



A June 2013 note from Joan Shirley, as one victim to another,

This month, we are going to be talking about memorializing the loved one/s you have lost to violent death. Memorializing is a significantly important part of the grieving process and keeps the person you have lost “alive” in your mind, heart, and soul. However, you will never forget them; which is a common fear in survivors. It is also a way to remind others that the person you loved and was taken from you was someone of significance to not only you but to those in your family, extended family, and community.

*Let’s start at the beginning; the funeral, memorial service or celebration of life you might have had for your loved one. If you didn’t have a service of some kind, I suspect that you had some type of gathering at your home or somewhere important to you. This is the first official step in remembering your loved one with those who care about you and your loved one. Starting here, and for the rest of your life, your loved one is remembered for their special qualities, their interests, their talents, and how they made the world a better place when they were living in it. The tragedy of their death is realized and friends and family members grieve openly while their friends and acquaintances comfort them. If the victim is buried or interred in a grave or crypt, there might have been a short service where the “final goodbyes” are said and the first reality of the finalization of their life is realized. You note that I put “final goodbyes” in parenthesis. That’s because my many experiences with survivors is that we never truly tell our loved ones goodbye; we remember them daily, sometimes talk to them, pray to them for help and strength, we look at photos and videos. We remember them on their birthdays, our birthdays, and their death anniversaries and on holidays. They “live on” in our memories and mourning rituals. **Just for clarification, grief is the incredible sadness and the emptiness you feel inside, whereas mourning is the outward display of how you deal with that grief; remembering them in special ways. The words are often interchanged.***

*Some people swear that they hear their loved one’s voice, see their loved ones, dream about them, or believe that they have changed from a person to say, a bird, some other creature or spirit which comes to visit them. However, some people are unable to look at photos, go into their bedroom, go to a grave or even think about a visitation; each person goes through their grief and remembrance in their own way. If you have not seen a “sign” as some people call them, **do not despair**; not everybody gets them or quite frankly, some people do not believe that they exist. However, your experience is yours, if it makes their loss more bearable, gives you peace, then you believe what you want to believe. Often survivors want others to mourn like they do, but their grief is different from yours and they **can’t possibly** mourn like you; **they are not you!** Mourning and it’s rituals shouldn’t be compared with anyone else’s experience, nor should you criticize how others may be mourning; there is no right or wrong way to remember this person and your style will change as the years go by. Honoring them by remembering them in a support group meeting, where others can sympathize with your loss, is another way to remember and get strength to go on.*

Anniversaries can be the most difficult times for most people. You didn't think that you could live on without them; but you have so far and you will for many more years. Maybe by now you have set up a display of their favorite things or have a sort of "altar area" where you light a candle for them every day. Maybe you go to the cemetery often to just be with them or decorate their grave or crypt with balloons or flowers. If their cremated remains are staying in your home, maybe you have them in a special place of honor with their photo or special mementos or maybe you sprinkled their remains in a place or places where they loved to spend time. Maybe you have a short memorial service somewhere special and release balloons or dedicate something special in their memory on their anniversary date or birthday. Maybe you have made a quilt of their favorite t-shirts or put a cross up high in a tree in the forest or you have a special toast at family meals where they are remembered; whatever it is that you do, it is important to you and makes you feel close to them. It is a proven fact that memorializing those we have lost is healing for your mind, body, and spirit. Maybe you are giving a scholarship or money to an organization that they participated in; there are many ways to remember them.

The years change how you remember and memorialize your loved one. On Kevin's first anniversary, our family went to the murder site at 11:30pm. We shouldn't have gone; killers can return to the site on anniversaries. We were lucky in that we were being watched by deputies watching and listening in the area. We also went to the cemetery, here like the site, people were watching and listening. We spent our time looking for a camera or microphone; it felt weird. We had a combined memorial service at Wilson Stadium for all three boys, which was basically an undercover sting operation. None of the efforts to see the perpetrator worked, but it made that anniversary easier for all three of our families. Now, 14 years later, I drove to the murder site and to Kevin's grave and placed flowers. I can now remember him with a smile. I was awake at 11:36pm on the Saturday night of Memorial Day weekend to spend a few minutes to remember the sadness; some things will never fade. As I said, how you remember someone is your way; my husband and daughters remembered Kevin in their own ways.

*In December of 2012, the Resource Center held a holiday memorial at our office in our atrium area; a lovely, peaceful place with trees, soft light, benches, and a fish pond. We ate food, listened to music, read poems, lit candles in our hands as well as around the pond area and spoke the names of those who have been taken from us. It was uplifting and gave those who attended a moment to remember their loved one during a frantic and inescapably joyful time of year when it is often difficult to find time to spend with the memory of the ones they had loved and lost. **Our next memorial will be here at our office on the 3rd Wednesday of December 2013; I hope that you will join us. Put it on your calendar now so you don't forget!!***

*This past April, we had a small memorial service for a family in the same area on the victim's death date. We gave her family a "stepping stone" to decorate to remember the victim's journey through her life. **Each year that we remember them, it is one more step forward to a time of resolution, not closure by any means, but learning to live with this person in our lives in a different way. You too may use this pond area anytime you'd like to have a memorial/remembrance service; just give us a call to set it up. 243-2222***

Over

Those Who We Have Loved and Lost (January through June)

David Adams	04/01/1995
Antionette Aguilar	05/08/2000
Joshua Apodaca	05/06/2007
Joshua Bean	03/02/2007
Chris Crawford	01/18/2004
Ian Fraser	06/21/2012
Don Gallegos	03/11/2009
Alejandro Garcia	04/23/2012
Alfonso Garcia	04/23/2012
Jessie Garcia	2011
David Gutierrez	01/08/2012
Samuel Gutierrez	03/22/2012
The Greg Griego Family	01/20/2013
Matthew Hernandez	02/27/2013
Mike Herrera	05/13/2007
Isaiah Ithurria	05/04/2012
Joseph Lucero	04/15/2011
Child Lucero	02/29/2012
Lawrence Lucero	05/11/1988
Kip Mackey	01/03/2009
Travis Miller	06/27/2001
Jacob Najera	05/14/2008
George Orosco	05/20/2008
Richardo Orosco	05/20/2008
Robert Pacheco	02/01/2007
Tyra Perry	01/02/1988
Carolyn Sanchez	05/16/2005
Rafael Serra	01/29/2012
Kevin Shirley	05/29/1999
Jeremy Trujillo	03/22/2012
Matt Trujillo	05/26/2011
Naomi Trujillo	04/28/2012
May Valerio	04/28/2012
Crystal Vasquez	03/13/2013
Gabino Venegas	01/14/1998
Cameron Weaver	01/14/2013
Amanda Wiley	04/19/2012
Erin Williams	05/11/1994

Also, remembering the West Mesa murder victims 2003-2005.

Over

Let me apologized in advance:

This is our first attempt at this listing. We may not have your loved one's information listed correctly, your loved one may not be listed here and should be, or you might not want your loved one's information listed; please give us a call so that we can update this name list so it meets your needs. If we inadvertently missed your loved one's name this time, we will remember them in our December Victim to Victim newsletter.

***Big News! Support group meetings start in
Los Lunas and Rio Rancho in June!***

***Los Lunas group: June 26, 2013
At the Wellness Center
3445 Lambros Lp NE Los Lunas, NM
6:00-8:00pm***

***Rio Rancho Group: June 27, 2013
In the library of the Star Heights Recreation Center
800 Polaris Blvd SE Rio Rancho, NM
6:30-8:00pm***

 OFFICE	 TELEPHONE	 ON-LINE
<p>The Atrium Building at 10701 Lomas NE, Suite 115 Albuquerque, NM 87112 (just east of Eubank on Lomas)</p> <p>Drop in hours: Monday thru Friday Noon – 3 p.m. <i>You may call for an individual or after-hours appointment.</i></p> <p>Victim Groups meet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 2nd Tuesdays from 1 p.m.-3 p.m.✓ 3rd Wednesdays from 6 p.m.-8 p.m.✓ And Rio Rancho & Los Lunas (call for dates/times)	<p>505-243-222 & 855-430-2232 – toll free</p> <p>After hours contacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Pat Caristo – 505-299-8712 Exec Dir./Intake /Case Mgr.✓ Joan Shirley -- 505-238- 1663 Victim Advocate <p><i>We can set up a conference call so you can join in if you can't get into Albuquerque.</i></p>	<p>E-mail: pacnia@usa.net</p> <p>NEW WEBSITE: www.bridgesforvictimsofviolentdeath.org</p> <p><i>We are a 501© (3) organization, so your donations are tax- deductible. Thank you, in advance.</i></p> <p><small>The Resource Center for Victims of Violent Death receives funding support from NMCVRC (2014-VA-136A)</small></p>