

Life Times

the newsletter of Bereaved Families of Durham Region

"Bereaved helping the bereaved to learn to live with grief"



ISSUE 1

2012

THE ANGELS' TREE OF LIGHT GATHERS US TOGETHER

UPCOMING EVENTS

On November 24, 2011, a large crowd gathered at the Durham District Board of Education building for our annual Angels' Tree of Light ceremony. And once again the angels and clear lights in their splendor adorned our tree in memory of our loved ones. This year the Angels were purchased. Susan and Vincent Hendricks covered the printing cost of the programs in memory of their daughter Kristina Nicole Hendricks, as well as Mary and John Gallelo in memory of their son John-John Gallelo and their daughter Tanya Marie Gallelo. John and Magda Zoelman covered the cost of the refreshments in memory of their son Dennis John Zoelman, as well as Paul and Joyce Smith in memory of their daughter Paula Marie Smith.

Joyce Schneider welcomed all who were present. We were again honoured to have Tom Easthope give the opening remarks. Jennifer Carter, who spoke graciously from her heart, dedicated our tree this year in memory of her sister Julie Marie Carter. Angela White and Lance White led the assembly in memory of her daughter and his niece Christina Grace Glover, in a moving responsive reading. The honour of lighting the tree this year was given to Michelle, Jason, Kendra and Jocelyn Murray in memory of their son and brother Tyler Jason Murray. Again this year, Lauren Sears sang for us while her father Richard Sears played the guitar. Throughout the evening Tom Wilson softly played guitar music. Light refreshments served after the ceremony provided an opportunity for all to mingle and share in their stories of grief and renewing life.

Thanks to Durham District Board of Education, M&M Meat Shops (Michelle Taylor, Joyce and Paul Smith), Thornton Cemetery Crematorium and Mausoleum, and Tim Horton's.

A very special thank you to everyone who assisted the Committee at various times: Bev Campbell, Jenn Carter, Marlene Charewicz, Joyce Foreman, Caroline Goswell, Amy Larocque, Nichole Dickhoff, Ria Nyland, Joyce Smith, Angela White, Magda Zoelman, Cam Young, Sharon Sears (Staff Support).

Thanks to everyone who helped out before, during and after the event with our tree and food preparations.

Last but not least, thank you to all who supported this event through the purchase of an angel. This ceremony is truly a special event for all of us at Bereaved Families - Durham Region.

Jane Carter
Angels' Tree of Light Committee Chair

February 2012

BFO 13th Mother's Retreat
February 3-5th

Infant Loss Drop-In
Monday 6th, 7-9 p.m.

Valentine's Dinner and Dance
Saturday 11th, 7 p.m.

Evening Drop-In
Wednesday 15th, 7-9 p.m.

Evening Drop-In
Thursday 23rd, 7-9 p.m.

Afternoon Drop-In
Monday 27th, 1-3 p.m.

Reconnect Drop-In for Older Children
Monday 27th, 7-9 p.m.

March 2012

The Walk to Remember
Sunday 4th, 9:15-12 noon

Infant Loss Drop-In
Monday 5th, 7-9 p.m.

Evening Drop-In
Wednesday 14th, 7-9 p.m.

Afternoon Drop-In
Monday 19th, 1-3 p.m.

Evening Drop-In
Thursday 22nd, 7-9 p.m.

Reconnect Drop-In for Infant Loss
Monday 26th, 7-9 p.m.

(April and May Calendar on Page 4)

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

DEAR BFO-DURHAM MEMBERS

I am writing to inform you of the changes to the volunteer Board of Directors. After 18 years of volunteering for BFO-Durham, I decided I needed to step back for a while and recharge the batteries, so to speak. I was delighted that the Board welcomed me back as a director and honored to be elected as Chair, once again. Cheryl Cullis has also rejoined the Board and will act as Co-Vice Chair along with Louise O'Donnell. Marian Rehr, who was acting Chair, will return to her role as Treasurer. Micheline Ball will continue as Recording Secretary; Jane Carter and Margaret Fortune will serve as Directors on the Board. Sharon Sears is on staff as the Director of Member Services; Margaret Devecseri has left BFO-Durham and we wish her well in her future endeavors.

Changes can be unsettling and BFO-Durham has experienced quite a few this past year. But as in the past, along with the help of you, our dedicated members, we continue to support each other and new members through our grief journeys.

At our last meeting, the Board was optimistic for the coming year. Funding is not expected to be of too much concern thanks to some wonderful fundraising events planned by our members through the coming year. The office is working hard to prepare support groups to begin as soon as possible. Our members are also well supported by numerous monthly drop-ins, including Reconnect drop-ins, and one-on-one meetings being held in the office.

This wonderful newsletter, as well as our Web Site, will keep you informed of all BFO-Durham activities and events.

I hope to see you at the Walk to Remember.

Gary Goswell

"THE WORLD IS HUGGED BY THE FAITHFUL ARMS OF VOLUNTEERS"

ONE-ON-ONE SUPPORT FACILITATORS: Jane Carter, Sharon Sears, Charlotte McMorrow, Margaret Fortune, Magda Zoelman, Joan Pearson, Nichole Dickhoff, Denise Love, Jackie Foster, Angie White, Cheryl Clarke, Michelle Murray, Zelda Plinte, Stephanie Agelopoulos, Louise O'Donnell.

LIBRARIAN: Denise Love. **FUNDRAISING:** The Love Gordon Family including Alexis and friends.

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS: Denise Love, Marlene Charewicz, Bev Campbell, Angie White.

ANNIVERSARY LETTERS: Joan Pearson.

WEB SITE: Ronda Evans, Micheline Ball.

NEWSLETTER: Micheline Ball.

TOGETHER WE SHARE A "WALK TO REMEMBER" - SUNDAY, MARCH 4TH, 2012

Bereaved Families of Ontario-Durham Region believes strongly in providing mirrors of hope for one another in a safe, supportive environment. Come this spring, the annual "Walk to Remember" will be held to celebrate and share the memories of the loved ones we have lost.

BFO-Durham invites you to attend the Walk at the Five Points Mall in Oshawa. We kindly ask walkers to bring two photos of their loved ones in order to share the memories of those they will be walking for. One photo will be used to create buttons or lanyards which will be worn the day of the event and the second photo will be placed on the Wall of Memories. BFO-Durham is proud to display this banner in their office.

Creating more memories and being able to reflect upon past memories is a beautiful thing. Memories are shared at services provided by BFO-Durham. Pledge forms for the "Walk to Remember" will be mailed out to all members and can also be accessed through the web site fundraising page for printing. Top earners from pledges will be awarded large prizes or gifts which will be given out during the walk.

The walk involves fun for family and friends through activities, live entertainment and refreshments. So please join us in a brighter light, and share the memories of the loved ones we have lost.

INSPIRATIONAL CORNER

A BAND OF ANGELS

Earlier this week, I tackled the unpleasant task of taking down the Christmas decorations and packing them away. With the house and an entire afternoon to myself, I endeavored to approach this inevitable chore with mindfulness, hoping that the simplicity of quiet attention might mitigate the emotional sting that is my usual experience.

I started with the lights, carefully unthreading them and setting them aside, then the heavier, more breakable ornaments, to be wrapped and packed at the bottom of the designated Tupperware bin. Finally, one by one, I removed the angel ornaments from our BFO Angel Tree gatherings over the years, and to my surprise counted thirteen in total. Thirteen ornaments, each with a ribbon bearing the name of my son, David Schneider, who died of cancer at age 11 in 1998.

It is now officially a collection, I decided. For many years now, angels and angel-themed ornaments have dominated our Christmas tree décor, and I admit to finding comfort in them. The spirituality of Christmas has always been important to me, but through each of the beautifully crafted and prepared angels, I have been able to connect with David's presence in a more tangible way.

And now, the sheer number of them marks for me the many years since his passing. I remember the raw agony of putting the first angel ornament on our tree six months after his death, but also I recall the comfort the sight of it brought me every time I looked at it through the season. As more and more have been hung around it, that sense of comfort has grown stronger, and the agony has become less potent. Do I still miss him? Absolutely. He is still gone. And yet, every Christmas, the adorning of the tree with the "band of angels" has become my way of acknowledging that David's spiritual presence is getting even stronger.

I packed away the box containing my collection of angels, and drew a deep breath. The angels gather. And they will continue to gather on my Christmas tree, and in the deepest regions of my heart.

Joyce Schneider

A strange thing is memory, and hope; one looks backward, and the other forward; one is of today, the other is of tomorrow.

Memory is history recorded in our brain. Memory is a painter; it paints pictures of the past and of the day. ~ Anna Marie Robertson Moses

INTRODUCING OUR NEW CO-OP STUDENT

I am in my final year of Public Relations at Durham College. I am pleased to complete my non-profit placement at Bereaved Families of Ontario-Durham Region, and look forward to the hands-on experience it will provide me.

At BFO-Durham, I am lucky to be working with Sharon Sears, the Director of Member Services. Sharon has an inspirational soul, and it is admirable to experience that, as well as drop-in members. I would like to thank Sharon for giving me the opportunity of working in the office and to help with the "Walk to Remember" campaign.

I strongly admire every individual's strengths who passes through at BFO-Durham and I know your loved ones couldn't be prouder. I look forward to meeting the strong souls of everyone at the Walk!

Brittney Mongeon

UPCOMING EVENTS (CONTINUED)

April 2012

Infant Loss Drop-In
Monday 2nd, 7-9 p.m.

Evening Drop-In
Wednesday 11th, 7-9 p.m.

Afternoon Drop-In
Monday 16th, 1-3 p.m.

Evening Drop-In
Thursday 26th, 7-9 p.m.

**Reconnect Drop-In for
Older Children**
Monday 30th, 7-9 p.m.

May 2012

Infant Loss Drop-In
Monday 7th, 7-9 p.m.

Evening Drop-In
Wednesday 9th, 7-9 p.m.

Afternoon Drop-In
Monday 14th, 1-3 p.m.

Evening Drop-In
Thursday 24th, 7-9 p.m.

**Reconnect Drop-In for
Infant Loss**
Monday 28th, 7-9 p.m.

THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF MEMBER SERVICES

The holidays are now over and it seems as though we now wait in anticipation until the next birthday, or holiday when the absence of our children and loved ones make it extremely hard to celebrate. Despite family and friends getting together during these special moments to provide support and reflect on memories and good times, finding the strength and courage to participate in those joyous occasions can be difficult. When we return to our daily routine, we can't help but feel alone again trying to deal with every day commitments and at the same time still wanting and needing support from others to get us through each day. This is why at BFO, one of our annual events, the Walk to Remember, continues to be a good opportunity for our families to get together and share stories and memories of their children and loved ones. It is a day where they can walk together with a common understanding and objective to ensure that their loved ones are not forgotten and that their lives continue to be celebrated. It's an event that our families feel encouraged to come out to and participate in, often making new friends who have just heard of BFO Durham and are reaching out for support. We look forward to seeing all of our families who have participated in the Walk to Remember in prior years and also those who are participating for the first time. We hope that you will find this year's event an opportunity which provides the continued support and comfort that all of our families look forward to on this special day.

As I enter the BFO office each day and glance at the Walk to Remember banner displaying beautiful pictures of our families' special angels, it gives me comfort knowing that I am part of this wonderful organization which provides the support and understanding desperately needed for families who have experienced the loss of a child. I hope you will join my family and other families to walk together in memory of our children on this special day and take time to enjoy the music and other activities planned.

As we begin a new year, I hope you will still continue to find time for yourself to reflect on those memories which bring you peace and encouragement to get you through each day knowing that you are not alone in your journey.

Sharon Sears.

MOTHERS' SUPPORT GROUP

If you have experienced the loss of a child and would like to join a Mothers' Support Group, one will begin March 13th, 2012 and will run for 12 weeks. There is some room available and if you wish to participate, please contact the office.

A Support Group will be available to members in the late Spring. Again, if you are interested, please contact the office.

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 9, 2012, THE OFFICE HOURS HAVE BEEN CHANGED

MONDAY TO THURSDAY — 10 A.M. TO 3 P.M. AND CLOSED FRIDAY

THIS NEWSLETTER IS A VOICE FOR THE BEREAVED AND IS SEEKING YOUR CONTRIBUTION. PLEASE SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS, IDEAS AND REQUESTS. RECOMMEND A BOOK AND WRITE WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT IT. SHARE YOUR STORY, SUBMIT A POEM, OR TELL OF THINGS THAT HAVE HELPED YOU ALONG YOUR GRIEF JOURNEY. THANK YOU!

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A GRIEVING FAMILY SYSTEM

1. Recognize the hurt: identify, predict, and accept the validity of the unique issues and problems the family faces:
Be gentle with each other.
2. Be realistic about expectations as parents:
We cannot protect our children from everything.
3. Identify problem areas and communicate about them in light of grief process:
Never underestimate the impact of grief on the family.
4. Discuss differences in grieving styles and do not judge the responses of other family members:
Do not expect the grief of other family members to be like yours.
5. Men, open up to your pain/grief, learn to cry and express anger/stress appropriately: women, learn to express your anger appropriately:
Learn to share your grief with one another constructively.
6. Assist children to grieve by allowing expression of feelings, giving factual explanations, and being careful of expectations:
Don't expect children to act or understand like adults.
7. Pace yourself with the recognition that grief resolution will take a long time and will require reworking throughout life:
Recognize and prepare for anniversary reactions.
8. Establish personal and family methods of recognizing important times relative to the deceased:
Create family grief rituals.
9. Give yourself and family members permission to set aside grief and enjoy life:
Have fun together.
10. Be realistic regarding the resolution of grief:
Accept that things will never be the same and turn off the "if onlys".

~ by Thomas R. Egnew, Ed. D., ACSW

PAST FUNDRAISERS

If you are interested in reading more about our successful 2011 fundraisers, please visit our Web Site at www.bfodurham.net - click on Past Fundraisers

" YOUR DONATIONS HELP BFO-DURHAM STAY ALIVE "

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO

Christine Shannon and Family for their generous donation in memory of husband/father, **Greg Shannon** and precious son/brother, **Christopher Shannon**

DONATIONS IN MEMORY

Yvonne and Bruce Gilliland in loving memory of their daughter **Sharon Rose Gilliland**
Hendrietta Torok in loving of memory of her daughter **Pat Gostlin**

The Clarke Family in loving memory of son **Graham Clarke**

"If I had a flower for everytime I think of you, I would walk in a garden all day"

BEREAVED FAMILIES OF ONTARIO — DURHAM REGION

1050 Simcoe Street North, 2nd Floor, Oshawa L1G 4W5

Tel: 905-579-4293 / Fax: 905-579-7403 / Toll Free: 800-387-4870

E-mail: bfodurham@bellnet.ca / Web Site: www.bfodurham.net

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Loved, missed and remembered

DECEMBER

Payton Joan Beaulieu	01-12-05	Rebecca Anne Leslie Sears	19-12-95
Trevor Todd Hunter	01-12-09	Brad R. Thomas	19-12-96
Grace Anne-Marie Beaulieu	02-12-05	Sarah Dorrian	19-12-99
Rachel Nicole Davidson	02-12-98	Jason Maxwell Normoyle	19-12-02
Andrew Joseph Weaver	03-12-99	Dawn Lent	19-12-07
Dan Phelan	05-12-75	Amanda Maja Vidulich	20-12-07
Derek Penny	07-12-01	Drake Farrell	21-12-09
Emma Skinner	07-12-07	Emily L. Mackie	22-12-92
Nicholas Beatty	09-12-01	Iain Stirling	23-12-04
Connor Fox	10-12-10	Brenda Jo-Ann Perks	24-12-90
Michelle Lynn Andrey	15-12-90	Brittany Mabee-Wilson	24-12-07
Johnny Pegg	15-12-09	Collleen Garry	28-12-08
David Michael Hannah	15-12-00	Kimberly Margaret Elizabeth Hryniw	29-12-97
Luc Breau	16-12-10	Susan Josephine Nyland-Davey	30-12-95
Alleya Alley-Wilson	18-12-09		

JANUARY

Shelley Nadine Taylor	01-01-95	Breanna Cousins	15-01-02
Ricky Van Den Oetelaar	01-01-06	Sara Ann Madore	17-01-03
Vanessa Larocque	02-01-09	Austin Blake Madore	17-01-03
Kyle Joseph Miller	02-01-09	Storm Gary Patrick Coad	18-01-97
Victoria Thompson	04-01-05	Nathan Michael Pennington	18-01-10
Jose Eduardo Navas	04-01-11	Stephanie Joanna Coleman	19-01-96
Tianna Vieira	05-01-10	Alexsandra Kellie-Ann Hewitt	21-01-95
Chantel Gauthier	06-01-94	Alexander Cade	22-01-04
Ashley Pittens	06-01-01	Antonio Thomas Cacciatore	23-01-10
Michael Upshaw	06-01-02	Vanessa Robyn Rivard	24-01-07
Rayman Imran	07-01-08	Graham Charles Clarke	26-01-07
Alastair Lahtinen	08-01-10	Jeffrey Warne	26-01-08
Duane MacIntyre	11-01-92	David Matthew Gilbert	27-01-08
Ron Davis	11-01-07	Eran Town	28-01-05
Brandon Tyler Baron	12-01-92	Branden Christopher Viarrael	29-01-09
Neil Warren Hembling	12-01-00	Wayne Edwards	29-01-09
Eerik Percival	13-01-02	Angela Worona	31-01-95
Khristian Robinson	14-01-08	Martell Baron	31-01-92
Jonathan Domenic Volpe	15-01-95		

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Loved, missed and remembered

FEBRUARY

Chantal Richard	01-02-11	Joe Kennedy	13-02-08
Thalia Tunzi	01-02-07	Walter Kranc	14-02-11
Patricia Bercik	02-02-11	Christine Harrison	15-02-00
Alicia Dionne	02-02-02	Madeleine Dutkiewicz	15-02-02
Krista Shea	02-02-02	Deborah Anne Halliday	16-02-92
Anita Saunders	03-02-02	Marc Andre Pineault	16-02-95
Kevin Ricketts	03-02-04	John Harvey	19-02-11
Bradley Shearer	04-02-95	Leah Page Speare	19-02-00
Shawn Cooper	04-02-02	Andrew Richard Sears	21-02-94
Christopher Coates	05-02-97	Renee James	21-02-02
Rebecca Hardy	05-02-06	Paula Marie Smith	23-02-94
Ethan Witte	05-02-10	John Sasseville	23-02-01
Brock Van Den Oetelaar	06-02-66	Trevor Lee Corby	23-02-03
Aiden Hamilton Valiantis	08-02-09	Amy Leigh McLennon	23-02-06
Connor Derek William Gilmore	08-02-09	Andrew Phillip Connolly	23-02-07
Emma-Lee Mathieu	09-02-00	Tim McCabe	24-02-03
Jane Jillian Lucy Eady	11-02-10	Jeffrey Hustins	27-02-05
Lyndzey Kiera Short	12-02-00	Paulina Mary Moreino	28-02-91
Danny Mclean	12-02-11	Curtis Heasman	28-02-97
Carly Francis MacKinnon	13-02-95	Trinity Weeks	28-02-07
Owen Puchala	13-02-06		

MARCH

Meena Valliappan	01-03-92	Michael Schomodji	19-03-02
Melissa Neault	01-03-06	Sharon Rose Gilliland	19-03-02
Laura Morrison	02-03-01	Angel Cervantes	19-03-05
Joshowa Miranda	03-03-11	James Warner	19-03-08
Debra Lundrigan	04-03-09	Sean DeSilva	19-03-11
David Stewart	04-03-11	Vaughn Heasman	20-03-89
Jamie T. Lomax	05-03-93	Aiden Connor Rekker	21-03-08
Melissa Margaret Raby	05-03-98	James Higgins	21-03-09
Daryl Convery	06-03-96	Mary Melnychuk	22-03-11
Katharine Suzanne Bruce	07-03-96	Brayden Nicholas Allan	23-03-07
Geordi Elizabeth Maybury	08-03-95	Kevin Allan Hale	24-03-96
Andrew Brooks	09-03-10	William Floyd	24-03-01
Emily Brunton	09-03-11	Alannah Warren	24-03-04
Jada Jeanine Herod	09-03-10	Owen James Scott	24-03-07
Tyler Murray	11-03-06	Bronwen Gwyneth Persaud	25-03-95
Jessica Crawford	12-03-09	Nicholas Short	26-03-07
Daniel John Dorrian	13-03-92	Demetrius Alexander Jones	27-03-08
Stephanie Ramadeen	14-03-02	Elisabeth Tucker	30-03-93
Heather Neat	14-03-03	Russell Eric Maccoomb	30-03-95
Kathleen Una Hutchings	18-03-94	Kristina Nicole Hendricks	31-03-91
Tara Lyver	18-03-01	Jerry R. Lomax	31-03-92
Paige Matthews	19-03-98		