

Center Highlights

FALL 2010



From the Founders -

We are over half way through our celebration of our 10th anniversary! In May we had a wonderful fundraiser at RiverCrest Country Club and enjoyed a delicious lunch as well as an entertaining fashion show with numerous stores participating from the Limerick Outlets. Our guest speaker, Rita Armstrong, movingly spoke about her experience of grief and resiliency after the rape, robbery and murder of her beloved daughter Anna Nicole. Rita is a former client of the Center who attended grief services to deal with this horrific and life-altering situation. She is one of many people who have come to the Center dealing with deaths that most people would rather not think about. Through her courageous attempt to find joy in her life again, we feel honored to have been part of her journey. We would like to share some excerpts of what she expressed toward the end of her story. (To read the complete version of Rita's speech, please visit our website www.bereavementcenter.org and click on Fundraising > "Swing into Spring", and scroll down past the pictures.

"I run, I dance, I smile, sometimes even catch myself laughing. And yes, oh counselor of mine, I have accepted, without feeling guilty, that this is all O.K. Would I have thought this possible five years ago? Absolutely not. Would it have been possible without bereavement counseling? I highly doubt it. During what was to be one of my last sessions, I drove home with these realizations: that where there is light, darkness cannot exist. That suffering is merely the non-acceptance of what IS. That love never dies. That by giving away her (Anna's) clothes I will never lose the memories. And most importantly, that by losing my daughter I gained many things: compassion, empathy, humility, a greater understanding of human suffering. That this was not about what I could teach others; it was about what Anna could teach me. That the bonds between a mother and child can never be broken....."

Thank you Rita for having the passion and courage to tell yours and Anna's story at this fundraising event. We wish you continued healing, growth and peace as you continue your journey.

Shirley and Christine

Shirley Elrod, LMFT, FT
Fellow in Thanatology -
Death, Dying and Bereavement
Christine Smith, MS



*Pictured left to right:
Shirley, Rita, Christine*



Our 10th Anniversary "Seasons of Hope" Celebrations



Our first 10th Year
"Seasons of Hope"
Anniversary event,
"Swing into Spring"

kicked off with a lovely afternoon spent at the RiverCrest Golf Club. Two-hundred twenty guests were entertained with spectacular raffle prizes, a silent auction, a gardening demonstration, fabulous food, and fashions! Guest speaker, Rita Armstrong, shared her message of hope and healing after years of grief work at the Center. Our Spring luncheon and fashion show surpassed last year's fundraising with over \$16,500 raised to benefit the many programs of the Center.



We are grateful for the generous support of our attendees and the talented committee members who planned and orchestrated the day. Pictured above from left to right are: **Christine Smith, Marilyn Pennapacker, Carol Berardelli, Connie Fretz, Arlene Kilcoyne** (co-chairperson), **Beth Douglass** (co-chairperson), **Barbara Gula, Shawna Bader, Rose Seponara, Alice Gassner, Lauren Rieger, and Shirley Elrod.** Dot Chmielewski is not pictured.

We thank also our faithful volunteers who helped on the day of the luncheon: **Joan Bown, Meg Cinelli, Daniel Dingman, Jason Elrod, Shannon Elrod, and Beth Hunt.** We appreciate the time and energy of all!



Our sincere thanks to **Keri Graddy** and the merchants at **Philadelphia Premium Outlets** for providing the stunning fashions for the show! **Mr. Lowell Steinberg** of Floral and Hardy in Skippack donated his time and materials for the gardening demonstration, while **Mr. Alfonso Gallo** donated the staging and set up for the runway! Thank you all!



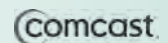
~ Harvest of Hope ~ Fall Fest September 25th 5:30 p.m.- 9:00 p.m.



Tickets:
\$75 per person.
For reservations or additional information, please contact Beth Douglass 610-222-4110, ext. 101 or visit our website:
www.bereavementcenter.org

This casual event will feature Beer (Victory Brewing Company) and Wine (Twinbrook) tasting, a bounty of Harvest Fare, silent auction (including two spectacular trips for wine and golf lovers), along with live music from the PokerFace Blues Band.

Our thanks to the sponsor of our Anniversary events-



Willow Creek Orchards
3215 Stump Hall Road
Worcester





THE CENTER FOR LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

Children's Bereavement Program - Nello's Corner



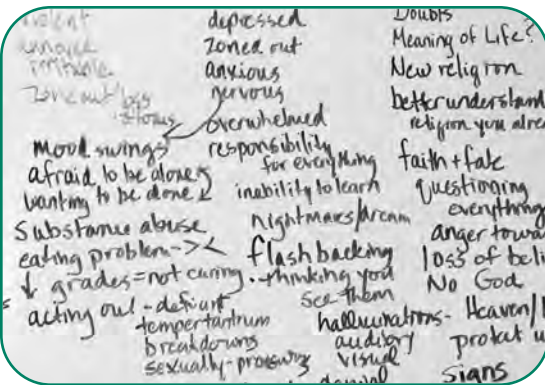
Nello's Corner is a support group program for those ages 4-17 who have experienced the death of a family member. Groups are age specific, meet every other Tuesday or Wednesday from September to June, and are facilitated by the Center's professional staff and trained volunteers. New members may join the program at anytime throughout the year as space permits.

Nello's Corner groups will resume on 9/14.

For information call 610-222-4115.

Last year proved to be a busy year, particularly for our Pre-teen and Teen groups. Despite their often demanding schedules, we experienced the largest number of committed group members for these ages since the program's start in 2004. Ready and willing to share their experiences with grief, these members have a genuine interest in understanding those of their peers.

Pictured is an activity in which one group generated a detailed list of grief reactions they had experienced since their special person died.



Younger children tend to be less verbal and sometimes their reactions to the death are not as apparent. We have learned that much of their grief work is done through play. Play can be a productive avenue for younger children to share experiences and convey thoughts. Time is spent in activities such as drawing, the use of dress up clothing, story-telling, and puppetry. A local Daisy Troop recently visited the Center, generously donating hand made sock puppets for the kids at the Corner.



Thank you to the girls for the time and thought that went into each creation. These puppets have already been well-loved!

WISH LIST

- Gift cards to Walmart and craft stores
- Avery dark t-shirt transfers
- Old CDs
- Plastic tablecloths
- Foam sun visors
- Colored sand
- Multi-colored card stock paper
- Fabric paints and markers
- Hula hoops

Thank You!



Congratulations to our Volunteer Class of Spring, 2010!

Calling All Potential Volunteers: Fall Training Scheduled!

The children's programs of the Center are in need of additional volunteers. We offer a three day training which highlights our philosophy, provides practice in skills needed, and expands your life experience. Join our team of facilitators and see for yourself what a difference volunteering can make - for the children of our programs and for YOU!

Application and information may be found on our website or by calling the Center.

Fall Volunteer Facilitator Training
October 15th, 16th and 23rd
9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



George Prieston was honored for volunteering over 100 hours with our Nello's Corner program at our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. Volunteers like George are the heart of our children's programs.



Through **Kohl's Associates in Action** program, five Kohl's associates came to our Center to assist with Camp craft preparations. Our thanks to Kohl's for their monetary donation and the hardworking volunteers pictured – **Angie, Christina, Dolores, Evelyn, and Theresa!** Also pictured are Center volunteers **Kate, Verna, and Julie.**



THE CENTER FOR LOSS AND BEREAVEMENT

Children's Summer Camp - **Camp Millie**



Our **Camp Millie 2010 WESTWARD HO** adventure took 46 children and teens on a **Journey of Reflection, Discovery, and Friendship!**

Our WESTWARD HO! theme with its images of family, perseverance, and survival is one which campers of all ages can relate to their journey with grief. Loss, hope, and healing were woven into every aspect of Camp and the children and teens responded with insight and enthusiasm. This Camp Millie was truly unique.

A special week-long craft activity was particularly meaningful for some campers. It was explained that Native Americans used masks during many of their special ceremonies and celebrations. Some of these masks were made to look like humans while others looked like an animal who might possess the same traits as a particular person. It was believed by Native Americans that the "spirit" or characteristics of the person it represented were shared with the person who wore the mask. With the help of their Buddies, each camper carefully considered how they could best represent their special person who died with a milk carton mask. Some even researched Native American symbolism of certain animals. The results were celebrated during a special circle ceremony where all showed and explained their colorful and diverse creations.



Camp Millie had nine 12-14 year olds participating in our special teen program. As volunteers, their assistance with morning activities was invaluable. They also participated in their own group, sharing thoughts, beliefs, and challenges of grieving as a teen. Our thanks to **Tricia, Kat, Sam, Chris, Sofiane, Nick, Linda, Tanisha, and Meredith** for being wonderful mentors to the younger campers and caring group members to their peers.



Camp was enriched by the spirited efforts of our hard-working intern, **Malorie Warrington**. 'Pioneer' Malorie visited our Openings each day, coordinated our game activities, and offered invaluable assistance wherever needed. Leaving the West behind, we wish her well as she continues her graduate work in elementary counseling.



A big Yee Haw! and thank you to our daily Camp volunteers who gave so much to our Camp: (back row) **Maggie Enright, Robb Muse, Travis Brown, John Shane, Jackie Baryn, Jenna Graeff, Diane Faulkner**, (middle row) **Amy Gowing, Sarah Galea, Jessica Wills, Malorie Warrington, Gabby Franken**, (front row) **Trisha Keller, Kate Doyle, Jake Marron, Stacy Frombold, Jason Elrod**. Not pictured: **Wendy Batson, Karen Bottger, Connie Fretz, Nancy Hunt, Terri Morgan, Karen Sarissan, and Alicia Ward**.

A Camp experience can help reduce feelings of isolation and 'being different' and promotes connection, acceptance, and comradery.



The week offers numerous opportunities for campers to share memories of their person who died and explore strategies that may help them cope with loss.

**Mark your calendars
Camp Millie 2011
Beach Blast
June 27th-30th!**

Specialized Support Group Program

Support groups gather individuals with similar circumstances and types of loss into a circle of support and encouragement. Groups offered are determined by the number of participants registered and are not limited to the categories listed. Meetings are scheduled for six weeks, once a month, or twice a month for 1 1/4 hours.

FALL SCHEDULE



Support for Suicide Loss

Mondays 9/20, 9/27, 10/4, 10/11, 10/18, 10/25

Adult Loss of Parent

Thursdays 9/23, 9/30, 10/7, 10/14, 10/21, 10/28

Loss of Spouse

Mondays 11/1, 11/8, 11/15, 11/22, 11/29, 12/6

Monthly Loss of Child - 2nd Mondays

9/13, 10/11, 11/8, 12/13, 1/10, 2/14, 3/14, 4/11, 5/9, 6/13

Young Adult Loss - Every Other Wednesday

9/22, 10/6, 10/20, 11/3, 11/17, 12/1, 12/15, 1/12, 1/26, 2/9, 2/23, 3/9, 3/23, 4/6, 4/20, 5/4, 5/18, 6/1, 6/15

Schedule is subject to change based on registration. There is a registration and screening process required. With the exception of the Young Adult group, cost is \$60 for six weeks. In our experience, a support group environment tends to be most beneficial if at least four - six months has passed since the time of the death.

Call 610-222-4115 to register.

Also at the Center: Local Chapter of **Parents of Murdered Children** - Held 1st Sundays, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.



Reaching out to Young Adults

The ages between 19 and 29 are often when wings are spread, plans are made, and dreams are imagined. College, work, or perhaps even marriage are experiences which pave a road from childhood to adulthood. Unfortunately for some, this adventurous time of life is interrupted and altered forever by the death of a parent, sibling, other family members, or friend. The thoughts and needs of these young adults are unique to their age group.

Our Center now offers an on-going Young Adult Bereavement Support Group to reach out to this population. The meetings are held every other Wednesday from 7:00 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. and offered free of charge. This past spring, seven dedicated participants shared their stories, challenges, and ideas with one another, quickly establishing ties of trust and friendship. A reoccurring theme was that of maintaining bonds with their loved one(s) and with one another. Amid the grief, support was given for current life transitions of graduations, entering graduate school, and upcoming wedding plans. New members are always welcome following initial contact.

*We invite you to contact Lois Harris at
lh@bereavementcenter.org or 610-222-4115*

Professional Round Table Trainings

2010-2011 TRAINING SCHEDULE

What's In/What's Out: Exploring the Grieving Process

October 14, 2010

9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Our foundation training is designed for those interested in exploring current perspectives on the grief process. It will focus on new insights and attitudes regarding models of grief that have emerged in the field of death and dying.

Building Blocks of Life and Death for the Younger Child

November 4, 2010

1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Our experienced presenters will focus on young children by offering this workshop designed for those working with an early childhood population and are interested in learning more about a young child's processing of death and dying concepts.

The ABCs of Children's Grief: K-12

March 24, 2011

9:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

This popular training "sold out" last season so we are once again offering this look at school-age children and their journey through grief.



De-Mystifying the Funeral Home

Experience: Historical and Current Practices

April 7, 2011

1:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Open to professionals as well as any interested individual, our newest offering is a unique collaboration with R.L. Williams Funeral Home of Skippack and Franconia. It will feature a view of funeral practices past and present, including an in-depth, behind-the-scenes tour of the funeral home. This informative opportunity will examine the use of funeral practices from both historical and current perspectives. Although attendance can earn CEUs/ACT 48 credits for professionals, all interested persons are welcome and encouraged to attend this aspect of life education!

REGISTRATION & CEU / ACT 48 INFORMATION



We are excited to be presenting professional trainings on these topics. Our trainings are designed for small groups in order to maximize the educational experience, so space is limited. You can find complete listings, a synopsis of content, and a registration form for all of our trainings on our website, www.bereavementcenter.org. Click on 'Our Programs' and then 'Grief Education'. The registration form can be downloaded and mailed to the Center with your payment. Cost is \$60 per training; those attending two different trainings will receive a discount of \$10 when registering for both.

Questions?

*Contact Claire Drexler - csd@bereavementcenter.org or
610 222-4110 ext. 104. We are a PA Dept. of Ed. Act 48
approved provider and an approved provider by the PA State
Board of Social Workers, Professional Counselors and Marriage
and Family Therapists to award CEU credit.*

Board of Directors:

Christine Smith, Board President

Shirley Elrod, Executive Director

Connie Fretz, RN

Anna Hillman, CPA

Marilyn Pennapacker

Carl Sensenig

Christopher Smith

Kathleen Thomas, Esq.

Ellen Watson

Remember the Center as you shop for the holidays!

- > Login to **Amazon.com** through the link on our website
- > Register your club/debit/credit cards at **www.escrip.com** with our group id #50006017.

The Center receives a percentage from all purchases you make!

The Center for Loss and Bereavement

Website: www.bereavementcenter.org

Phone (610) 222-4110 Fax (610) 222-4116

Staff Directory:

Christine Smith	Board President, Co-Founder	---	cjs@bereavementcenter.org
Shirley Elrod	Executive Director, Co-Founder	ext. 102,	sje@bereavementcenter.org
Beth Douglass	Community Outreach & Development Coordinator	ext. 101,	bad@bereavementcenter.org
Claire Drexler	Therapist	ext. 104,	csd@bereavementcenter.org
Mary Flenders	Nello's Corner Coordinator	ext. 119,	mf@bereavementcenter.org
Lois Harris	Program Director	ext. 118,	lh@bereavementcenter.org
Pat Keeney	Support Group Facilitator	ext. 120,	pak@bereavementcenter.org
Steve Keller	Therapist	ext. 105,	sk@bereavementcenter.org
Emily Vincent	Clinical Director, Therapist	ext. 103,	emv@bereavementcenter.org

If you wish to be removed from our newsletter, please contact Beth Douglass at 610-222-4110, x.101 or bad@bereavementcenter.org

The Center for Loss and Bereavement
3847 Skippack Pike
P.O. Box 1299
Skippack, PA 19474-1299

