



mayday

Volume 36 • Issue 1



January 2019

Sharing and Discussion | Aurora, Illinois

Next Meeting: January 21, 2019

Tough day? Here are some people to call:

Loss of a Parent:

Kari Frantzen

Father died July 22, 1991

☎ 815.498.2257

Loss of a Sibling:

Wendi McKenzie

30 Year old Brother died

January 18, 2009

☎ 815.341.8856

Loss of a Child:

Dean Hufsey

Son died August 16, 2001

☎ 224.402.2266

Loss Connected to Military Service:

Andy Weiss

Soldier died 4 MAR 2012

☎ cell: [630.235.7260](tel:630.235.7260)

Loss of Friend:

Mary Wolff

Friend Died January 18, 2011

☎ 630.450.3880

Other Important Meetings

| | | |
|--|---------------|----------|
| Catholic Charities Northwest Office in Des Plaines | 2nd Sunday | 7 - 9 pm |
| Spouse Meeting, Northwest Office | 2nd Wednesday | 7 - 9 pm |
| Catholic Charities Near North Office | 3rd Tuesday | 6 - 8 pm |
| Holy Family Church, in Inverness | 3rd Wednesday | 7 - 9 pm |
| St. Paul the Apostle - Joliet | 3rd Wednesday | 7 - 9 pm |
| Carmel High School, in Mundelein | 4th Thursday | 7 - 9 pm |
| St. Joseph's Church, in Wilmette | 4th Sunday | 7 - 9 pm |
| St. Daniel the Prophet - Wheaton | 4th Thursday | 7 - 9 pm |
| South Suburban Worth | 4th Sunday | 7 - 9 pm |

Contact Catholic Charities ☎ 312.655.7283

Compassionate Friends: The 2nd Friday of each month at 7:30pm ATt Presence Mercy Center Hospital Behavioral Health Building Dunleavy/Walsh Conference Room 1325 N. Highland Avenue, Aurora. Park in the east parking lot and enter through the three story Behavioral Health Building facing Lake Street. Chapter Leader: Sherry Stewart 630-779-7756

Survivors of Suicide Naperville

Bereavement Group for those that have had someone die by suicide. Meets the SECOND and FOURTH Saturday of each month from at Fox Valley Institute 640 North River Road Suite 108 Naperville, IL. Questions or registration (not required) email group@fvinstitute.com or call 630.718.0717 ext 0

Mourning After Support Group

Support Group for young widows, widowers or other adults grieving the loss of a partner. This group meets at 7pm on the first Thursday of the month in room 10 of the Elburn Community Center, 525 N. Main St. in Elburn

Grieving Parent Support (GPS)

Provides drop in support for parents who have suffered the death of a child. It meets on the second Thurs. of the month at 7pm in room 10 of the Elburn Community Center, 525 N. Main St. in Elburn. Pre-registration required

DBSA

Provides support and education to those with mood disorders, their families, and friends. Meetings 7:30-9:00 pm 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month. Location: Behavioral Health Services Building, Central DuPage hospital. 27W350 Highlake Rd, Entrance one, Winfield. Contact Person: Judy Kramer: ☎ 630. 466.4851.

NAMI Dupage County Suicide Loss Connection Group: For anyone who has had a friend or family member die by suicide. Discussion facilitated by Sherry Bryant, LCSW and Patty Johnstone, Nami Dupage Resource Support Director. 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month. from 7:00 to 8:30pm at the NAMI Dupage Community Center. 115 N. County Farm Road Wheaton, IL. 60187



Survivors of Suicide (S.O.S.) is a self-help support group for anyone who has lost a friend or relative to suicide. We believe healing and resolution come through the support and strength of others who have been there.



Other Up & Coming Events

SAVE THE DATE

A Timed 5K Run

Join us for this
event on

Saturday
May 11, 2019



© Can Stock Photo - ceph432424

love gifts

A Love Gift may be given to S.O.S. in the name of, or memory of, a loved one who has died.

Love Gifts were received from:

No Love gifts received this month.

Love Gifts ensure future mailings and brochures. Love gifts may be designated for the purchase of books on grief or suicide to be added to the library.

December Recap

Thank You!

Kim Tarver for opening up and setting up the December meeting room.

Jessica Valdespino for offering to set up the Jan meeting room.

Cheryl Wetherhot, Jessica Valdespino, Sue Miller, Nancy Voross, Dawn Sperry, Daniel Deluna, for bringing food to the Dec. meeting.

Please feel free to bring treats in for the January Meeting

Attendance in December:..... 18

Financial Update

SOS is now a line item with it's own budget under SPS. We will continue to list all income and expenses as we always have. This move insures the perpetuity of SOS... (July 1, 2013– June 30, 2014)

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Starting Income: | \$4100.00 |
| Love Gifts..... | \$125.00 |
| Projected expenses: . | \$189/month—\$2268 |
| Newsletter printing | \$810 |
| Stamps..... | \$67.50/month |
| Books..... | \$1072.00 |



Remembering...

January 14th to February 10th

Birthdays, death dates and wedding anniversaries are especially trying days for those who are survivors. This section acknowledges those important dates. A * symbol denotes the first anniversary since death, an especially painful time when cards and calls could help so much. Our hearts and prayers are with those listed below and for others who have dates this month

*Please also note the dates that these are printed. You may have a loved one, for example, who have a birthday or Heaven date in July, but because of the way the newsletter printing falls, it may be listed the month prior or the month after.

Mary Jane and Arthur Aagesen, whose daughter, Carla Sue Carey, lived from September 21, 1961 to January 18, 2002.

Jade Boczek, whose mother, Laura Boczek, lived from January 14, 1963 to October 11, 2005.

Delbert & Alta Bush, whose son, Jeffrey Bush, lived until January 25, 1998.

Nick Cabral, whose daughter, Silvia Cabral, lived from February 1, 1977 to April 21, 1997.

Patti Cichon, whose mother, Barbara Jager, lived from September 18, 1927 to January 21, 2011.

Linda and Jerry Dalton, whose grandchild Chass Dunahoe, lived from March 27, 2002 to January 28, 2014.

Daniel & Emily Deluna, whose daughter Mariah Michelle Deluna, lived from January 22, 1998 to September 11, 2018

Nancy Ducharme, whose brother, Dave Gingrich, lived from January 23, 1945 to July 15, 2002.

Janet Duran, whose daughter Danielle Duran lived from November 24, 1984 to February 8, 2013.

Jennifer Ensign, whose husband, Carl Ensign, lived from August 1, 1964 to January 22, 2008.

Lori Ferrell, whose brother, Brian Leden, lived from August 4, 1963 to January 30, 2004.

* **Elizabeth Fredrick**, whose daughter Stephanie, lived from June 5, 1997 to February 9, 2017.

Sue Grag, whose brother, Paul Wilczynski, lived from July 18, 1962 to January 20, 2004.

Jaclyn Harwey, whose uncle, Bill Moscoff, lived from January 16, 1952 to February 4, 2010.

Rachel Hathaway, whose friend, Ben Wilkinson, lived from April 12, 1993 to January 18, 2011.

Anthony Hellem, whose sister, Mary Milanesi, lived from December 9, 1956 to January 26, 2005.

Rich and Kathy Hess, whose daughter, Samantha (Sammy) Hess, lived from August 11, 1989 to January 25, 2012.

Chris Holt, whose sister, Laura Boczek, lived from January 14, 1963 to October 11, 2005.

Bruce Irwin, whose husband Duane D. Larson, lived from August 29, 1961 to February 8, 2016.

Kathleen Iszotic, whose son Matt, lived from January 31, 1991 to December 8, 2011.

Devyn Johnson, whose best friend, Bianca Acosta, lived from January 16, 1992 to November 24, 2008.

Suzanne Larson-Kolomyjec, whose brother, Bradley Johnson, lived from January 30, 1962 to April 29, 2000.

Sylvia and Michael Kurtz whose first husband & father, Arnold "Bud" Kurtz, Jr., lived from October 19, 1964 to January 18, 1998.

Otto & Shari Leden and Todd Leden, whose son and brother, Brian Leden, lived from August 4, 1963 to January 30, 2004.

Denise & Cody Lewis, whose husband/Father, Gerald E. Lewis, lived from January 31, 1953 to June 24, 2009.

Rachel Long, whose boyfriend, Curtis Glen, lived from February 3, 1980 to September 24, 1996.

Jordan Martner, whose close friend, Ben Wilkinson, lived from April 12, 1993 to January 18, 2011.

Wendi McKenzie, whose brother, Chad Stead, lived from March 21, 1978 to January 18, 2009.

Scott Mitzel, whose sister, Linda Bakken, lived from December 19, 1950 to January 31, 1987.

Joyce Mohr, whose brother, Carl Ensign, lived from August 1, 1964 to January 22, 2008.

Constantina Muñoz, whose brother, Gerardo Valle, lived until January 22, 1998.

Karen O'Brien, whose partner, Tony Rogulic, lived from January 19, 1947 to November 28, 2003.

Pat O'Hara, whose brother, William Moscoff, lived from January 16, 1952 to February 4, 2010.

Jeannie Owen, whose best friend's husband Duane D. Larson, lived from August 29, 1961 to February 8, 2016.

Debra Payton, whose son Phillip Payton, lived from January 25, 1990 to January 22, 2013.

Carolyn & Joe Panozzo, whose son, Michael Panozzo, lived from September 6, 1979 to January 22, 2007.

Pat and Elaine Phillips, whose son, Lee Phillips lived from May 1, 1971 to January 29, 2004.

George & Diana Poulos, whose daughter Danielle Marie lived from January 1, 1988 to January 14, 2007.

Cindy Reid, whose daughter Michelle Gipson, lived from April 20, 1986 to January 31, 2014.

Emily Roberts, whose friend, Ben Wilkinson, lived from April 12, 1993 to January 18, 2011.

Jeff and Jill Roberts, whose son Ben Roberts, lived from January 22, 1992 to August 26, 2011.

Mary Saur, whose son, Sean, lived from June 22, 1977 to January 22, 2006.

Continued on Page 4—Remembering...

Please let us know if any dates/spellings are incorrect, so that we may correct them.



Remembering...

Continued from Page 3

Sharon Schule and Elizabeth Schule, whose son and brother John M. Schule, lived from August 26, 1992 to January 27, 2013.

Janet Sosa, whose son Andrew Sosa, lived from January 18, 1969 to September 12, 2013.

Rick and Leticia Stark, whose son, George Terrazas, lived from February 20, 1980 to January 29, 1999.

Jessica Valdespino, whose partner/father of children, Casey Erik Banas lived from January 31, 1977 to June 10, 2017.

Gracieta Vargas, whose husband, Javier Vargas, lived until February 1, 1999.

Debi Weidner, whose father, Paul Brewer, lived from January 21, 1931 to August 25, 2001.

Mike Weiland, whose son Christopher, who lived from October 24, 2002 to January 30, 2015.

Tim & Debbie Wilkinson, whose son, Ben, lived from April 12, 1993 to January 18, 2011.

Erica Wolff, whose father, Frederick Carl Wolf, lived from January 25, 1980 to April 23, 2001.

Mary Wolff, whose friend Ben Wilkinson lived from April 12, 1993 to January 18, 2011.

Vickie Wurtz and Family, whose sister, Carla Sue Carey, lived from September 21, 1961 to January 18, 2002.

Bob and Karen Wych, whose son, Ryan Wych, lived from January 25, 1980 to April 23, 2001.

days of thanks

In a year when much
was given,
much was taken too.
So we pause and give
thanks
for what now is.
Think, too, of what once
was,
and we are grateful.
For the threads of lives
gone by,
threads that enrich the
fabric of this the life we
know.

~Lois Wyse
Lifted with Love
SBS, Portland, OR
Nov. 2008

LOVE NEVER DISAPPEARS

Love never disappears...for death is a non-event
I have merely retired to the room next door.
You and I are the same; what we were for each other,
We still are.
Speak to me as you always have; do not use a different tone, do not be
sad.
Continue to laugh at what made us laugh.
Smile and think of me.
Life means what it has always meant.
The link is not severed.
Why should I be out of your soul if I am out of your sight?
I will wait for you; I am not here, but just on the other side of this path.
You see, all is well.
- St. Augustine (354 a.d. -430 a.d.)

Encouraging Words

Some People Say

I wouldn't go to one of those grief meetings. It's morbid— people sitting around talking about the dead. How wrong those people are!

In so many ways, those who attend are saying, "I am hurting now, but I want to go on with my life." They are saying, "I am crying now, but I want to laugh again." They are saying, "I am sick in body and soul; help me get well." I see these things as healthy, not morbid.

It is not easy to walk into a meeting of any kind alone, especially one where the subject is very emotional. But once there, it takes only a few minutes to find out we are not alone—that there are those who care about us and want to help us. We see others hurting and suddenly we want to help them. I don't see that as morbid.

A grieving person wants to talk about their loved one who is no longer physically part of their life. That person died with a tragic suddenness. We want to know why or find a reason or some meaning in that person's death.

Memories of our loved one are all we have left. We have a driving need to hang on to those memories lest we lose that small bit of him/her. It is not morbid to want to keep that small part alive forever, at least in our hearts and minds.

To walk into an SOS meeting is a loud shout— "I want to live and be happy again." It is a cry that "My loved one is dead, but I know he would want me to go on and be a better person for the suffering." It is a confirmation that "Even though part of my life is gone, there is a reason to go on." There is nothing morbid about doing what is necessary in order to re-enter the mainstream life.

~Margaret Gerner

BP/USA Chapter, St. Louis, MO

Edited and lifted with love from The Compassionate Friends Fox Valley IL Chapter.

Scholarship Opportunities

The Todd C. Bryant Memorial Scholarship | \$1,000.00

A \$1,000 scholarship to any college, university, vocational school or community college available to all graduating high school seniors who have lost a parent or sibling to suicide during their high school career and who live in the funding district of The Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley.

The deadline to apply is February 5, 2019.

To apply, call (630) 896-7800 and ask about the Todd C. Bryant Memorial Scholarship #26 or Ellen and Robert Weber #147



From Stephanie



**"You cut off the capacity for grief in your life,
and you cut off the joy at the same time.
They both come up through the same tunnel."
-Actor William Hurt**

it is amazing

**It is amazing that today
it's all gone.
Today I will answer the
phone, say how bad it is,
That I wonder how long
it will take until it doesn't
hurt so much, but I really
know the answer...
This day on the calendar
will never be just another
day for me.
Grief is like weeding a
flower garden in the
summer.
You have to do it over
and over again till the
season changes.**

*From Songs From The Edge,
by Fay Harden (1989).
Copies may be obtained from
Fay Harden
404 E. Butterfly Circle
Gretna, LA 70056
Lifted with love from SBS newsletter,
Portland, OR*

When we are experiencing intense grief, it is hard to remember happiness. As we emerge from the overwhelming darkness, fragments of happiness come.

Each one of us comes to a new meaning of life and ask what is important after someone we love dies. We overhear bits of conversations that strangers are having and we think,

"My (mom, dad, son, daughter, sister, brother, husband, wife, friend) just died and THEY are talking about THAT?" We grieve; we judge; we want to let others know what's important in life. Friends rally for a while. Cards arrive in the mail. Food appears at our door. People treat us gently.....at least for a while. Then life returns to what was normal for those out there while our life continues to be a puddle of tears, guilt, anger, and, emptiness.

I often quote I know-not-who when I say, "If we hadn't loved so deeply we wouldn't hurt so much", or, "Would we have given up everything we had with them if we'd known how it would end?"

After a death by suicide, we try to find others who have experienced a similar loss. It helps us feel less alone. The newly grieving arrive at SOS meetings or find SPS or are connected through others who know about us and then the healing begins. It's S-L-O-W, drawn out, painful. The first time we laugh or smile we may feel guilty. Eventually, we are able to tell humorous stories about our loved one. When someone tells us a story about them, our heart swells with happiness.

Joy & grief. Grief & joy. "They both come up through the same tunnel."

The darkness of winter is a time to go inward and to reflect. Under the ground, plants are sleeping and preparing to awake to a new spring. We fertilize in the fall, perhaps, and we wait. When we are deep into the early beginnings of our grief, our spirit and soul are underground. What we can't remember at the time is that one day spring will come again; we will laugh and rejoice again. Locked in our suffering, thoughts of joy and laughter are far removed.

As I interact with survivors of all ages in and all stages of their grief, I am privileged to witness the transformation. The luminarias that were displayed in front of Stone Manor, home of Suicide Prevention Services, on December 24, are a testament to that moving forward. This year, we had a griever of a short time come into our building to put her loved one's name on a bag and found it to be more devastating than she'd imagined. Another griever called and asked if she could come here to physically light the candle in her bag. Others brought pictures and asked that they be put on bags. Those luminarias represented so much to so many. I witnessed people years down the road come in with a lighter step and make what they considered to be "a silly bag because he/she was silly and would love this."

My staff and I were witness to many stories that were told to us by survivors. It meant so much to them and it certainly meant a lot to us.

My husband, Bill, and I drove to Stone Manor on Christmas Eve to see over 110 glowing bags of love and remembrance. People were walking amongst them looking for "theirs". I, too, got out and looked for "mine." The air was solemn and reverential. The brilliance and beauty were blinding. I cried.

More from Stephanie

Many hands made that display possible; many hands cleaned up the ragged wind-blown bags the next day. Every hand had been touched by a death by suicide of a loved one. Many hands were of young people, even small children. The message was clear: This is where we come to honor and show love to that important person who no longer walks, physically, among us.

"When you light one little candle, you don't stumble in the dark." Many, many, many candles were significantly lit to display love and to let the other survivors know, "You are not alone."

As we move toward longer days but still have many long evenings of darkness, remember that joy and grief are intertwined. We loved. We remember. We are not alone.

Say her/his name, tell the story. Laugh with wild abandonments and cry as if the tears will never cease. Reach out to one another and hold tight. To love and be loved is, indeed, the greatest joy. Put the regrets and guilt aside, as you are able, and relish the life that was. That life lives on in you. Keep their flame burning...

Stephanie

Year-end... Or Beginning... Thanks!

I used to write year end thanks in December and I'm not quite sure what happened to that. I always hesitate because I know I'll forget someone. If that should happen (and it probably will!) call me and I will make it right. It isn't that I overlook you because you aren't valuable; it's that I'm old and my memory is fragile...

and
Kari Frantzen, Kim Tarver, and Sharon Schule, and Liz Schule, and Nancy Patush stand out most especially as my co-facilitators at the Aurora meetings. Thank you.

Maureen Anderson, Jill Roberts, Delia Lopez, Sylvia Kurtz, and Laura Soderberg, for writing notes to survivors each and every month. As a 30 plus year survivor, I STILL value them. To all 5 of you...thank you.

The Advent Christian Church who has lent us their beautiful meeting room for 34 years.

To each and every one of you who come month after month to not only receive but to give back...**YOU** are the heart and soul of SOS

To Megghun Redmon who edits this newsletter every month and gets it to the printer. She also gets the online version out and mails the monthly dates to the card writers.

To my husband, Bill, for waiting up for me and for debriefing me after meetings. Your support is invaluable.



There is a sacredness in
tears.

They are not the mark of
weakness, but of power.

They speak more elo-
quently than 10,000
tongues.

They are the messengers of
overwhelming grief, of
deep contrition and of un-
speakable love.

..... - Washington Irving
**for the
new year**

Where there is pain, let
there be softening.

Where there is bitter-
ness, let there be ac-
ceptance.

Where there is silence,
let there be communica-
tion.

Where there is loneli-
ness, let there be friend-
ships.

Where there is despair,
let there be hope.



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Batavia, Illinois 60510

Phone: (630) 482-9699

Fax: (630) 482-9669

Email: info@spsamerica.org

 www.spsamerica.org

We're going green—how 'bout you?

Please help us save time and resources by electing to receive future copies of *mayday* in your email box.

(We pinky-swear promise we'll never spam you!)

Opt now for an email version of this newsletter so there will be no disturbance or late issues of *mayday* in the future

Moving? Other changes?

Use this form to help us keep our records up to date and stay in touch, or email us at megghun@spsamerica.org.

Please complete and return this form to:

Stephanie Weber
528 South Batavia Avenue
Batavia, Illinois 60510

Subscriber Response Form

- ☐ **Yes**, I'm going green, too! Please email future issues of *mayday* to me at the following address.

Email: _____

- ☐ **No**, not now. Please continue to snail mail future issues of *mayday* to me at the current mailing address on file.

- ☐ **Heads-up—my info has changed or I'm moving!** Please update your records with the following information.

Name

Address

Phone

Email Address

Please return this entire page, including the upper portion with the mailing label attached, to help us accurately update our records.