



**Bereaved
Parents
OF THE USA**
ST. LOUIS, MO

July / August 2026

Chapter Newsletter

VOLUME 49 - NUMBER 4



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FOR YOUR LOVE GIFT

WHEN THE DAYS ARE LONG AND YOUR SPIRIT IS WEARY

May you find quiet moments to breathe deeply and rest.
When GRIEF presses close, may you be surrounded by
gentle hands.

May hope take rest even in the hardest soil and may
small signs of GOODNESS find their way to you!

In the SILENCE, may you feel the Presence of God,
not always in ANSWERS, but in nearness.

And when you take your next step,
no matter how uncertain, may you walk with the QUIET
STRENGTH of those who know.

THEY ARE DEEPLY LOVED!



—Author Unknown, submitted by Doris Young

**In Memory of
Darren Young**

12.19.68

10.22.89

Some versions of them only
exist in you.

Izzy Roe

Admit it
there's no easy way out.

You can't run from it.
You can't talk your way out.
You can't hide.
You can't deny it.
You can't let it slide.

You can't think your way out.
Grief lingers, it hovers.
It's heavy and sneaky.

It's going to remain.
Your life has changed.
You can cry and complain (a lot)
and sometimes you may feel deranged.

Yet, we have choices.
We can lock our heart away
and withdraw from the world
and live in constant dismay.

None of that
changes the fact.
So maybe we can change our response
and learn a new way to react.

Lend a hand.
Share our abundance.
Give a smile and
create a new countenance.

It's not a cure.
there is no such thing;
but reach out to others
and see what good it can bring.

Thank You!
FOR YOUR LOVE GIFT



**In Loving Memory of
Rosie Umhoefer**

Poem by Rosann Umhoefer,
Rosie's mom - BPUSASTL



**In Loving
Memory of
Eric Korte
5/1985 - 7/2015**



Wildflowers

Standing in a meadow with colors all around dancing wildflowers
not making a sound.
Some fragile, some strong, that's how I feel.
Today as I stand here it all seems so real.
The breeze is warm as it caresses my face.
I wonder how long I can keep up this pace.
I have been chasing something that I can't explain.
I only know that today I am in pain.
Standing here I feel such sorrow.
I wonder if I can face another tomorrow.
I am missing my son, my very heart.
I can't begin to understand it, I haven't from the start.
He was made of summer, wild and free.
The fact that he's not here seems impossible to me.
I watch a butterfly moving to and fro.
As if guarding a secret that only it seems to know.
I begin to realize how beautifully fragile life can be.
It's as if the meadow is whispering just to me.
I am reluctant to move on, I don't want to leave.
Yet I am left with a feeling that I need to believe.
He was standing in the meadow watching over me.
For he was made of summer, wild and free.



Eric's mom
Lorna Korte
May, 2026





Surviving Grief ✓

3h · ⚙️

One of the strangest, hardest parts of grief is not the big milestones, birthdays, holidays, anniversaries. Those come with their own tidal waves, yes, but at least you can brace for them.

You circle the dates on the calendar and stockpile tissues.

What no one told me is how brutal the 'empty days' are. The plain old Sundays. The mornings when you wake up, roll over, and remember they're not here. It's not a special date. It's not an event. It's just another ordinary day without them. And somehow, that emptiness is louder than anything else.

Because the way grief works is you can make breakfast, pick out what you're going to wear, and still there's this hollow space where a whole person used to be. It turns the quiet into something loud.

I've had days I've stared at the clock actually wishing for the day to just be over, because when you're grieving time likes to drag itself out on those empty days, turning minutes into hours, hours into weeks.

Here's the thing...sometimes, in those blank stretches of day, I do still notice the tiniest slivers of light.

The memories that make me smile. The smell of something that brings back a time when my days weren't so empty. These are the things that fill the emptiness enough that I don't want to waste the time I have left. I want to fill it with something important and meaningful.

By doing that I'm finding purpose every day.

A reason to look forward to the hours ahead.

Some of the time I'm happy, some of the time I'm sad, and some of the time both things can happen on the same day, the same hour, the same breath.

Empty days don't mean we have an empty heart. It just means we've got to figure out how to live inside the quiet.

Doing that sometimes with tears and sometimes with laughter.

So, if you're staring down an empty day today...I know it drags.

I know it hurts.

But I also know you're still here...and maybe, there's a reason for that.

Gary Sturgis

Author: 'SURVIVING GRIEF - 365 Days A Year'



Surviving Grief

Support That Surrounds

2026 Community Grief Support Programs

GRIEF CAMP

Stepping Stones is a free camp for kids ages 6-15 who have lost a loved one.

Stepping 
Stones

August 7-9, 2026

Camp Wyman in Eureka, MO

WALKING WITH GRIEF

Join fellow grievers as we walk and talk about our grief.

September 19, 2026 - 10am to 12pm

Forest Park, exact location TBD

CHILD LOSS RETREAT

Weavings is a free grief retreat for mothers who have lost a child.

Weavings 

October 23-25, 2026

Pallottine Renewal Center in Florissant, MO

For more information or to register for any of these events, please contact BJC Hospice at:

GRIEFSUPPORT@BJC.ORG OR 314-953-1676

<https://www.bjchospice.org/Grief-Support/Community-Grief-Support>

BJC 
Hospice
Every Moment

As a resource, there are many podcast episodes at the link below.



Child Loss Supp...

2d · 🌐

The problem is we might miss the signs if we have our heads down all the time.

Sit in silence more, walk in nature without distraction....

Listen to this new podcast episode here:
<https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/child-loss-grief-support-for-moms-coping-after-the/id1781528995>



If you want more signs from heaven, you need to listen more, slow down, and ask for them.”



~ Lisa Boehm

Host: *Child Loss & Grief Support Podcast*

A Gentle Goodbye

Do not grieve that I am gone
for I am not far away.

In quiet wind and morning light
I VISIT EVERY DAY!

When leaves are dancing in the trees,
or rain taps on your windowpane,
I am the HUSH between your thoughts -
The ECHO in your name.

I am the WARMTH in the winter chill,
the calm on summer's blue,
the stillness in your silent prayer—
I WALK THE WORLD WITH YOU!

So do not let your SORROW stay,
let love and memory rise.

In every breath, in every step,
You hold my Spirit's Light!

—Author Unknown,
submitted by Darren's Mom,
Doris

Grief doesn't have to match

In my own journey through grief, and in observing the grieving of others, I've noticed a desire for matching. People often want things to match up in some way that helps us make sense of grief, or predict how it will behave, or feel less alone in it. For example, if a person's grief reaction looks like someone else's (or if they imply that someone else's grief should look like theirs), that might help them feel that they are normal. If a person believes their grief will always look and feel the same over time, that could make it seem more predictable. If a person reads something about grief that makes sense to them, they may hope it will apply to them. In all of this, I see a hope that there can be some control over grief.

But in my experience, almost nothing matches. My grief one day doesn't necessarily match another day, and a year might not match another year. It certainly doesn't match what I thought it would look like; to be honest, I had a limited understanding of grief before my brother died. When I talk with other grieving people I find we have a lot in common, especially those who have lost



siblings, but there are always elements that don't match at all. And my grief for different people in my life doesn't match either. See this photo of my grandfather (Frank Sr.) and my brother (Frank III) preparing to share one of our countless family dinners? These men are both gone. I miss them both terribly, and very differently.

My message for you today is that it's OK for your grief not to match. Your grief one day doesn't have to match another day. It doesn't have to match another person's experience, even if you are grieving the same loved one. Doesn't have to match what you thought it was going to be, what some famous author said it was like, how you have grieved someone else. ***It doesn't have to match.*** And if you're uncomfortable with not being certain, and not being able to predict, get comfortable with that discomfort. It can create a lot of extra pain to try to shoehorn your grief into someone else's plan, a cultural or religious structure, even your very own plan or structure, literally anything other than its own form. Let it be what it is. Show up to it, be curious, and see what it has to tell you.

Sarah Lyman Kravits

<https://www.lifewithoutjudgment.com/>

Welcome, bereaved sibling.

First things first – you are not alone. Many join you in the community of bereaved siblings, and the more we are able to lean on one another, the more we can continue on. Your presence here is an important part of connecting with others. We are so glad you are here, even as we are heartbroken at the reason why you have come.

Sometimes called the “forgotten mourners,” bereaved siblings have a significant — and frequently unmet — need for support. Although some believe the loss of a sibling is somehow less intense than the loss of a child, a parent, or a spouse, this is not at all the case in a general sense. Individuals may have more or less intensity around any loss they experience, depending on their own circumstances, but siblings often feel a devastating loss. In many cases, people have never known a time when their siblings were not a part of their lives, and for this reason cannot conceive of them being gone. This tremendously confusing loss may turn one's sense of reality upside down and lead to deep and challenging questions of trust, faith, and identity.

Here are some particular features of sibling loss that you may relate to:

- › The nature of the sibling relationship, which is for many people the longest relationship in life; siblings are “life witnesses” who know us as no one else can
- › The feeling that with your sibling gone you have lost past, present, and future
- › The challenge of supporting one's parent(s) through the loss, especially when extreme parental grief constitutes an additional loss for the bereaved sibling
- › New roles and responsibilities for surviving siblings as the family structure shifts
- › For adult siblings, regret over distance or lack of time spent
- › The depth of sibling connection, regardless of proximity or emotional closeness, and often despite conflict
- › The tendency for others to idealize the deceased sibling
- › Sense of a part of self missing, physically/emotionally and in terms of memory

Circumstances of sibling loss, and the accompanying needs, vary widely. An adult losing a sibling, for example, has different needs than a child who has lost a sibling. Someone whose sibling died by suicide experiences different circumstances than someone who lost a sibling to cancer. We can learn from one another, sometimes when we connect with someone whose circumstances resemble ours, other times when the loss of a sibling is the only thing we have in common.

BPUSA offers support for siblings:

- › All [chapters](#) welcome bereaved siblings.
- › A few [chapters](#) are exclusively for siblings, and we hope to have more. If you do not live near these chapters, we invite you to [start a sibling-specific chapter of your own.](#)
- › Our Annual Gathering Conference features workshops focused on siblings as well as sibling-specific activities and a gathering spot.

Best regards,

The Board of Directors

Contact Us

My Garden of Grief

I have a beautiful garden,
And it's not the kind you think.
It's a different kind of garden,
It's a garden grown from grief.

The seeds were planted not long ago,
But the roots, they go down deep.
The roots are anchored in a love,
For a person I could not keep.

Others who pass my garden by,
Don't get my garden's needs.
As from the outside looking in,
They see an unkempt mess of weeds.

"You see that part over there,"
They say...
"It's bushy and overgrown..."

*I'll leave it as it is,
I thank.
It's meant to be as shown.*

*It's overgrown and it's bushy
To make a kind of shade
It gives me a place of solitude
Aloneness is its' name.*

"But how bout that flower over there
This plant... it blocks the light,
It looks wilted and so droopy
It looks a sad, sad sight."

*Well that's because it is, I say.
You just nailed the name of that flower -
It's a beautiful bloom of sadness,
And it's meant to droop NOT tower.*

"And what about over there", they say,
"Just stems, without any bloom,
Remove those dreary, bud-less flowers
They look like doom and gloom."

*Those ones I call hope.
And I know that they will grow,
They were germinated in a love
When their ready, buds will show.*

*Come on with me, I grumble.
I'll show you all the rest.
My grief cultivated this garden,
So I can explain it best.*

*These ones are perennials,
They'll come again each year,
These ones I call joy
Because they remind who was here.*

*And those annuals over there,
They sprouted for a reason.
Named shock, guilt, fear, or anger.
Annuals stay for just a season.*

*And that beauty over there,
The red rose with the sharp thorn...
It pricks... when it's picked
Pain... from a love born.*

*This is my garden -
My garden grown from grief,
It may look disorderly to you
But to me, I know every leaf.*

*"This garden that you have,
It's like nothing that I've seen,
It's actually very beautiful
Now that I know what it all means."*

*Well thank you, I reply.
But you never should have judged.
For every weed and every flower
Are griefy grown from love.*

Grief - The Write Way

Weekly Word of Hope



One of the things we often get to hear about, after the death of our child, are what is called the “Five Stages of Grief, which are: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

BUT there is no such thing!

These five stages were introduced in a book called “Death and Dying” by psychiatrist Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, back in 1969. It was inspired by her work with terminally ill patients, as her reflection of what they go through in facing their own mortality when diagnosed with a disease they cannot recover from.

It was *not* a pattern for grieving the death of a loved one. They are not stops on some kind of grief timeline.

As a matter of fact, it seems that later in her life, Kübler-Ross noted that these five stages are not a linear and predictable progression, even for the terminally ill, and that she regretted writing them in a way that was misunderstood.

So, if you have been concerned that you haven’t been following these five stages of grief, you can be greatly relieved!

Picture in your mind a big messed-up ball of yarn. That is more like what our grief is like! It is a tangled mess of emotions, that can change to extremes in an instant, and even have multiple opposite feelings going on inside of us at the same time!

For most of us, when we learn that feeling like we are going crazy is considered normal for someone whose child has died, it helps ease the burden a bit of thinking we are “doing it wrong”.

Yes, those first three years or so can feel like nothing but a tangled mess, and you are the only one who can determine what grieving your child needs to be for you.

A final thought



Yes, at some point the messy ball of grief will start to untangle itself. But with a mess like that, doesn't it make sense that it will take quite a while? It is a process, one that takes so much longer than we want it to. But those of us who were there ourselves at one time, and are now further along, can assure you that it *will* happen.

And when it seems to come back here and there over our lifetime, the mess is smaller, and untangles more quickly.

Offering Hope Through Him,
Laura D



MEETING TIMES & PLACES

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



<u>BUSINESS / FACILITATORS MEETINGS</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>
ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME!	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
CONTACT: Mike & Jeanne Francisco 636.233.8490			

GROUP MEETINGS	MEETING LOCATION	FACILITATOR(S)	DAY	TIME
BPUSASTL—St. Peters / St. Charles, MO	Life Gate International Church 7575 Veterans Memorial Pkwy. St. Peters, MO 63376 Please check the website for any updates.	Mike & Jeanne Francisco 636.233.8490	1st Thursday - Please contact facilitators for meeting status	7:00 pm
St. Peters / St. Charles, MO—Siblings Facilitator	Facilitator TBD	Contact info above		
Wright City Group	Discontinued meetings. Feel free to call one of us.	Anne Marie Salyer 972.740.9702 Marilyn Kister 636.634.6019		
Troy Group	Dept. of Health Conference Rm #5 Health Dept. Drive Troy, MO 63379	Cindy Morris 314.954.1810	1st Wednesday	7:00-9:00 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) *Be sure to contact MaryAnn before attending	MaryAnn Lemonds 314.282.7453 (landline) 314.330.7586 (cell) SurvivingOUL@gmail.com	Sundays *To confirm dates, contact MaryAnn before attending	5:00 pm
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
Grief Support Group	Ferguson Library 35 N. Florissant Road St. Louis, MO 63135	Pat Ryan 314.605.3949	3rd Saturday	2:00 pm
BPUSA Virtual Bereaved Sibling Chapter — Ages 18+	TBD	TBD		

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

Representation in Lieu of Meetings

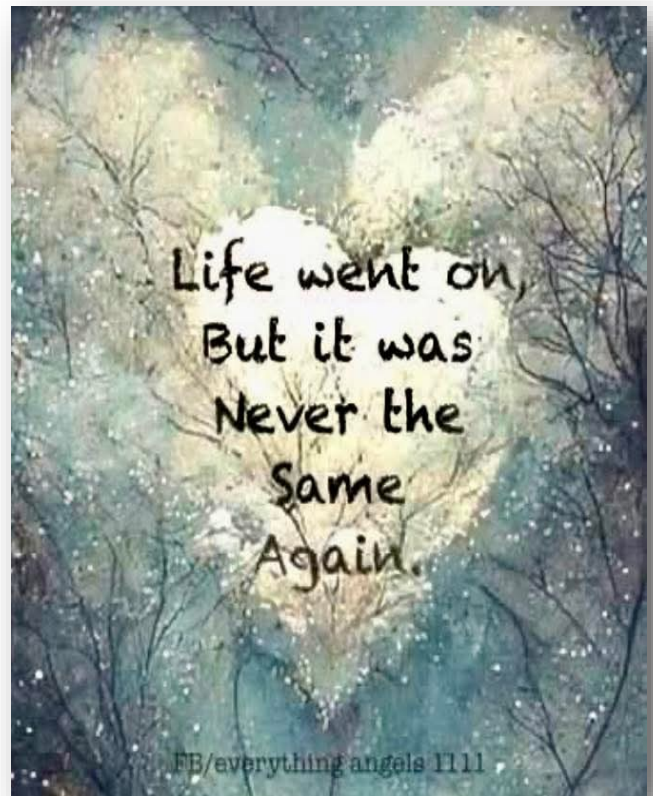
Tri-County, MO	Brenda Wilson 573.438.4559
OPEN ARMS (Parents Left Behind)	Kathy Dunn - 314.807.5798 kathydunn333@yahoo.com

Newsletter Submissions

Cut-off date for our next issue is **September 15, 2026**

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, 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.

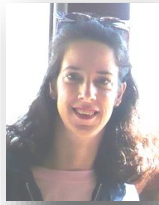
Children of BPUSAS^tL's Board Representation



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



Jeffrey Morris
Son of
Cindy Morris
Troy Group
Facilitator



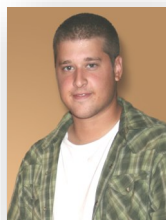
J. P. Rosciglione
Son of Terre
Rosciglione
Trivia
Coordinator



Patrick Salyer
Son of Anne Marie
and Steve Salyer



Rosie Umhoefer
Daughter of
Rosann Umhoefer



Matthew Wiese
Son of Kim Wiese



Arthur Gerner / Emily Gerner
Son & Granddaughter of
Deceased Margaret Gerner
Founder of BPUSAS^tL

Children of BPUSAS^tL's Special Events



J. P. Rosciglione
Son of Terre
Rosciglione
Trivia
Coordinator

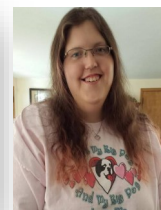


Aaron Cole
"Aaron's Ms.
Courtney"
Trivia Coordinator

Valene Connell
Daughter of Chris
Connell
Candlelight
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 _____

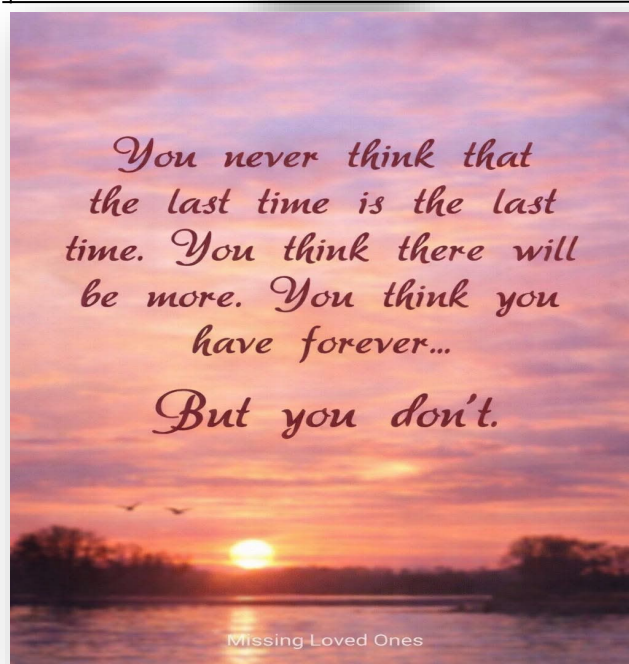
CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____ NAME OF CHILD(REN)

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**





Finish this thought...

*The hardest part of my grief
right now is _____.*

Surviving Grief

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