



HOPELine Newsletter ~ August 2022

A monthly newsletter of HOPE FOR BEREAVED, a not-for-profit community organization providing hope, support and services for the bereaved.

Celebrating 43 Years of HOPE

Our goal, in this 43rd year, is to expand our support, services and outreach to the bereaved with emphasis on helping grieving youth, and to financially solidify HOPE for decades to come.

Thank you to all our readers for your continuing support of HOPE For Bereaved and the services we provide. We are truly blessed and proud to be part of a community that believes in and supports not for profit agencies such as HOPE



This issue of the HOPEline newsletter is sponsored by Jim, Sheila & Scott O'Marah & Family



In Loving Memory of Kathryn 'Katie' O'Marah

If we could have a lifetime wish, a dream that would come true, we'd pray to God with all our hearts for yesterday and YOU. A thousand words can't bring you back; we know because we've tried. Neither will a thousand tears; we know because we've cried. You left behind our broken hearts and happy memories, too. But we never wanted memories, we only wanted YOU! (Author unknown Reprinted with permission from Healing Hearts, the newsletter of the Grief Center of The Southern Tier, Painted Post, NY June, 2004

Share Your Story Underwriting ~ Opportunity

Do you have an article or story to share? We are always looking for articles that inspire *hope, help and comfort* to the bereaved.

Email us at: mail@hopeforbereaved.com

Each month, the HOPELine is sent to 1,200 families throughout Central New York and the United States. If you would like to underwrite the cost of the HOPELine for a specific month, please contact Walt Stein at HOPE at 315-475-HOPE (4673). It costs \$450 to underwrite the newsletter. Your donation will fund 100% of the expense of a newsletter for a month. You may include a special dedication to your loved one.

Thank you for supporting the HOPELine!

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When Heartstrings are Strummed With Sorrow

by Janet Polech 5/19/2022

Our wedding was a wondrous celebration, a *joie de verve*; a culmination of the growth of our love for each other and the anticipation of sharing it with the people who mattered the most to us. Everyone was in high spirits as we gathered on Memorial Day weekend to commit ourselves to a future that was yet to unfold, that we would create together by the joining of our lives and souls.

A treasured wedding gift that we received was thoughtfully compiled by a cousin and his wife. He crafted a poem to capture the spirit of our union, and his wife lovingly toiled to create a needlework of his words, then custom-framed it for a one-of-a-kind keepsake. The decorative needlepoint design included our names and our wedding date, followed by this script:

The road is bright before us,
As hand in hand we start;
United in love forever,
One mind, One soul, One heart.

This precious gift was a lovely summation of the sentiment of our mutual feelings for one another, along with the eager optimism of our future together. I occasionally pull it out of a storage closet as Memorial Day approaches, and as I reread this expression of Love, with its dramatically extended needlepoint loops on the capital letters, it still moves me to this day. My heartstrings get strummed like a harp, with softly flowing notes of beauty that resonate an invisible energy. But now, having been widowed at mid-life, the tones seem different, lowered to a level of bittersweetness due to the absence of my beloved spouse. It has been several years since he passed, but the tender feelings that arise with each occasional reading are still vulnerable now, tinged with the soft pain of loss. Gone is the burning optimism that once made my spirit soar, replaced by a familiar twinge of sorrow in my heart that is hard to describe but deeply felt. Missing is that comfort in my spirit that I shared with my husband, in person.

Loss has been my greatest teacher. Grief can return unexpectedly, without warning. Being susceptible to its jolts and whims, it can be a struggle to deal with the impact of emotions that can erupt with the slightest provocation. Its essence makes itself known to the heart, being more a spiritual and mental sorrow. An intangible essence that makes it hard to grasp and control - but no less real than physical pain.

Grief makes me fragile, and prone to missing my loved ones more during certain times of the year. I find myself getting pulled back into the past as the calendar circles back around to the dates that hold special meaning, that were special to us, our union, etched in my memory. As the

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years progress, more losses accumulate as family members, friends, and others pass on due to aging, disease, or special circumstances. Now it seems that there isn't a month on the calendar that isn't a recurring reminder of loss. But the long Memorial Day weekend is the big one for me, and it starts a domino effect of reminders of loss that topple into each other. The month of May used to be my favorite month, and I still appreciate the warmth that it brings along with the glorious growth and accompanying bursts of beauty. But now a myriad of reminders of loss fill my May calendar - Mother's Day, College graduations, and the extra-long holiday weekend when we were married. June quickly follows with Father's Day, and my deceased spouse's birthday, both of which I now memorialize at the cemetery. My parents passed in July and August. My husband died in September, the World Trade Centers collapsed on 9/11 ... on and on, the reminders continue.

I have learned to anticipate potential feelings of grief that will crop up and make plans to memorialize certain dates with a ritual to honor my loved ones. I visit the cemetery a lot, placing a rose on their graves and pulling out weeds that grew tall around the headstones. I've learned to create distractions too, that fulfill my need for connection. So, I plan get togethers with family or friends to fill some of the emptiness and make new memories while having fun at the same time. The kindred spirits understand, knowing what it's like to lose a spouse, a parent, or other family member. New traditions are born, and the ties of devotion to family and friends become stronger.

During the first year of losing my spouse, I found out that there are a lot of us that are members this club that we didn't want to join. And the words of a stranger stuck with me. "You have to stick together," I was told by a hotel employee as he sympathized with me and my daughter. He was referring to family, as he shared his own story of personal loss with us. Bearing in mind his wise words, as the years progressed my (adult) children and I have remained close, closer even than before their father died. We've been more understanding of each other, with our hard-won lesson of how precious life really is and have been there to support each other when needed. And we make it a point to get together regularly to enjoy each other's company, even though we don't live in the same cities. Devotion to family can be part of the magic of healing. And appreciating the people who are still present in my life has made a positive difference that keeps me optimistic and involved in good times and supported in down times. We're all imperfect, and we all have wounds that can reopen, even when it's not convenient. I've learned that while we have each other present in our lives, we are stronger, more resilient and more loved.





News & Updates from the Staff

August 2022

Dear Friends—We are excited to announce the Board of Directors has hired Alicia Ernest as HOPE’s new Executive Director. Alicia will begin on July 18th and the staff is very excited to welcome her. We look forward to working with Alicia and the future of HOPE under her leadership.



Alicia Ernest is committed to supporting the Mission and values of the community organizations she devotes herself to. **Alicia’s work ethic is driven to effectively meet the expectations of each project while positioning the business toward ultimate success.** She has a proven ability to work effectively and collaboratively with diverse interests.

Previously, she held leadership positions with two of the area’s largest and most successful veterinary practices. Earlier she established her career with Friends of Beaver Lake, Inc.

Alicia’s years of experience in administrative management have trained her to be a highly enthusiastic and self-motivated professional.

In her spare time, Alicia is a Master Naturalist through the Cornell Cooperative Extension. At home, she and her husband have a calico cat and a chocolate, Labrador Retriever.

If you visit HOPE, please stop in and introduce yourself to Alicia

NOTE: HOPE’s 12th annual Remembrance 5kRun/3kWalk for HOPE will be held on August 6th at Long Branch Park. Come and walk /run with friends, put together a team in memory of a loved one or call Walt for volunteer opportunities. There is still time to register online at runsignup.com or call HOPE @ (315)475-9675 for more information. HOPE to see you there!

Please mark your calendars for our annual Remembrance Ceremony at the Butterfly Garden of HOPE on September 10th from 12:00-1:00. There will be a guest speaker, music and remembrance sharing. Come and experience the beauty and tranquility of the Butterfly Garden. Walk the brick pathways and see the beautiful inscribed bricks, the gardens and the peaceful surroundings.



Remember when you shop AMAZON use AMAZON SMILE and choose HOPE FOR BEREAVED - the Amazon Smile Foundation donates back .05% of your purchase price on eligible products to HOPE! <https://smile.amazon.com/>



Please keep Therese Schoeneck, Bob Kriesel, Christy Dannible, Kathy Spencer, Christine Hart, Ann & Dan Emond, Kevan and all our first responders, medical staffs, essential workers and their families in your prayers for good health .



Hope
For
Youth



8/2022

Dear Friends,

Our loved one's death  has brought on many very difficult feelings. We feel angry  and sad  because we miss our loved one. We won't see them again  during this life.  But my friends, part of our grief journey is to discover  ways that our deceased loved one remains with us. Perhaps we look like   our loved one. Maybe we act in similar ways.   We might share the same taste.    As we go along our grief journey, we will learn many ways that our loved one is still with us. Our loved one is a part of who we are in very real ways!  They live on in us in our memories , in the lessons we learn  , and in the love we have in our family.  Our loved who died is ALWAYS with us!  LOVE, Mark 



HOPE

for
Teens & Adolescents



Dear Friends,

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As I reflect on the number of mass killings that have taken place recently, and over the past number of years, I am struck by the number of perpetrators that are adolescents or young adults. What causes some people to become so angry and bitter about life that it seems that killing a targeted group is somehow an answer? There is no one theory or answer to understand this extremely complicated issue. Yet, I do believe there are some challenges that occur during the grief process that could help explain at least some aspects of the problem.

For example, we all experience anger and sadness over the death of our loved one. If we don't address these feelings in grief, we can become depressed and bitter. Over time, we may not only be upset about the death of our loved one, but could become bitter and fearful of life in general. Long-term bitterness can lead to hatred and despair; there may no longer be hope. A person in this state is more likely to make poor decisions, and might become delusional about priorities in life.

By dealing with our feelings in grief and reaching out to others, we can maintain our trust in our grief journey. We can then work through our feelings so they don't build up and get "stuck". We will continue to move on, solve problems, and accept what life offers. We can then appreciate more and find reasons to feel happy!

Take Care, -Mark

Feel free to forward your questions, comments, and ideas to mail@hopeforbereaved.com

I wrote the following in April of 2018 for publication in our monthly HOPEline newsletter and also for our annual Circle of Friends newsletter. Unfortunately, school shootings have continued to occur. It will take more than a village; it will take our entire Nation to solve the problem. We must work together to end the tragedy of school shootings.

Therese S. Schoeneck, Founder, HOPE For Bereaved

Never Again

As a bereaved parent my heart goes out to the families, friends and students affected by the tragic school shootings. I am a grandmother of three teachers/coaches, a guidance counselor and 7 school age children which greatly concerns me for their safety - everyone's safety.

One way to keep our students and teachers safe is to ban and destroy AR-15's and bumpstocks. Assault rifles should only be available to and used by military and some police agencies and personnel. Buy-back programs and better background checks would also help. There is not one good reason for the general public to have AR-15's. **They can't be used for hunting and they are weapons of war.**

The March 14 Parkland assault was the 18th gun related incident in an elementary, middle or high school since January 1, 2018, 45 days into the new year!

The dedication and determination of the students is needed and inspiring. The students WILL succeed where adults have failed. I wanted to add my plea to do what is right so that NEVER AGAIN do we have such a tragedy within our schools or anywhere.

SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

TIME 6:30 to 8:30 PM

- 1st Tues. Aug. 2nd. Death By Drug Overdose
- 1st Wed Aug. 3rd "Young at Heart" & Young Widow/ Widowers
- 2nd Tues. Aug. 9th HOPE For Family & Friends
- 2nd Wed. Aug. 10th Survivors of Suicide
- 2nd Thurs. Aug. 11th *Oswego Gen. Group
- 3rd Weds. Aug. 17th Bereaved Parents & Infant Death
- 4th Thurs. Aug. 25th. *Oswego Gen. Group

Other Support Group Meeting Times

- 3rd Wed Aug. 17th 10am to noon (seniors)
- DAYTIME GROUP FOR WIDOWS/
WIDOWERS

Meetings are held at HOPE's Center,
4500 Onondaga Blvd. Syracuse

All meetings held at HOPE's Center are in person & by ZOOM.

*HOPE For Bereaved - Oswego groups meet at Christ the Good Sheperd 129 E. 4th St. Oswego

One-on-one counseling- Call HOPE (315) 475-4673 (HOPE) for an appointment. Can be done in person or by phone. No charge for counseling, but donations are welcome.

If you would like to help collate the HOPEline newsletter, spend time with friends & enjoy a lunch prepared by the staff, it is held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, 10am to usually 1 and that includes time for lunch.

Masks are optional



HOPE

for bereaved

As you journey from grief to HOPE

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Syracuse, NY 13219
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For you or to share

AUGUST 2022



I found a picture of you
One that I had not seen in a while
I held it gently in my hands
Lost for a moment in your smile

I found a card from you
Written in your own special way
I held gently in my hands
Lost in a moment in that day

Memories, sweet gifts from you
To allow my heart to breath
To let me be lost for a moment
To remember life, not just death

