

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.

The purpose of this newsletter is to help those who have experienced the death of a loved one. Each month, we share information and ideas from bereaved people and professionals to help you through your grief journey. Please know you are not alone. HOPE is here to help you. To talk with a compassionate, caring professional, please call us today at 315-475-HOPE (4673).



Charles W. Rock
Jan. 16, 1942 – Oct. 12, 2019

Diane, Chip, Kathy, Austin, Ashley, Katie, Chris, Carrie, Cecelia, Carleigh, Patrick, Meaghan, Maeve and Charlie

Your hands were strong yet gentle as you held us in your care. You taught us by example every day. No matter what we needed, you were always there. We meant the world to you and you to us which is the reason it was so difficult to say goodbye. You left an emptiness inside our hearts. It seemed somehow you would always be with us; we never learned to let you go.

Your loving family,

“When you’re grieving, you need to do whatever helps you get through the day. Try to treat yourself with kindness whether you want to be alone or with other people. There is no right way or wrong way where grief is concerned.”

Linda Rao

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 Pat Kriesel 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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What Mourners Long to Tell Others

Dear Friend and Potential Comforter,

Perhaps you have noticed my watery, red-rimmed eyes. Maybe you've missed me and wondered where I've been lately. Is my downcast appearance a giveaway? Or is it my forced personality that clued you in? Yes, it is sorrow. Intense grief. It originated from loss, loss of someone dearly loved.



What you see on the outside is just a fraction of the turmoil going on in the inside. Inside I am a crumpled heap on the floor. In an instant, everything changed. The plans I had for the future have been obliterated; the past has disappeared in pain. Surviving another minute seems impossible. My world is no longer safe. I realize I'm not in control. I don't know who is.

The one thing I do know is how uncomfortable I make you feel. Some people can't handle this and I won't see them again. Some people try for a while, but it's hard and they have their own life. It takes a special person to walk with the grieving. Being able to be my friend through all this is one part love, one part God's wisdom, and a hefty dose of perseverance. And it may take more than one of you.

So, what do I need while I walk this mourning road? I probably won't be able to communicate that to you. Sometimes I don't know. There are a few constants, though. I need to feel genuine love, I've lost that you know, love. I need to know that you love me, that God loves me, that I can love again.

I need to feel safe; safe physically, safe emotionally, safe spiritually. I feel alone and that is not safe. When I am with you I need to be able to express myself without feeling judged, be able to cry with you, be angry and mad without scaring you. I need to process my loss and not receive spiritual clichés in response. In grief, I can see right through them and they hurt.

I need prayer. Please pray for me and with me. Sometimes I can't pray on my own. I may be mad at God. Don't let that worry you; God is big enough to handle it, he does not reject me in my grief. But knowing that someone is praying for me is a big help and I can feel it.

Thank you for being there for me when it is hard. It won't always be like this. You may need to tell that to me, actually. I won't always feel so bad. And one day our crying together will change to laughing together. One day I will again feel joy, even while I feel sorrow. One day I will again be able to stand, even while in pain. One day, I will again be able to feel alive. **Thank you my friend!**

*Thanks to **Desiree Harless of the Gateway Church in Southlake, Texas** for granting HOPE permission to use her wonderful article.*

One Year Ago Right Now

It is a day she would have loved — grey, cloudy, overcast, cool for July. She would have loved it. She loved darkness. She loved storms and wind, and the color black. She loved heavy things — fat furniture, big cars, chunky jewelry. Substantial, formidable things. Things Built to Last. Like she was.

By the end, one year ago today, she was none of the above. By the 29th of July 2015, she was small, broken, bruised. One year ago today, she lay silent and immobile. Had done for almost a week. During that week, her smooth, pale skin had grown even more luminous, as though the light of her being was pressing against it from within, making its way out, pushing its way to freedom.

The last time she opened her eyes to me, they were clear, cloudless, grey points of glistening light. I gave her water which I, of course, managed to spill on her. **I was crying so hard I couldn't see what I was doing.** The water was icy cold, just the way she liked it, and yet she responded very little when it hit her skin. She only weakly motioned toward the spill with a crooked finger. Then she realized I was crying. And everything changed.

I watched her call herself back from wherever she had been, from wherever she was going, call herself back to the present, this present, my present, the present in which one of her children was crying. "Don't cry, baby," she mouthed, voiceless. "Please don't cry." How was it that I didn't realize she was dying? I, who have been watching people die for most of my life. How did I not see that my mother was dying?

The past two weeks have been filled with the song *Wait for It* on continuous loop in my head even when it's not playing. Only today, listening to this particular verse have I understood just why. I spent the last decade of my life with my mother. Nine years living with and caring for her, one year trying to figure out how to live without her here in the form I knew so well, the form I miss so much.

It's not that I spent that decade waiting for anything. I wasn't waiting for it to get easier nor for it to be done, over, finished, in some way. I wasn't waiting for my life to begin once hers was ended. In fact, those ten years were some of the richest most fulfilling years of my life, professionally and personally, beyond and including the healing time spent with my mother. And it was healing.

***Death doesn't discriminate
Between the sinners
And the saints
It takes and it takes and it takes
And we keep living anyway
We rise and we fall
And we break
And we make our mistakes
And if there's a reason I'm still
alive
When everyone who loves me
has died
I'm willing to wait for it
I'm willing to wait for it***

Of her four children, I was the one least likely to be chosen as Primary Caregiver in her final years. To say that our relationship for most of my life was "challenging" is the greatest of understatements. And yet the last nine years of her life allowed us to build the kind of relationship I would never have dreamed possible. For that, I am forever grateful.

So, no, I did not spend all those years waiting. But, today, I realize that, in some ways, I *have* been waiting, waiting for something during this past year since her death. I just don't know what it is. I know from what my hospice patients and their families have taught me that following the death of a loved one after a lengthy illness, the Primary Caregiver is often left without an identity, with a nameless emptiness where the Caregiver identity stood for so long. I just never expected it would happen to me. Who am I now that I am no longer my mother's keeper? Who am I now that I am, officially, an orphan? I don't know.

Sitting here writing this as the sun sets, as I approach the actual moment 365 days after her death, I realize there is so much I do not know. I also realize that's ok. Real problems never stem from not knowing. Real problems always result from thinking we know it all. And I so do not Know It All. Still, there are a few things I do know. I know that orphan though I am, I am still my mother's daughter. Nothing can ever change that. It is its own "legacy to protect". And I know they never really leave us. Never. Earlier today, I went for a bottle of wine. When I opened the car door to step out, this awaited me:

My sister, *Debbie*, collected pennies. This is a penny covered in something that has embedded it into the parking lot pavement and allowed a white feather to attach itself to it. Since she died in 2007, Debbie has sent me pennies at the most difficult times of my life. Today, my mother added an angel feather. And Deb out did herself, scattering pennies all around the feathered one: No, they never really leave us. Not after the first year, not after 100 years.



So... ***...if there's a reason, I'm still alive When everyone who loves me has died I'm willing to wait for it ... I'm willing to wait for it.*** And I will do my best to remember I'm not waiting alone.



News & Updates from the Staff & Executive Director

October 2022

Dear Friends,

It was such a true joy to meet all who attended the Run/Walk on August 6th. Thank you for supporting HOPE, sharing in moments of laughter, and inviting me to listen to your stories and journeys. I greatly look forward to meeting many more of you in the coming months.

Each year, HOPE for Bereaved hosts our major fundraiser – Celebration of HOPE! Contributing approximately 1/3 of our annual income, this event enables HOPE to provide counseling, support groups and the HOPELine newsletter, completely free of charge!

While it remains a challenge to host fundraisers in the same capacity as pre-pandemic times, HOPE eagerly anticipates engaging with our community members during the (virtual) 2022 Celebration event!

You can help HOPE spread the word about the 2022 Celebration fundraiser by: sharing our social media announcements, donating items for the auction, and by joining us (virtually) on November 5, during our Celebration of HOPE!



Gratefully,

Alicia, Exec. director

From the Staff– Thank you to all who came out to support our annual Remembrance Run/Walk in August. It was a great day with over 300 participants. A SPECIAL THANK YOU to our dedicated volunteers, including the volunteers from St. Elizabeth Seton Church, who worked tirelessly to make it a fun and successful fundraiser!! A big thank you to our wonderful sponsors, listed below. We are wrapping up and have re-ordered shirts for those who ordered & did not get them. Hope to see you all in 2023!

- ◆ Presenting Sponsor– St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church
- ◆ Gold Sponsors– James P Reagan & Reagan Companies Asset Mgmt.; Plis Funeral Home; HEA Appraisal (Stephen Schoeneck); TOK, LLC (9Round Kick Boxing)
- ◆ Silver Sponsors-Buranich Funeral Home; Empire Merchants North; JE Miller, Inc;
- ◆ Shirt Sponsor: **Jason's Auto Repair**
- ◆ Bib Sponsor: Ozzie Crisalli

A big thank you to all who ordered the Memorial Sponsorship on shirts. These sponsorships helped make the Remembrance Run/Walk a much needed financial success!



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, Reenie Hayes, Bob Kriesel, Christy Dannible, Kathy Spencer, Christine Hart, Lanie Moses, Ann & Dan Emond, Kevan and all our medical, front line workers and their families in your prayers for good health .




Hope
For
Youth

V38
N2 10/2022

Dear Friends,

Autumn  is the time of year  when the earth prepares to become dormant, or "sleep" for the coming winter. In the Fall, it may appear that things around us are dying: trees let go of their leaves, , flowers go back to the soil , and it begins to feel cooler as the days get shorter. ~~Autumn~~ Autumn brings its own beauty, however, with the crisp days  of harvest, and the gorgeous foliage.  In the Fall, the world is **NOT**  dying; it is actually preparing itself for the life  and growth  of Spring! It is the same   for our grief journeys ; dying has its own type of beauty, and grief brings us to learning, growth, and  **LIFE!**

Love, Mark 



**for
Teens & Adolescents**

Dear Friends,

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Autumn can be a time of reflection and introspection. In some ways, it is a season on contrasts. Nature appears to be shutting down, letting go, and even dying; the signs of summer begin to fade. Flowers lose their blooms, leaves start to fall, many birds fly south, and other animals prepare to hibernate. And yet, Fall is a time of great beauty as we witness the incredible colors of the foliage, and we celebrate the bounty of our harvest. The earth braces to “rest” for the coming harsh Winter in anticipation of the Spring. Autumn is a time of letting go of certain things in life, slowing down, and preparing for amazing and unheard-of growth!

Our journey through grief reflects the same pattern. Often, it can seem like a journey of contradictions. We experience intense pain from grieving the death of our loved one; yet we can gain insights that help us to grow in life. The process of letting go will bring difficult times of anger and sadness; however, we may find comfort in the love we share with the deceased. We may go through long stretches where we feel no change, only to realize that this was a period that led to a great insight(s) that give us strength and healing. We trust the seasons to come and go (and come back again); we must trust our grief journey to guide us to improved relationships with others, and lead us to a better, healthier life!

Take Care, - Mark

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

"Today I wrote a note to a bereaved mother. I wanted to say don't believe all those sympathy cards. The ones that say "time heals" and "God only takes the best" and "may your sorrows be lessened." You'll only be disappointed. I wanted to say this is the most heart-wrenching, chest crushing, breath stealing tragedy on earth. I wanted to tell her there will be days she wants to die, and friends who will not understand some of the things she does or says.

I wanted to tell her she will still feel her child's presence at times, sometimes so strongly that it is as if they are dancing just at the edge of whatever activity is going on. And other times she might not feel their presence at all.

I wanted to tell her that her life will not go back, that she will never be the same, because a piece of her left with her child. And that even though the pain does not go away, somehow her soul will eventually make enough room so she can hold it all- the grief, the pain, the joy and the love.

I wanted to tell her... but I didn't. Instead, I wrote this: I'm sending love, for words are pointless right now. And that is the truth."

Wonderfully written by Susi Costello
Shared by Hope's Seed



SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

TIME 6:30 to 8:30 PM

- 1st Tues. Oct. 4th. Death By Drug Overdose
- 1st Wed. Oct. 5th HOPE for Widows/Widowers, Engaged & Significant Others
- 2nd Tues. Oct. 11th HOPE For Family & Friends
- 2nd Wed. Oct. 12th Survivors of Suicide
- 3rd Weds. Oct. 19th Bereaved Parents & Infant Death

Other Support Group Meeting Times

3rd Wed Oct. 19th 10am to noon (seniors)
DAYTIME GROUP FOR WIDOWS/WIDOWERS

Masks are optional

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

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

For **ZOOM** support group meeting
information go to HOPE's website
Hopeforbereaved.com

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



HOPE for bereaved

As you journey from grief to HOPE

4500 Onondaga Blvd.
Syracuse, NY 13219
Electronic Service Requested

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Syracuse, NY
Permit NO. 713



For you or to share

OCTOBER 2022



Thought For the Day



This Halloween, when passing out candy: when a teenager comes to your door, please give them candy without saying, "Aren't you too old to be doing this?" They could be out doing things much worse: drinking and driving, vandalizing, or drugs. It is far better that they are knocking on our doors, asking for candy and having safe and legal fun than having them do dangerous things.

Let them be kids as long as they can be; they are growing up way too fast. Please don't refuse a child candy because they aren't dressed up. Some children are on the autism spectrum or have sensory issues that make dressing up highly uncomfortable, if not unbearable.

Also size doesn't always determine mental age or special needs. One last thing please don't ask "Are you from this neighborhood?". Some children live in areas/neighborhoods that aren't safe to go trick or treat. Just because they aren't from your area/neighborhood don't turn them away. Please don't be judgmental-BE KIND