the day. Remind yourself often that you will make it through Mother's Day, and when you do, you will be one step farther along in this difficult journey we call grief.

Lovingly lifted from HOPE for bereaved, May 2022 Newsletter



#### Grieving on Father's Day

By Carol A Ranney, http://honoringourangels.blogspot.com/2011/06/grieving-on-fathers-day.html

Fathers are often referred to as the hidden grievers. When a child dies, thoughts generally go to the mothers—the agony they most certainly are suffering, their loneliness, emptiness, now that someone who was once a part of them is gone. Women tend to grieve outwardly, talking to their friends, crying, seeking out supportive groups and friends to be with and with whom to share their burden of sorrow.

Men, on the other hand, have a much more inward grieving style. Men are usually more factual than emotional. They accept more readily that nothing they say or do will reverse the situation; their child is irrecoverably gone from this earth. They may weep at times, but that is not their primary mode of mourning. A man may throw himself into his job with fervor, perhaps to help alleviate the feeling that as the "family protector," he has failed to keep each member safe. He may begin or continue a project, or start a new activity, in memory of his loved one, to whom he dedicates his efforts.

Men are more concrete in their thinking, but that does not mean they grieve less. What it often does mean is that they get less emotional support; people see them return to work, keep busy at home, and assume "they're over it." Little do others realize that men agonize through their grief and mourning fully as much as women, and appreciate just as much the caring word, the hug, a recalled memory, a shared moment of silence.

Perhaps the best gift you could ever give a grieving father on Father's Day is the recognition of his loss, and affirming him as a father in mourning. A book especially for men in grief; a card recognizing that he is missing one of those who made him a father, yet he is still a father; a gift in memory of his child; or simply a hug, an arm around the shoulder, or a compassionate word will assure him that although he does not grieve outwardly much, those who truly care about him have not forgotten.

#### FOR GRANDFATHERS

By Margaret H. Gerner From "For Bereaved Grandparents"

If you are a bereaved grand-father, you may have special difficulty grieving the loss of a grand child for two reasons. First, your grief is minimized by people who don't consider a grandfather/grandchild relationship to be very significant. Secondly, like most men, you have probably been taught to keep your feelings inside.

When a child dies, the concern of others is first for the mother, then the father, occasionally some will be expressed for the grandmother. Rarely do people recognize that you are hurting too. When you weep or express pain, even among family and friends, your behavior may be questioned. You may feel embarrassed. A grandfather isn't expected to be upset. He is expected to concern himself with his children and his wife.

Once I saw a grown man cry.

"Now there goes a man with feeling!" said I. He was strong, able, quite well-built, with muscles, gray hair and charm to the hilt. I moved toward him slowly and said, "What's wrong?" The look he gave me was tear-filled and long.

"I cry for a child. My grandchild has died."

So I sat beside him and two grown men cried.

#### **WEEKEND CAMP**

For children or teenagers grieving the loss of a family member or friend.





#### WHEN

August 11-13, 2023

Overnight Weekend Camp

#### WHERE

Camp Wyman Eureka, MO

Stepping Stones, available at no cost to participants, is open to any child or teenager who has experienced the death of a loved one, not only those served by BJC Hospice.

#### WHAT

A weekend camp for children and teens, ages 6-15, who have experienced the death of a family member or close friend. Stepping Stones provides a fun place for campers, gives them a chance to meet other children with similar losses and provides ways to heal while making friends and experiencing the joy and activities of a camp environment.

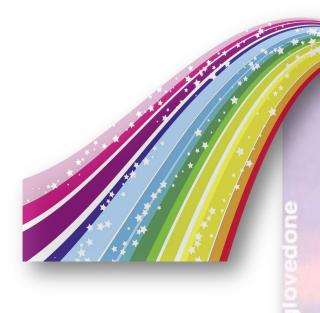
To register, go to the website or use the phone number or email listed below.



TO REGISTER CALL 314.953.1676 OR EMAIL GRIEFSUPPORT@BJC.ORG







The only people who think there is a time limit for grief have never lost a piece of their heart.

RaeAnne Friedrickson

# Crossing Over

Oh, please don't feel guilty, It was just my time to go. I see you are still feeling sad, And the tears just seem to flow.

We all come to the earth for our lifetime,
And for some, it's not so many years.
I don't want you to keep crying,
You are shedding so many tears.

I haven't really left you
Even though it may seem so.
I have just gone to my heavenly home,
And I'm closer to you than you know.

Just believe that when you say my name, I'm standing next to you. I know you long to see me, But there's nothing I can do.

But I'll still send you messages
And hope you understand,
That when your time comes to "cross over,"
I'll be there to take your hand!

#### FACEBOOK.COM/MISSINGLOVEDONE



#### NATIONAL GATHERING ♥ BEREAVED PARENTS of the USA ♥ KEYNOTE SPEAKERS











Laura Diehl

Judy Lipson

Phil Cohen

Sadija Smiley

Meet Gathering Keynote Speaker LAURA DIEHL. She will be our Friday lunch speaker. Her presentation is entitled "OUR G.R.I.E.F. JOURNEY: Five Important Things to Know About Grief". After the death of their oldest daughter, Becca, Laura and her husband, Dave founded Grieving Parents Sharing Hope (GPS Hope) www.gpshope.org They travel full-time in their Hope Mobile (a 38-foot motor home) providing support and resources to grieving parents on their difficult journey, including local weekend retreats. Laura hosts the weekly Grieving Parents Sharing Hope podcast and is also a singer and national speaker. She has written several books, including the multiple award-winning "When Tracedy Strikes: Rebuilding Your Life with Hope and Healing After the Death of Your Child" (Morgan James Publishing, New York). Dave and Laura's home base is in Southern Wisconsin and they are the parents of 5 adult children (including Becca) who has already received her promotion to heaven) and are blessed with seven grandchildren.

#### **BPUSA**

National Gathering Conference Hilton Washington Dulles Hotel Herndon, Virginia July 21–23, 2023

Say hello to Keynote Speaker PHIL COHEN who will present his topic "The Grief Continuum: Navigating Grief" following Friday evening's dinner at our 2023 Gathering. Frustrated by the lack of resources after the sudden loss of his 14-year-old son, Phil developed the Grief Continuum™ — a unique framework for navigating grief. Phil is an award-winning keynote and TEDx speaker whose insights have been featured in The Wall Street Journal, Success magazine, the American Bar Association, and dozens of top-rated podcasts. Visit his website here: www.philcohen.com

We're looking forward to meeting and hearing bereaved sibling, JUDY LIPSON's Saturday morning breakfast talk entitled "It Is Never Too Late To Grieve." She will help us understand that no matter when you suffered a loss, there is no recipe or timeline for grief. She will urge us to give ourselves permission and compassion to take the journey no matter how long it takes. Judy is the sole survivor of three sisters, losing her sister Jane in 1981 at age twenty-two in an automobile accident, and nine years later her sister Margie at age thirty- five after a twenty-year battle with anorexia and bulimia. For thirty years Judy suppressed her grief but in 2011, she founded "Celebration of Sisters", an annual ice-skating fundraiser to commemorate the lives and memories of her beloved sisters to benefit Massachusetts General Hospital. Skating is a sport the Lipson sisters shared and her endeavors have brought Judy full circle back to her sisters. Read Judy's memoir, "Celebration of Sisters: It Is Never Too Late To Grieve", released in November 2021 by Writelife Publishing. Visit: www.judylipson.org

Meet SADIJA A. SMILEY, a Keynote Speaker at the 2023 Gathering. Her Saturday Lunch presentation is entitled "What Grief Has Taught Me" and she will talk about the lessons, both big and small, that she has learned from her grief. Sadija is the Founder and CEO of Stillborn And Infant Loss Support (SAILS), a nonprofit organization based in Maryland, dedicated to raising awareness and creating a supportive environment for families who have experienced a stillbirth, pregnancy or infant loss. SAILS was created to honor the life of her daughter, Ivyanna Salene, who was stillborn at 36 weeks pregnant. Since the death of her daughter. Sadiia has dedicated her life to helping hearts heal. She is a Certified Grief Recovery Specialist and a contributing author to "Your Wings Were Ready But My Heart Was Not" and "Finding Joy in the Journey". She currently resides in Maryland with her family. You can learn more by visiting www.bomintosilence.org

Tables are still available, as well as volunteer opportunities.

# BEREAVED PARENTS USA TRIVIA NIGHT



Saturday, May 20, 2023

Knights of Columbus - 5701 Hwy N Cottleville, MO 63304

Doors Open 6:00 PM-Trivia Begins 7:00 PM

Table of 8 - \$200

**Beer and Beverages Included** 

**Call for Reservations:** 

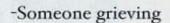
Terre - 314-393-5713 or Courtney - 314-440-7751





#### 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.





#### Can Grievers Take a "Grief-cation"?

Written By Jill S. Cohen, Family Grief Counselor

#### Is it Right or Wrong For Grievers to Want to "Escape"?

#### Vacations are for everyone! Grievers, included.

Despite the ups and downs of the Covid statistics all across the world, travel is top-of-mind for many people, having been so isolated for so long, during the pandemic.

#### If you're grieving, your first thought might be:

How can I possibly even think of going away? After all, I'm mourning the loss of a loved one.

#### Do these thoughts match your thoughts?:

Why would I want to be sad somewhere else?

How could I possibly have a good time?

What would people think of me if I escape my home and mourn my loss somewhere else?

Does having fun mean I don't miss my loved one?

#### I often suggest to my clients that they can change that thought. Think of it this way:

Vacations are not experiences only for the "happy" people.

They are for ANYONE who would benefit from a new experience, a change of scenery and a little bit of pampering.

In fact, a vacation may be just what you need - to take a mini- break from grief.





Continued on page 12

#### Can Grievers Take a "Grief-cation"? - Continued from page 11

#### Here's how GRIEVING and VACATIONING can go hand in hand:

#### **Change Your Surrounding.**

It's okay to grieve in different surroundings. Changing your environment can lift your mood, can refresh you, and can take you out of your "stuck" zone.

#### **New Outlook.**

A vacation can give you a fresh outlook on life. It reminds you that there is a whole world happening out there. You'll see people, who also may have had losses, who are still living and going about their activities in their own way. It can be reassuring that your life can and will resume when you're ready.

#### The Scenery.

After all, what can lift a mood better than beautiful scenery? ---from great cathedrals to glaciers, to ocean colors to mountain heights. It's almost impossible not to "feel" something, in the midst of it all. Allow yourself to forget, if only for a while, your own sadness.

#### **New People.**

Imagine talking to people who don't know your "story" and don't look at you as if they don't know what to say. Wouldn't it be a relief to be anonymous for a week or so?

#### **Grieving Gets Lonely.**

When you stay for a prolonged period of time in your grief, you begin to close yourself off in unhealthy ways. The longer it stays that way, the harder it is to re-enter your own life again. Being around others can make you feel that you are part of the world again.

#### **Grieving Can Get Crowded.**

Sometimes, it's just too much to have people around constantly. They are helpful. They keep you company. They try to distract you from your sadness and "make it better". But sometimes, **you just need to be alone** or with strangers.

A vacation gives you the time to FEEL, THINK, DISCOVER and MOURN on your own terms. And this is one of the best reasons to go on vacation!

#### Used by permission from:

Jill S. Cohen, CT family grief counselor www.jillgriefcounselor.com 212 721 4720

### 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
BPUSAStl—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	7:00 pm
St. Peters / St. Charles, MO—Siblings Facilitator	Same as above	Samantha Schaefer 636.293.1099	Same as above	7:00 pm
BPUSAStL West County Group St. Louis, MO	Please contact Jacque for meeting status	Jacque Glaeser 636.236.5103 jlynn63021@yahoo.com	This meeting is on pause. Please contact Jacque for meeting status	

SPECIALIZED MEETINGS	MEETING LOCATIONS Please contact facilitators to verify meeting dates/times.	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
Healing After Suicide Loss	Baue Funeral Home 608 Jefferson St. Charles, MO 63301	Kristen Ernst: Call to confirm meeting location and time 636.328.0878	1st & 3rd Monday	6:00 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 Tuesday	6:00 pm to approx. 7:30 pm

BPUSA Virtual	Please use this link to register:	Katie Alger	Last Thursday of the	7:00 pm
Bereaved Sibling	https://virtual-bereaved-sibling-	845.443.0614	month	CST
Chapter — Ages 18+	<u>chapter-</u>			
	meeting.mailchimpsites.com/			

#### TELEPHONE FRIENDS

# BPUSA ST. LOUIS CHAPTER CO-CHAIRS: Mike & Jeanne Francisco Landline: 636-947-9403

Accident, Auto	Theresa DeMarco	636.544.3478
Accident, Non-	TBD	
Vehicular		
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	TBD	

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

#### **Representation in Lieu of Meetings**

Franklin County, MO	Cindy Morris	314.954.1810
Tri-County, MO	Brenda Wilson	573.438.4559
OPEN ARMS (Parents Left Behind)	Kathy Dunn kathydunn333@ yahoo.com	314.807.5798

#### **Newsletter Submissions**

Cut-off date for our next issue is

June 15, 2023

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 **BPUSA***StL*'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, sometime serving nature or establishing routines signal solace to the writer. Often they turn to religion or spirituality for comfort and guidance.

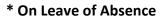
**BPUSA***StL* share these insights not only for your contemplation but also to acknowledge our community's many and rich sources for strength and hope.

My Mind Still
Talks to You. My Heart
Still Looks for You But
My Soul Knows You're
at Peace. I miss you
Every Single Day.



#### 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



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



J. P. Rosciglione Son of Terre Rosciglione Trivia Coordinator



Children of BPUSAStL's

**Special Events** 

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 pages 3 of this newsletter)

NAMEPHONE
ADDRESS
CITY
STATE ZIP NAME OF CHILD(REN)
I WOULD LIKE A LOVE GIFT DEDICATED TO MY CHILD(REN) IN THE MONTH OF:
I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE IN LOVING MEMORY OF
MAIL TO: P. O. BOX 1115, ST. PETERS, MO 63376

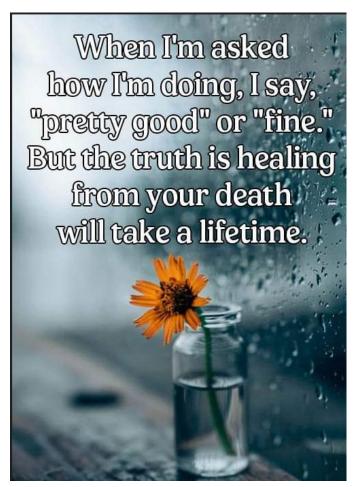
# TO SOMEONE VERY SPECIAL IN HEAVEN

I heard that people in Heaven can look down and watch over us. If that's true, when you see me sitting quietly, know that I am thinking of you, and remembering all that made you so special.



# Summer





#### 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