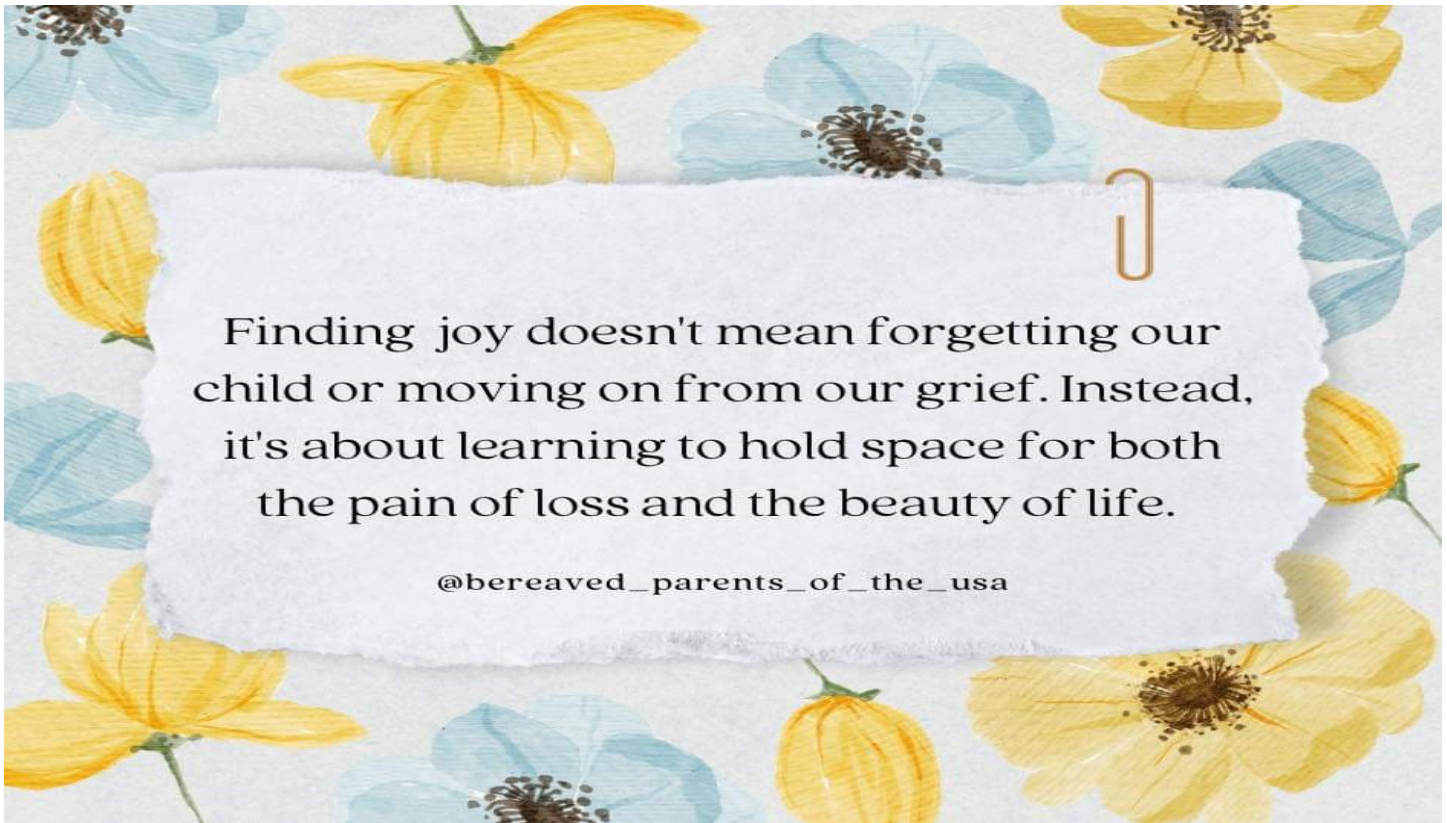


# Bereaved Parents of the USA

May-Jun 2024



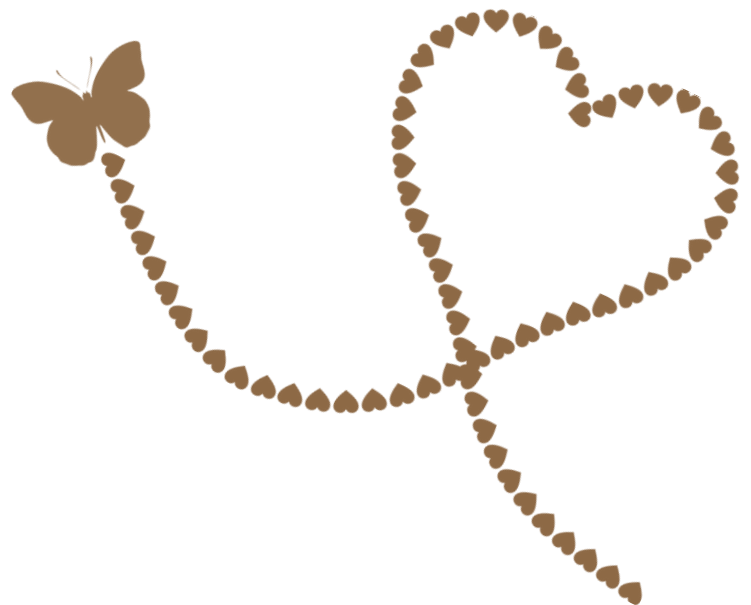
**VOLUME 47 - NUMBER 3**



Finding joy doesn't mean forgetting our child or moving on from our grief. Instead, it's about learning to hold space for both the pain of loss and the beauty of life.

@bereaved\_parents\_of\_the\_usa

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# THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOVE GIFT



**In Loving Memory of  
Rosie Umhoefer**

Spring

It's Spring.  
we welcome it,  
a time to begin  
new endeavors.

Peeping growth in the ground.  
Trees budding and leafing out.  
The birds and spring peepers making their sounds  
all working together in harmony.

Yet along with new life  
we encounter Spring's harsh side.  
No gains are made without some strife,  
like storms and severe weather warnings.

All this, much like our grief.  
Days of inner storms and turbulent nights.  
We wait anxiously for some relief.  
It's a cycle without compare.

Nature teaches us to be on guard.  
Along with the bright and beautiful  
comes the dark, which is hard.  
All life has its seasons.

Poem by Rosann Umhoefer,  
Rosie's mom - BPUSASTl

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOVE GIFT



## Loved for 15 Years and Counting

I feel you when I'm in nature.  
I see you when I close my eyes.  
My heart aches for you.  
I miss you all the time.

What I wouldn't give for one more hug,  
For one more 'I Love You.'  
For one more shared knowing look, conveying so  
much without words.

On this day 15 years ago, you came into the world.  
I loved you fiercely for all 5,315 days of your life.  
I will love you fiercely until the end of time.

## In Loving Memory of Kaitlyn

*We lost our daughter Kaitlyn on 9/26/2023. We are  
approaching her first birthday in heaven on Saturday,  
3/9/2024. Carlos and Stephanie Morales*



## Bereaved Parents of the USA

# NATIONAL GATHERING

“As the weekend with fellow bereaved parents comes to an end, I place my hands over my heart and feel its fullness. My soul has grown new roots. My spirit has been gently sheltered inside a carefully created container, allowing a rare freedom.”

~ Recent Attendee

## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

### Keynote Speakers

Michele Benyo - Good Grief Parenting  
Mandy Eaton - Adrienne's Fund  
Roger Moroney - Alive Alone  
Becky Russell - Weepyseeds

### Workshops

From poignant storytelling to practical coping strategies, these sessions create a space for shared experiences, fostering connection and understanding.

### Candle Lighting Ceremony

We gather to share in a sacred moment of remembrance. Each flickering flame represents a cherished memory, a love that continues to illuminate our path through grief.

### Connecting with Others

In the embrace of this community, find not only solace but also the courage to endure, mend, and heal on the journey through grief.



### More Information

[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)



**JULY  
26 - 28**

**HILTON  
WASHINGTON  
DULLES HOTEL**

HERNDON, VIRGINIA

# Support That Surrounds

## 2024 BJC Hospice Community Grief Support Programs

### GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

- **SPOUSE OR PARTNER LOSS GROUP**  
(6 sessions in St. Charles starting in April)
- **HEALING HeARTS ART THERAPY GROUP**  
(Virtual group for young adults starting in Feb.)
- **CHILD LOSS GRIEF GROUP, 6 weeks**  
(6 sessions at Barnes Jewish West County starting in Jan.)
- **MANY COLORS OF GRIEF Parent Loss Group**  
(Art therapy group starting in the fall)

### GRIEF EVENTS

#### **HOLIDAY CANDLE LIGHTING** November 10



### LOSS OF CHILD

**Weavings** is a retreat for mothers who have lost a child that is held at a retreat center near Saint Louis, MO

November 1-3

Weavings

### SUPPORT FOR GRIEVING KIDS AND TEENS

**Stepping Stones** is a camp for kids ages 6-15 who have lost a friend or family member.

August 9-11, Camp Wyman in Eureka, MO

Stepping Stones

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER FOR ANY OF THESE EVENTS, PLEASE CONTACT BJC HOSPICE AT [GRIEFSUPPORT@BJC.ORG](mailto:GRIEFSUPPORT@BJC.ORG) OR 314.953.1676.

BJC Hospice  
Every Moment

CF\_240244\_0/21

Hello everyone,

I wanted to share our 2024 grief support flyer with you all. We have already had 2 support groups happen this year, but we have other groups as well as our Weavings retreats and Stepping Stones camp still to come and we would appreciate your help in spreading the word to anyone you know personally or professionally that might benefit from these. All of the programs listed on the flyer are free of charge.

Our groups remaining for the year are a 6-session **group for spouse/partner loss** starting in April as well as an **art therapy group for the loss of a parent** starting in the Fall.

Weavings is a **weekend long retreat for moms who have lost a child** at any age after birth. We have one retreat in April and one in November this year.

Stepping Stones **camp is for kids ages 6-15 who have experienced the death of a family member or friend**. We are looking for campers as well as kids ages 16-18 who want to volunteer to be part of our set up crew for the weekend.

Please let me know if you have any questions about our programs and please share this information with others as appropriate.

Thank you for your support! Andrea

**Andrea Tritinger, MSW, LCSW**  
**Support Services Manager**  
**314-403-4617 (cell)**

**TRIVIA** night was another great success and much fun was had by all. Special thanks to all the volunteers, judges, registration, mulligans/runners, 50/50 and raffle items. Thanks to our trivia Master Brian and The Knights of Columbus for our great venue and service.

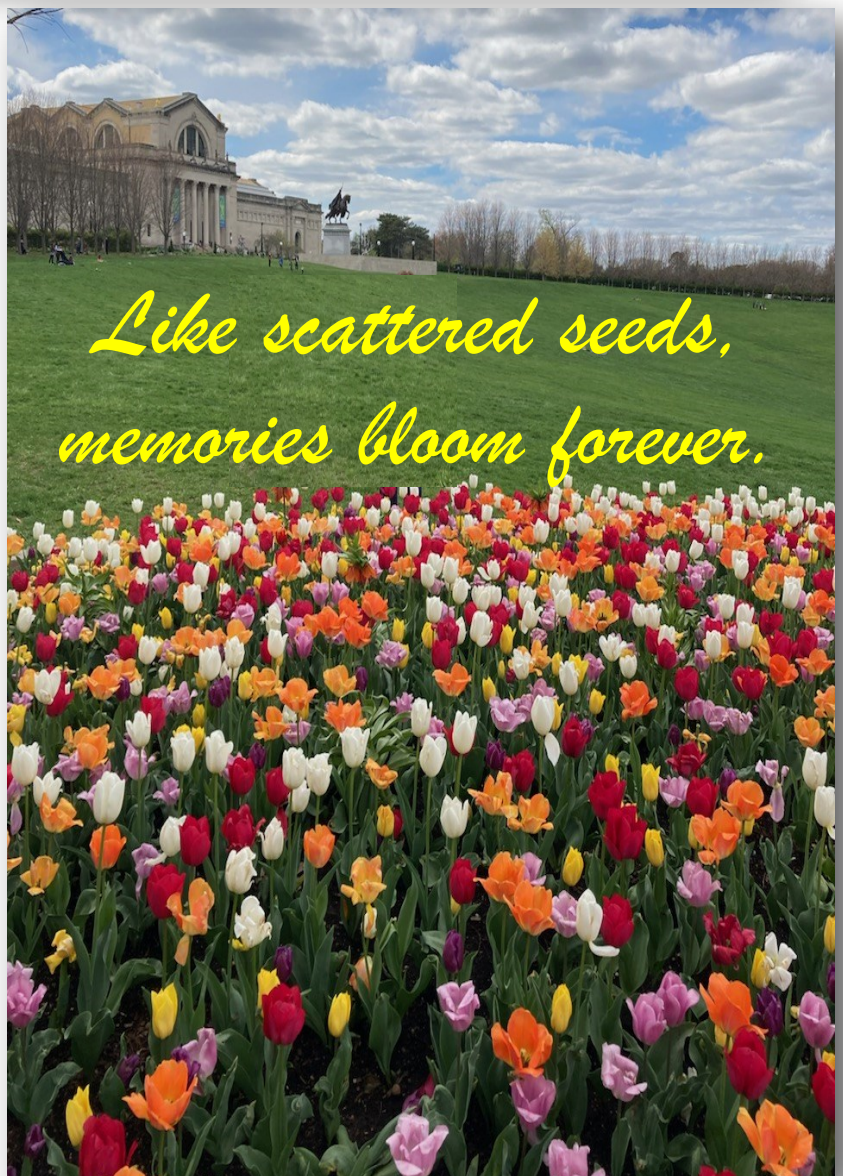
A special thank you to *Terre Rosciglione & Courtney Lane*, our trivia coordinators, for the many hours they spend pulling these events together. And most importantly, THANK YOU to everyone who attended and supported this fundraiser.

Fun Fact: Lighters were invented before matches! The first lighter was invented in 1823 while the match was created in 1826.

"How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard."

*Winnie the Pooh*

*Thank you to Linda Frohning, Natalie's Mom, BPUSASTL, for capturing and sharing this beautiful tulip garden at the base of Art Hill, St. Louis Art Museum in Forest Park, St. Louis, MO. — Taken: Friday, April 5, 2024*



*Like scattered seeds,  
memories bloom forever.*



## WHAT GRIEVING MOMS WANT FOR MOTHER'S DAY

*Posted on May 10th, 2017*

Acknowledgement is what grieving mother's want most for Mother's Day, suggests a survey by [www.thecomfortcompany.net](http://www.thecomfortcompany.net) a website that specializes in meaningful sympathy gifts. The online survey asked, "What can others do to ease your pain on Mother's Day?" Over 80 percent of the 200 respondents answered, "Recognize that I am a mother."

"While Mother's Day is generally considered to be a day of celebration, for many women it is a day of pain and loss," says Renee Wood, former social worker and founder of the Comfort Company. "It's important to remember those moms who have had a failed pregnancy or who have lost a child at any age."

In response to the survey result, The Comfort Company has issued a list of ten simple ways to reach out to a grieving mother on this difficult holiday.

- Recognize that they are a mother. Offer a hug and a "Happy Mother's Day." Send a card to let them know you remember they are a mother even though their child is not with them physically.
- Acknowledge they have had a loss. Express the message, "I know this might be a difficult day for you. I want to know that I am thinking you."
- Use their child's name in conversation. One mother responded, "People rarely speak his name anymore, but when they do it's like music to my ears."
- Visit the grave site. Many a mother felt it was extremely thoughtful when others visited their child's grave site and left flowers or a small pebble near the headstone.
- Light a candle. Let the mother know you will light a candle in memory of her child on Mother's Day.
- Share a memory of a picture of the child. Give the gift of a memory. One mother wrote that the "greatest gift you can give is a heartfelt letter about my child and a favorite memory with them.
- Send a gift of remembrance. Many mothers felt a small gift would be comforting. Suggestions included an angel statue, jewelry, a picture frame or a library book donated in the child's name.
- Don't try to minimize the loss. Avoid using any clichés that attempt to explain the death of a child ("God needed another angel.") Secondly, don't try to find anything positive about the loss ("You still have two other healthy children")
- Encourage self-care. Self-care is an important aspect of the "healing the mind and spirit effort" according to several mothers. Encourage a grieving mother to take care of herself. Give her gift certificate to a day spa or any place where she can be pampered.

—Renee Wood

[www.thecomfortcompany.net](http://www.thecomfortcompany.net)

# A Father's Grief



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 that she can get some rest.  
They always ask if she's alright  
And what she's going through.  
But seldom take his hand and ask,  
"My friend, how are you?"  
He hears her cry 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 child too.*

~ Eileen Knight Hagemester



**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**

Supporting Family After a Child Dies





## Who am I Now?

*By: Traci Morlock BPUSASTL  
Bereaved Sibling St. Louis, MO*

Who am I now that my sibling has died? I have asked myself that question many times over the last four years. When I think of my brother, Sean, I think of how things used to be. I also think of all the things that he will miss. For example, my husband or my children will never know Sean. Sean will never have children. There are just so many things that he will miss.

I began to question who I was about a month after Sean died. He and I shared a great love of music. When I think of music, I think of Sean. As first, every song I heard made me cry. After a while though, I began to try to find a deeper meaning in the songs. I know that a lot of teenagers and young adults identify important times in their lives by music. I am one of those people. Now I am trying to figure out what place the music has in my life. After Sean died, music took on new meaning for me. The music I sing and listen to is my special connection to my brother. The song, "Because You Loved Me" by Celine Dion was especially powerful for me.

I came to realize that through simply loving and supporting me, my brother had helped to shape the person that I was becoming and who I want to become. I have realized now that my life's direction has taken a slight detour. I have had to reroute my image of myself. When I see music, I see my brother and I hope that will never change. When I saw myself in the past, I saw Sean by my side. That picture has now been altered. The biggest part of the question, "Who am I now?" is also "Am I still a sister?" The answer to that is a simple yes! Sean will always be my brother and I will be his sister. Forever.



In the gentle rain's soft embrace,  
A robin lands with delicate grace.  
Upon the earth, where loved ones rest,  
Its presence a comforting, welcomed guest.



Amidst the droplets, a vibrant hue,  
A symbol of hope, a message anew.  
In the quietude of the graveyard's peace,  
The robin's song brings sweet release.

A beacon of joy in the somber scene,  
A reminder of love, where memories convene.  
With each flutter of wings, a heart is stirred,  
A connection felt, though words are unheard.

As the rain falls, a gentle patter,  
The robin's visit, a moment to gather.  
In this fleeting encounter, a bittersweet delight,  
A sign that love transcends the darkest night.

As the rain subsides, and the clouds part ways,  
The robin takes flight, in the sun's warm rays.  
And though they're gone, they'll always remain,  
In the robin's song, amidst the rain.

~ Izzy Roe



Written and permission to use by Christine Roe, Vice President BPUSA, Ashley's Mom

# Grief is Messy...

How am I going to feel on the anniversary?

Is this normal?

I want to scream.

## so,so messy.

Why is everyone else living their lives while mine is falling apart?

Worried nobody wants to be around me because I've been so sad.

I'm exhausted.

Laughed and felt guilty about it.

Sobbed in the shower

Avoiding "our" places.

Avoiding making plans or coming up with excuses to get out of them..

If I would have known I would of.....

Afraid to be alone in the quiet.

What was I doing again?

Forgot an important appointment.

Nobody understands.

Avoiding answering texts.

I just want to hide under the covers and sleep.

## Does this ever get easier?

Sometimes the things people say to try to make me feel better make me feel worse.

Am I grieving the right way.

The After Glow

From Facebook - Grief Speaks Out

Why am I up at 3am?





Word of Hope

<https://www.gpshope.org>

We are into a new month, and that makes me think of new hope. Not all of us feel that way, though, so I thought I would try to help with that just a bit.

1. A new month often brings new weather, and in this case, it is getting us closer to spring! Those of us who are in the cold northern states truly appreciate this. I think about how winter makes everything look so dead, and it can really affect our mood. However, it is just a season, and new life always returns, no matter how harsh or how long the winter has been.

So, it is a wonderful reminder that no matter how long or how deep into darkness our grief has taken us, spring IS coming at some point, with new life and new hope.

2. A new month brings new opportunities. Some of you may not see that as a good thing, especially when that month brings with it a date that is very difficult. But, it still brings new opportunities to do something different that will possibly take some of the sting away.

If you know it is going to be difficult, ask yourself what can you do different that will help? Maybe change the focus on dwelling on your painful loss to thinking about their gain, and do what you can to picture them in heaven and what it is like for them? If you have to go to an event you are dreading, what can you do to bring your child with you and have others celebrate their life with you for a moment?

So, it does bring new opportunities to move toward a healing that allows you to learn how to live in hope, light, and even move toward having meaning and purpose again. You may think that is impossible, but those of us who thought it was impossible for us as well are here to encourage you.

3. Sometimes we dread going forward, because we feel like it is taking us further away from our child who has left this earth. I have shared this before, but it is worth repeating. God graciously pointed out to me once (when I was feeling that way) that I am not getting further away from Becca, but I am getting closer to her. Each day I am here brings me one day closer to being reunited with her again!

So, a new month brings us that much closer to seeing our children again. Hoorah!!!!

***Permission to use article from: Laura Diehl, author and keynote speaker at the 2023 BPUSA Gathering.***

# MEETING TIMES & PLACES

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



<u>BUSINESS / FACILITATORS MEETINGS</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
<b>ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME!</b>	BJC Hospital St. Peters Medical Center Bldg. 1 St. Peters, MO 63376	<b>Contact Mike &amp; Jeanne. Meeting dates vary depending upon unforeseen events.</b>	9:00 AM
<b>CONTACT: Mike &amp; Jeanne Francisco 636.233.8490</b>			

GROUP MEETINGS	MEETING LOCATION	FACILITATOR(S)	DAY	TIME
BPUSASTl—St. Peters / St. Charles, MO	Knights of Columbus Hall 5701 Hwy N Cottleville, MO 63304	Mike & Jeanne Francisco 636.233.8490	1st Thursday - <b>Please contact facilitators for meeting status</b>	7:00 pm
St. Peters / St. Charles, MO—Siblings Facilitator	Same as above	Samantha Schaefer 636.293.1099	Same as above	7:00 pm
Wright City Group	Scenic Regional Library 60 Wildcat Drive Wright City, MO 63390	Anne Marie Salyer 972.740.9702 Marilyn Kister 636.634.6019	3rd Saturday	1-3 pm
Troy Group	Dept. of Health Conference Rm #5 Health Dept. Drive Troy, MO 63379	Cindy Morris 314.954.1810	1st Wednesday	7-9 pm
SPECIALIZED MEETINGS	MEETING LOCATIONS Please contact facilitators to verify meeting dates/times.	FACILITATOR(S) / CONTACT(S)	DAY	TIME
SOUL: (Surviving Overdose and Understanding Loss)	Concordia Lutheran Church 505 S. Kirkwood Rd. Kirkwood, MO 63122 Or via Zoom (holiday weekends and church conflicts) <b>*Be sure to contact MaryAnn before attending</b>	MaryAnn Lemonds 314.282.7453 (landline) 314.330.7586 (cell) SurvivingOUL@gmail.com	Sundays <b>*To confirm dates, contact MaryAnn before attending</b>	5pm
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 at 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 Bereaved Sibling Chapter — Ages 18+	Please use this link to register: <a href="https://virtual-bereaved-sibling-chapter-meeting.mailchimpsites.com/">https://virtual-bereaved-sibling-chapter-meeting.mailchimpsites.com/</a>	Katie Alger 845.443.0614	Last Thursday of the month	7:00 pm CST

# TELEPHONE FRIENDS

**BPUSA ST. LOUIS CHAPTER CO-CHAIRS:  
Mike & Jeanne Francisco  
636.233.8490**

Accident, Auto	Theresa DeMarco	636.544.3478
Adult Sibling	Samantha Schaefer	636.293.1099
Drugs/ Alcohol	MaryAnn Lemonds	314.330.7586
Child with Disability	Linda Frohning	314.721.5517
Illness	Marilyn Kister	636.634.6019
Jefferson City	Sandy Brungardt	314.954.2410
Only Child /Single Parent	Donna Arnold	314.608.3655

As always, for up-to-date information on BPUSASTL events, visit [www.bpusastl.org](http://www.bpusastl.org)

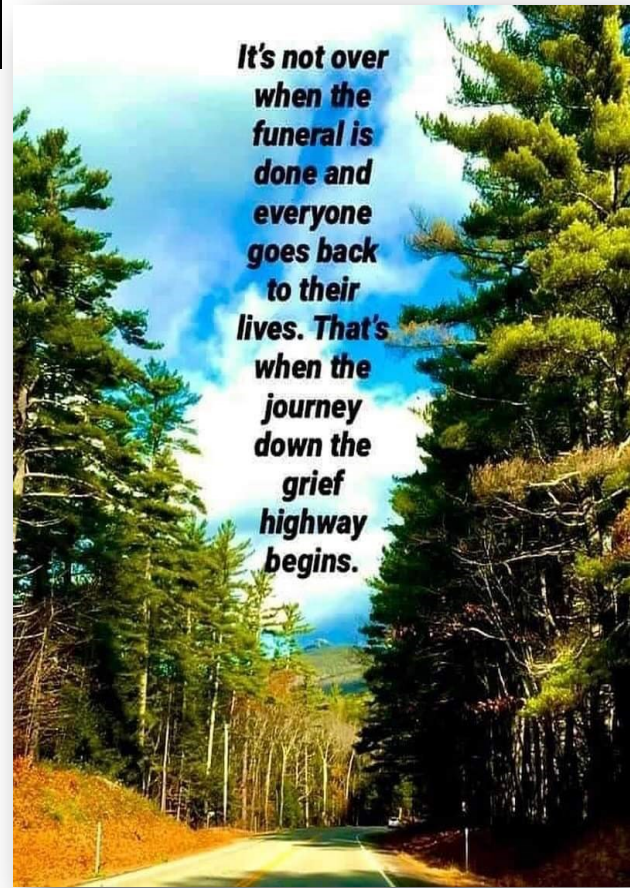
### Representation in Lieu of Meetings

Tri-County, MO	Brenda Wilson 573.438.4559
OPEN ARMS (Parents Left Behind)	Kathy Dunn - 314.807.5798 <a href="mailto:kathydunn333@yahoo.com">kathydunn333@yahoo.com</a>
West County Group (formerly held in Ladue, MO)	Jacque Glaeser 636.236.5103 <a href="mailto:jlynn63021@yahoo.com">jlynn63021@yahoo.com</a>

**Newsletter Submissions**

Cut-off date for our next issue is **June 15, 2024**

Send your submissions (poems, articles, love gifts) to:  
Newsletter  
PO Box 1115  
St. Peters, MO 63376  
or to :  
[snowwhite6591@gmail.com](mailto:snowwhite6591@gmail.com)  
Your writings may help someone.



**It's not over when the funeral is done and everyone goes back to their lives. That's when the journey down the grief highway begins.**



## 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, sometime 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.

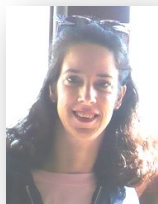
## Children of BPUSASTL's Board Representation



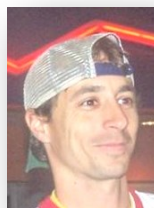
**Julie Bardle**  
Daughter of  
**Marilyn Kister**  
Newsletter  
Editor & **Wright**  
City Group  
Facilitator



**Joseph DeMarco**  
Son of  
**Theresa DeMarco**  
Treasurer



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



**Mickey Hale**  
Son of  
**Jacque Glaeser**  
Secretary



**Jeffrey Morris**  
Son of  
**Cindy Morris**  
Troy Group  
Facilitator



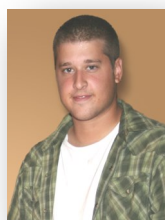
**J. P. Rosciglione**  
Son of **Terre**  
**Rosciglione**  
Trivia  
Coordinator



**Patrick Salyer**  
Son of **Anne Marie**  
and **Steve Salyer** &  
**Wright City Group**  
Facilitator



**Rosie Umhoefer**  
Daughter of  
**Rosann Umhoefer**



**Matthew Wiese**  
Son of **Kim Wiese**



**Arthur Gerner / Emily Gerner**  
Son & Granddaughter of  
Deceased **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 pages 2-3 of this newsletter)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ NAME OF CHILD(REN) \_\_\_\_\_

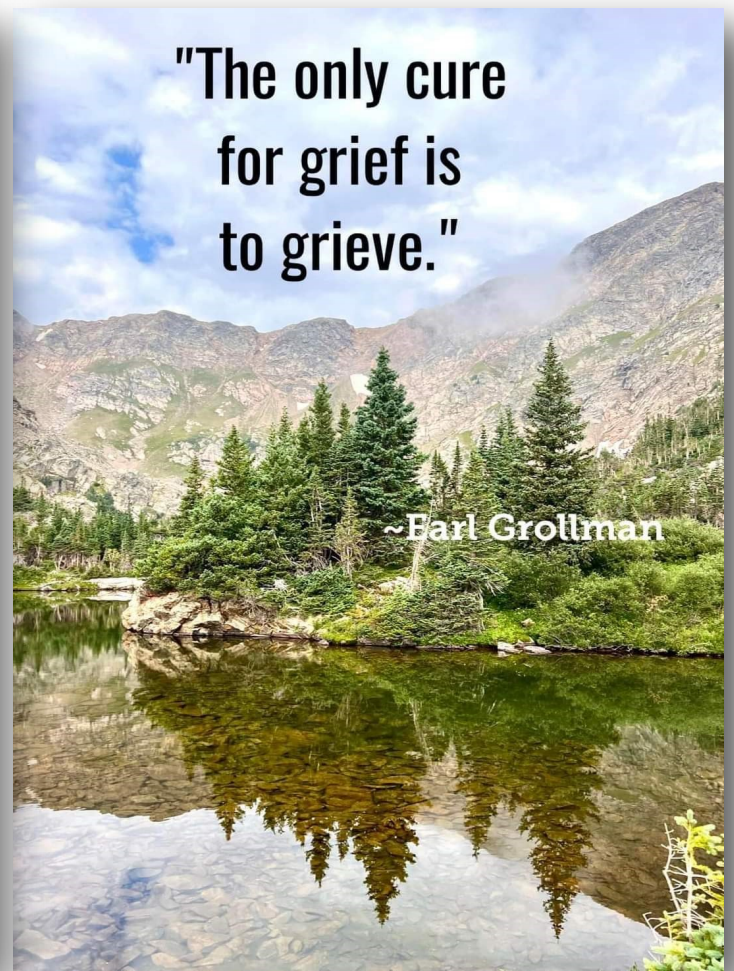
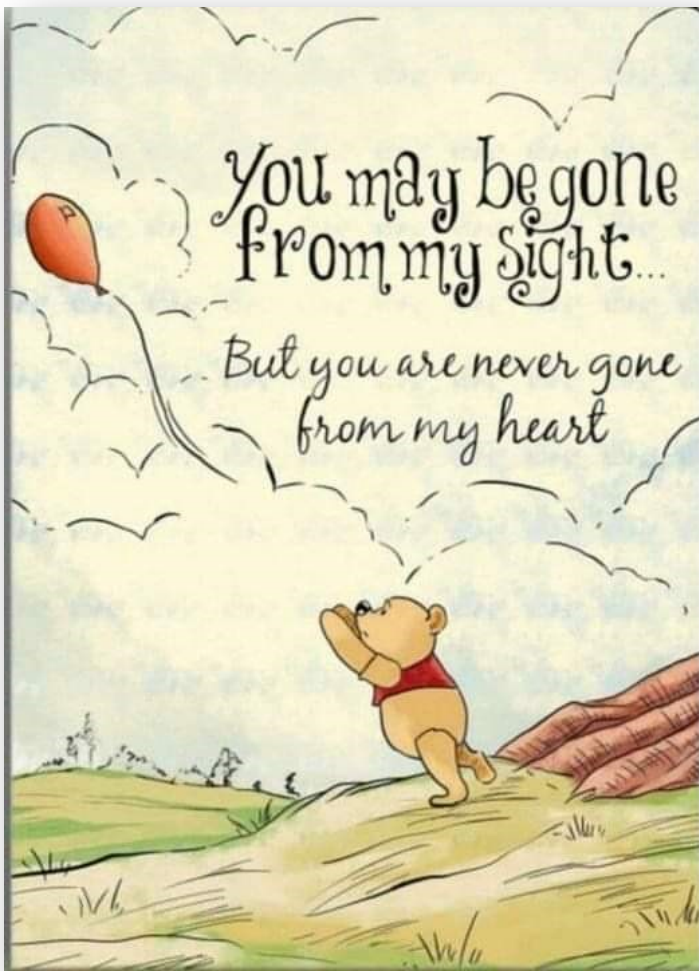
I WOULD LIKE A LOVE GIFT DEDICATED TO MY CHILD(REN) IN THE MONTH OF: \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE IN LOVING MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL TO: Bereaved Parents of the USA-St. Louis,  
P. O. BOX 1115, ST. PETERS, MO 63376**

I will learn to live  
in the sunshine  
of your life  
instead of the  
dark shadow  
of your death.

- Unknown -



## 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