

# Forget - Me - Not

## Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc. Newsletter



What can I do to honor my baby(s)? That is a question that we hear often, especially around the milestone days or holidays. Some decide to share posts on Social Media or have private celebrations of birthdays. Others want to somehow “give back.” We have families that go to local bakeries and buy birthday cakes on the day of their baby’s honor date, or host a donation drive for a food pantry, foster closet, some of our programs, or any other meaningful organization. There are families that make a birthday basket to take to a local hospital, to be given to the family of a baby that was born on their baby’s honor date. Many families take presents and donate them to kids in need during the holiday season. Others choose to volunteer with an organization or start their own foundation or non-profit in their baby’s memory.

There are others that can use their platforms for change on a state-wide or even on a national level. New York State Senator Timothy Kennedy is one such person. As the bereaved father of Brigid, he is able to advocate for legislation that will help support other bereaved families. In 2012, he was instrumental in helping get the NYS Stillbirth Certificate Law passed. He introduced, sponsored, and helped pass a Bill (S7308A) in the NYS Senate that would provide paid Family Leave following any pregnancy outcome, whether it is a live birth, miscarriage, or stillbirth. This bill is currently in the NYS Assembly.

Also currently in the NYS Assembly, is Bill A00242, to allow the mother that has suffered a pregnancy loss at less than 20 weeks, a) access to the fetal death report, and b) the ability obtain a burial permit in order to facilitate a burial, cremation, or other dignified disposition of fetal remains.

On October 18, 2023, Governor Kathy Hochul signed legislation, “Ava’s Law” (S.6082A/A.5734a), to support New Yorkers overcoming pregnancy and infant loss, “Far too many parents are forced to deal with the pain and trauma of losing a child to a miscarriage or stillbirth,” Gov. Hochul said.

“When the worst occurs, it is imperative that we support the mental and physical health of women who are navigating this loss. With Ava’s Law, we can ensure families have access to the support and resources they need as they recover.” What a tremendous acknowledgement of the pain, physical, and mental health struggles of losing a baby. What better time to have this signed than during Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month!

These bills would not be where they are today without the dedication of bereaved parents and loved ones advocating for change. Making a difference and honoring a life is not only made in the legislative branches of our government, it is started by making a difference in one person’s life, which will lead to another and another.

Share your baby, share your journey, advocate for change, so the next person who has an infant loss will be further along in their journey than perhaps we were. If we don’t say their names, advocate for change, or honor their memory, who will?

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Nominations are open for the Doctor's, Nurse(s), and Community Awareness Awards that are given at our Annual Gala (May 2024). Please email [Emily@wnypbn.org](mailto:Emily@wnypbn.org) with your nomination and why you believe they are deserving of this award!



**Michael Anthony Anderson** April 5, 2005  
 Always, always in our Hearts! Love, Nana and Papa xxxooo  
 We love you always! Love, Mommy, Daddy, & Mia  
*Parents: Michael and Kelly Anderson*

**Lilya Raine Arena** September 26, 2009  
 Hugs to the sky, baby! Mama, Daddy, and little sister, Willow  
 love and miss you.  
*Parents: Kelly and Michael Arena*

**Jivae Andrea Báez** December 28, 2012  
 Our beautiful baby girl... we love and miss you every second of  
 every day. Thank you for your sweet baby brother Jamari. All  
 our love all our life. Love, Mommy and Daddy.  
*Parents: Evelyn and Jarred Báez*

**Benjamin Matthew Brightman** March 25, 2021  
 We see you everywhere we go - thank you for giving us those  
 hopeful signs. Until we see you again, Benjamin. You are so  
 loved! Love, Mommy, Daddy, Emma and Millie  
*Parents: Kurtis and Carrie Brightman*

**Cecelia Rose Callea** December 16, 2018  
 You are our shining moon and shooting star. Thank you for  
 inspiring us and always watching over our family. You are so  
 loved and so missed. Love, Mama, Papa, Thomas, and Matteo  
*Parents: Tom and Mary Callea*

**Rily James Croce** March 8, 2010  
**Gabrielle Irene Croce** August 3, 2010  
**Baby Croce** December 9, 2013  
*Parents: Lena Kingsbury*

**Joy Aubrey Damberger** May 11, 2023  
*Parents: Jenna and Andy Damberger*

**Kayonna Marie Darrell** October 16, 2018  
**Kingston Antonio Darrell** April 27, 2021  
 We Love You Always! Not a day goes by that we don't think of  
 you both! You both will forever be in our hearts!! We are sad  
 that you both are not here with us, but it helps knowing that  
 you have each other!! Love, Mommy, Daddy, Big Sisters Elana,  
 Avianna and Savannah. Big Brother Brandon  
*Parents: Ashley Hunt and Wendell Darrell Jr*

**Baby D** March 11, 2013  
**Selah Grace Doring** October 30, 2013  
 We carry you in our hearts - Forever & Always, Mommy, Daddy,  
 Preston & Kendra  
*Parents: Emily and Todd Doring*

**Tyler Farris** June 25,  
**2020**  
 Here on earth for a short time my darling baby boy. Never far  
 from our thought and prayers.  
*Parents: Kayla Marvin and Carl Farris*

**Eli Robert Godios** June 25-Sept. 13, 2022  
*Parent: Eric and Amanda Godios*

**Reid Hamilton** April 18, 2021  
 We miss you more and more each day. We think about you  
 every minute of every day. We know you are watching over us.  
 We love you so very much. Love, Daddy, Mommy, Pierce, Rory,  
 Burke, Reagan, Riley, Seamus, and Pdraig  
*Parents: Molly and Andrew Hamilton*

**Baby Girl H** October 15, 2019  
**Baby H** December 28, 2022  
 We know you're both in heaven with our other loved ones who  
 have passed on. We know you both watch over your sister as  
 her angels now. We miss you everyday and think of you often.  
 We love you both!  
*Parents: Erin and Todd Hoeltke*

**John Paul Jerebko** November 18, 1999  
 Our little angel! Love, Mom, Dad, Jakob & Jackson  
*Parents: Peter and Lisa Jerebko*

**Baby Boy Jonathan** June 8, 2018  
 Miss you more and more everyday!! Forever missed, never  
 forgotten, loved forever and ever!! Mom, Dad, Big Sisters  
 Krysten, Kaytee, Kamden, Big Brother Klyde, Nephews Kortlnd,  
 Kreese, Delltoh, and Nieces Kenzley and Emileigh Blue  
*Parents: LaRue and Leilan Jonathan*





**Marina Kim** August 3-4, 2005  
**Ella Grace Kim** June 8, 2007  
 We love you and think of you often. Please watch over us... now and always.  
*Parents: Dawn and Mark Kim*

**Baby Joy Love** February 15, 2020  
**Baby Hope Love** March 26, 2021  
**Baby Bliss Love** November 8, 2021  
**Livenzo Sol Love** March 16, 2023  
 My sweet boy, my perfect son, my miraculous full term child, Livenzo Sol. I carried you in my womb, held you in my arms and love you dearly forever. I miss you so much. To each of my precious babies, you are a blessing to me, gone too soon and always in my heart. With all our love ~ Mama, Grandma and Ambrosia  
*Parent: Christina Love*

**Angelo Thomas Marchetti** January 31, 2022  
 Mommy, Daddy, and your brothers love you and miss you beyond words. We feel you here with us everyday. I will see you again one day my sweet baby boy.  
*Parents: Katelin and Mark Marchetti*

**Chiara Snehama Matam** Nov. 21- Dec. 16, 2022  
 Chiara, our beauty, we are so thankful to be your parents. We cannot wait to see you again one day.  
*Parents: Joshua and Lexi Matam*

**Bud Charles Mott** September 12, 2005  
**Theresa Marie Mott** September 12, 2005  
**"Blueberry" Mott** January 21, 2014  
**Baby Mott** December 23, 2014  
 Miss you with all of our hearts, Theresa, Bud, "Blueberry" and Baby Mott. God knows our pain and sadness. We know that someday, we will see you again. All our love ~ Daddy, Mommy & Allison  
*Parents: Timothy and Beth Mott*

**Noah Navarrette** Feb. 12- Sept. 12 2021  
 Te amare para el resto de mi vida mi amor. Siempre.  
*Parent: Alexa Mancilla*

**Michael James Quigley** October 24, 1992  
 Miss you more and more! 'Til we meet again! Love, Mom  
*Parent: Debi Zmuda*

**Caleb Jonathan Schmeelke** March 18, 2022  
 My sweet boy, You made this world a brighter place and brought our big family together. Daddy and I love you more than we could ever say. We think about you every day. We are so proud to be your parents, little Cub.  
*Parents: Krystal Rivers and Cameron Schmeelke*

**Jacob Wesley Scott** May 27, 2000  
 We love you and think of you everyday! Butterfly kisses, buddy! Love, Mom, Dad, Thomas, & Mandy  
*Parents: Phillip and Christine Scott*

**Steven James Serrano** March 16, 2006  
*Parent: Lisa Graziano*

**Aubrey Marie Stuber** May 7, 2023  
 Aubrey Marie "lil' bean" - God needed you for reasons we may never understand but we are thankful to have you watching over us. We love you forever, our beautiful guardian angel.  
*Parents: Larry & Sarah Stuber*

**Nicholas Mark Weld** April 25, 2019  
 You are my darling, my angel, my star, and my love will find you, wherever you are. Love, Mom, Dad, Benjamin, Amelia, & Johnny  
*Parents: Nate and Joanna Weld*

**Margie Faye Willis** May 22, 2019  
*Parents: Katie and Brandon Willis*

**Grace Lee Zimmer** April 12, 2012  
 Until we meet again, fly sweet butterfly, fly! A moment in our arms, A lifetime in our hearts.  
 Love, Mom, Dad, Hunter and Luke  
*Parents: Donna and Russell Zimmer*







In addition to all of the fall and winter holidays, my husband and I will also be celebrating our tenth wedding anniversary in December. As this milestone approaches, I am reminded of our five year anniversary when we went on a weekend getaway shortly after we found out we were expecting twins, but had not yet received the diagnosis of Nicholas's congenital heart defect. There is one picture in particular from that trip that continues to haunt me. My smile is filled with such joy and excitement, naive to what was to come only weeks later. Soon after this trip, we also learned of the passing of another baby who remains close to our heart, sweet Cecilia. We honor her life and how much she is remembered and loved on December 16th.

When we are filled with grief, it is often difficult to find the energy or the desire to celebrate. In my case, although I would have preferred to skip Christmas the year we lost Nicholas, I had three living children who deserved the decorations, presents, memories, and magic that the holiday dictates. I've written in the past about my family honoring our Nicholas on St. Nicholas Day, December 6th. Devoting one day to him among the stress, pressure, and chaos makes the season a little more bearable. I encourage you to honor your feelings, give yourself grace, and celebrate, or not, in whatever way you are emotionally and physically able.

As you are thinking about gifts and ways to remember your baby, I wanted to share a picture book I came across titled "Everywhere, Still: A Book about Loss, Grief, and the Way Love Continues" by M.H. Clark. In thinking about memories of a missing loved one, the author writes, "Sometimes they hurt my heart to hold. Sometimes they're warm. Sometimes they're cold. Sometimes, they feel so bright and huge I smile... because they feel like you." I think it's an accurate description of the duality of joy and sorrow we feel as loss parents, especially during the holidays.

I am honored to once again share this page with a fellow bereaved mother, Courtney Bajdas, who asked me to include a poem she has written in honor of her baby, Andrei Skolikas Barnhardt. Submissions to the newsletter are always welcome and can be sent to [Newsletter@wnypbn.org](mailto:Newsletter@wnypbn.org).

I wish you peace for the holidays.

Before my son died,  
I had a plan

Before my son died,  
I was in control

Before my son died,  
A good cry brought relief

Before my son died,  
I thought I knew empathy

Since my son died,  
My heart broke open and hasn't  
closed

Since my son died,  
The tears keep coming

Since my son died,  
I feel everything more intensely

Since my son died,  
I have learned much about myself

Poem by Courtney Bajdas  
*Bereaved mother of*  
Andrei Skolikas Barnhardt  
10/17/2011



*Angel Gowns of WNY, Inc.*  
**LOOKING TO DONATE  
YOUR WEDDING GOWN?**

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Our next donation day is Saturday, Dec. 2nd

Please remove the gown from all boxes or packaging, take a current photo of the front and back of your gown, and send it to :

[angelgownsofwny@gmail.com](mailto:angelgownsofwny@gmail.com)





# Kristen's Page

By Kristen Smith, Family Support Coordinator

The most wonderful time of the year is approaching! Whoa, who could possibly feel like that after experiencing perinatal loss? Many people find the holidays to be a difficult time of year, as they experience loneliness, family drama, financial stress, social anxiety and overwhelm, but after experiencing the loss of your baby, you may find it exceptionally difficult. Know that you are not alone in your feelings or experience. Are you dreading holiday get-togethers as people know what happened and you know they won't know what to say and you don't want to have to figure it out for them? Or perhaps people didn't know you were pregnant, you were planning on announcing at the holidays, and now you have to figure out if you want to tell them how it all went terribly wrong? Or maybe you're dreading opening up holiday cards and seeing all the cute babies and kiddos in their holiday attire knowing that your holiday card will have an empty space (whether truly visible to others or just emptiness in your heart).

This time of year is full of childhood memories and traditions that you thought you would be incorporating your little one into rather than figuring out a plan for how you'll care for yourself during this season and carry your grief. With so much of the upcoming season centered around children and family, it is near impossible to not feel more than your usual amount of grief.

So what can you do? I read an article recently that described it as the three C's of holiday grief - 1. Choose your actions, 2. Communicate your choices to others, and 3. find suitable Compromises.

1. Choosing your actions requires an action plan. One of the most important things in helping you navigate the holiday season while grieving the loss of your baby is having a plan. Have a plan for how you'll deal with and respond to all the holiday invitations. Have a plan of escape should you be at a family function or get together with friends and need to exit pronto. Have a plan to deal with the holiday cards should receiving them be too much this year.
2. Another way of saying "communicate your choices to others" is to gather support. Whether that's just communicating your needs and expectations with your husband, your mom, or your best friend so they can help communicate and navigate this time with or for you or deciding to attend support group faithfully over the next few months or scheduling extra appointments with your therapist. Do not do the holidays alone and let others know in advance what you need!
3. We don't all grieve in the same way, but finding ways to grieve together that you and your loved ones find significant and that honor your baby can be healing this holiday season. For example, after each of my miscarriages, I purchased an ornament with various sayings and quotes regarding miscarriage. We hang them on our Christmas tree each year and it gives me an opportunity to take a moment amongst all the hustle and bustle to stop and remember my babies, to talk to their siblings about them, and to help me and my husband feel like they're a part of our holiday memories and traditions in some way.

Please remember as you are grieving the loss of your baby, you are not alone. Feel free to reach out to me if you need support or resources at 716-222-2150 or [kristen@wnypbn.org](mailto:kristen@wnypbn.org).

I hope to see many of you in our upcoming support group meetings. Here is the schedule for November and December: 11/2-In Person, 11/16-Virtual, 12/7-In Person, and 12/21-Virtual.



Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc.

## Tiniest Angels Support Group

**1st Thursday of each month**  
In Person @6pm  
Resurrection Life Church  
2145 Old Union Rd  
Cheektowaga, NY 14227

**3rd Thursday of each month**  
Virtual via Zoom @6pm

For More Information Contact:  
Kristen Smith  
Family Support Coordinator  
[Kristen@wnypbn.org](mailto:Kristen@wnypbn.org)  
(716) 222-2150 Cell (716) 626-6363 Office  
visit [www.wnypbn.org](http://www.wnypbn.org) or scan the QR code

Share your story of loss and find support among other bereaved parents



# Fundraisers and Events

## Infant and Pregnancy Loss Awareness Month October 2023

By Kristen Smith, Family Support Coordinator

It's been a busy month full of events of remembrance here at WNYPNB. We kicked off the month with our in-person support group where we hosted guest speaker, Brandon Thurman, co-host of Guys and Grief podcast and bereaved father to Astoria. It was wonderful to have some of our dads there, to hear Brandon share his story, and to give the men in attendance some time to break off and chat with Brandon and each other. Thanks again, Brandon!

October 8th was our 30th Annual Walk to Remember...and my first Walk! It was a blustery yet beautiful day and as I said during the service, it both broke and warmed my heart to see so many people there honoring all of our babies gone too soon. Even though the chilly Fall weather sort of shocked us all (especially since it had been 80 degrees just a few days prior), there was still a great turnout and we are so appreciative of everyone who helped make the day what it was.

We again showed our support to Gavin's Light in Olean, NY for their Wave of Light Memorial Service on October 15th. Bereaved mother of Gavin, Amy, always does a great job with this night and we were glad to be in attendance.

A new event to us this year was our Trick or Treat benefit at the Hyatt Buffalo Amherst on Saturday, October 21st. This was the Hyatt's first community fundraising Trick or Treat event to benefit a local organization, and we were pleased and proud to be their first benefit recipient while spreading awareness of perinatal loss and also creating some seasonal fun.

Another fundraising event this month that allowed us to collectively honor our babies was Paint Night on October 24th at Painting with a Twist. Man, if you missed this event, you missed out! It was a ton of fun and there were definitely some masterpieces created in memory of our sweet babies. We'll definitely do this again so you can get in on the artistic fun!

And yet to come at the time of writing this, we're gearing up to join the WNY Chapter of the Star Legacy Foundation's walk in Penfield, NY on October 28th to close out the month. We're excited to support a fellow perinatal bereavement organization and represent WNYPNB at their event.

We're glad you've joined us at so many events over this month of Infant and Pregnancy Loss Awareness. We hope you feel that your babies have been honored, awareness has been raised, and you've had some time set aside to remember and cherish their memories.

## Upcoming Events

Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc.

### BUFFALO BILLS SIGNED JERSEYS RAFFLE

**#17 JOSH ALLEN**  
**#14 STEFON DIGGS**

TICKETS  
\$20 EACH  
OR  
6 FOR \$100

WIN 2  
LIMITED EDITION  
JERSEYS!

To purchase tickets:  
Scan the QR code  
Call: (716) 626-6363  
Email: [Emily@wnypbn.org](mailto:Emily@wnypbn.org)



Drawing  
Dec 17th

All proceeds benefit the programs of  
Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc.

## Hot Cocoa with Santa!

Saturday, December 2nd 10am-12pm  
Ellicott Creek Park, Friendship Building  
Tonawanda, NY

Free  
Event!

Fun & Crafts!  
Visit with  
Santa!  
Cocoa & Cookies



Space is limited, Call the WNYPNB office for more details  
or to reserve your spot! (716)626-6363

Thank you to Hyatt Place Buffalo/Amherst for their donation of \$1,585 from the Community Trick or Treat Event, held in honor of Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month!



# Acknowledgements from the Walk to Remember



A Special Thank You  
to our Top 5 donors from the  
Walk to Remember

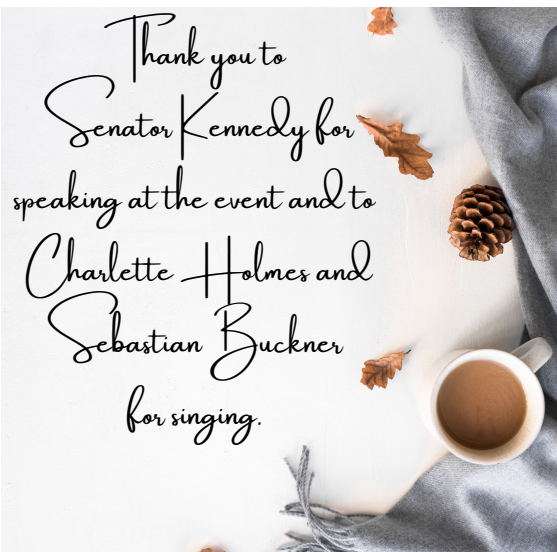
**Ingalsbe Family**  
in Honor of Alyssa Ingalsbe  
\$1,180

**Brightman Family**  
in honor of Benjamin Matthew Brightman  
\$1,135

**Hamilton Family**  
in honor of Reid Hamilton  
\$1,100

**Baldo Family**  
(Tony Ravioli's Marinara Gang)  
in Honor of Anthony Baldo  
\$1,035

**Cretacci Family**  
in Honor of Peyton Cretacci  
and Parker Cretacci  
\$840



The WNY PBN would like to express our  
gratitude to the sponsors of this year's  
Walk to Remember.

**TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY**  
New York State Senate, 63rd District



Thank you to the WNY Perinatal  
Bereavement Network for the  
important work that you do for  
bereaved families in our community.

**Contact My Office** Phone: (716) 826-2683  
37 Franklin Street, Suite 550 Email: kennedy@nyssenate.gov  
Buffalo, NY 14202 Website: Kennedy.NYSenate.gov



**Kaleida Health**



**Delaware  
North**

- 7 Hearts Maternity Rescue
- Angel Gowns of WNY
- Audubon Women's Medical Associates, PC
- Bridget's Battle Foundation, Inc.
- Buffalo Bisons
- Buffalo One Composite Squadron, Civil Air Patrol
- Chosen Photography of WNY
- EscapeWire Solutions
- Hale Northeastern Expo Services
- Lombardo Funeral Home
- Mischler's Florist and Greenhouse
- Moderncraft
- The Money Ball Channel on Youtube
- Mr. Paul: the Awesome Artist
- New York State Police, NYS Troopers K-9 Unit
- Perna, Dengler, Roberts Funeral Home
- Pietszak Funeral Home
- Trillium's Courtyard Florist
- Wagner Monuments
- The Weld Family
- Wegmans
- WNY Superheroes and Cosplayers

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers!





Wilson Support Center  
 150 Bennett Road  
 Cheektowaga, NY 14227  
 Phone: (716) 626-6363  
 Fax: (716) 626-6368

**Emily Doring**  
*Executive Director*  
 Emily@wnypbn.org

**Kristen Smith**  
*Family Support Coordinator*  
 Kristen@wnypbn.org

**Joanna Weld**  
*Newsletter Editor*  
 Newsletter@wnypbn.org

**Christine Scott**  
*Founder of the*  
*Wings of Love Memorial Fund*  
 Christine@wnypbn.org

**Our Mission**

The mission of the Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc. is to assist the community in meeting the needs of people facing the pain of perinatal death. We promote standards of bereavement care intervention through educational support, community programs and referral services to bereaved parents. The WNY PBN supports an established standard of care following a perinatal loss, regardless of location of where the loss took place.

**Member Organizations**

Angels Gowns of Western New York, Inc., Baby's Sweet Beginning's Breast Feeding and Maternity Boutique (Lancaster), Brooks Memorial Hospital, Buffalo Prenatal-Perinatal Network, Inc., Catholic Health System (Mercy Hospital, Sister's Hospital, Mount St. Mary's Hospital), Mount St. Mary's Hospital of Lewiston, Hospice & Palliative Care Buffalo, Inc- Essential Care for Children, Kaleida Health (Oishei Children's Hospital, Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital), Jones Memorial Hospital, Wilson Support System, Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital, Olean General Hospital, United Memorial Medical Center, UPMC Chatauqua, Wyoming County Community Health Center

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 Wilson Support Building  
 150 Bennett Rd  
 Cheektowaga, NY 14227