



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – INNOVATIVE BEREAVEMENT RITUALS

Second-Lining at Death in New Orleans

By Tashel C. Bordere, PhD

Author's Preface: *I wrote most of this article on "second lining" prior to Hurricane Katrina. I sit at my desk now wondering how water, an element that sustains life, could claim the lives of so many. Katrina's unwelcome visit has left destruction, denial, desertion, displacement, despair and a deep, disheartening sense of loss. Due to the dependency brought on by this mass destruction, otherwise self-sufficient families and adults must now ask questions often asked by children following loss. Who will take care of us now? Will our needs be met?*



In my research with African American teens and violent death in New Orleans, I found that the teens had little faith in our nation's leader to improve their life conditions. One teen explained, "President Bush...I just think he, he don't care. He say all that stuff but...don't mean it." After having to wait days to be rescued from unsafe, unsanitary, unfathomable conditions brought on by Katrina, what will our children think now?

My family lives in New Orleans, so I have been focused on them and the hurricane. I was so worried about them that I literally did not sleep for almost two days. Now, days after the flood, still I sit a prisoner to my phone, awaiting the next time I will hear from my family. In the wake of Katrina, my mother, grandparents, uncles have lost EVERYTHING—their houses, their cars, their clothes, food, jobs in some cases, everything that sustains life, everything except their faith and hopefulness and memories of a life that no longer exists.

How does an entire family, an entire city start over? Amidst the bewilderment, my family is grateful to be alive. In a conversation with my mom, she acknowledged that, "The tears flow in the early morning hours. They trickle down our faces at night and often all during the day as we ponder the conditions." Despite their tears, they remain hopeful as they contemplate daily how to build something from nothing.

As individuals and families rebuild their lives, they will need an arena to grieve not only human and pet loss but material loss (e.g., pictures, shelter), loss of the familiar and loss of contact with people and items significant to them.

Knowing that that my family is safe, I am able to focus enough to finish this article. Even in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, some New Orleans' residents are still trying to practice some of the elements of second lining as a way of coping with their losses and honoring their dead.

— Tashel C. Bordere
09/09/05

New Orleans is well established as a city that finds a way to celebrate everything, everything from fruit at strawberry festivals to music at jazz festivals to even crustaceans at crawfish festivals. Yet, one of the most distinctive aspects of the culture is the way it celebrates even at death through its jazz or musical funerals often referred to by natives as "second lines." Rooted in both the city's rich history of jazz and in African American ceremonies dating back to the time of slavery (Breux &

Aristimuno, 1997), second lines are as much a celebration of life as they are a celebration of death.

But what about violent death? Amidst the celebrating around the city (e.g., Bourbon Street, French Quarter), New Orleans is plagued by a high violent death rate among teen-aged African American males. So, what is it about a second line experience that could allow a city plagued by violent death and immersed in a culture (i.e., African Americans) with a history of sudden, violent

Continued on page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Professional Development

Second-Lining at Death in New Orleans	1
Bringing Grief Back Home	4
Incorporating the Extraordinary Experiences of the Bereaved into Personl Rituals	6
Incorporating Loss into Our Holiday Rituals	7
A Pre-Death Ritual for Mable	8
Teen Theatre Troupe as Ritual	10
An Open Letter to ADEC Members: Presence and Absence . . .	11

Association News

Dame Cicely Saunders Dies	5
Student Paper Awards	9
2006 Award Nominations	9
ADEC's Proposed Bylaws Revisions	11
President's Colum: Reflections on Hurricane Katrina	12
Call for Board Nominations	12
Associate Editor Sought	13
Editor's Adieu: "A Wonderful Ride"	13
ADEC Upgrades Members Only Section of Web Site	13
ADEC 28th Annual Meeting	14
Certification News	14
What's New From ADEC Members	15



The Forum

Association for Death Education and Counseling

Editorial Office
The Forum Newsletter

Editor

Louis Gamino, PhD, ABPP
Scott & White Clinic
2401 S 31st Street
Temple, TX 76508
(254) 724-4071 fax (254) 724-1747
lgamino@swmail.sw.org

Associate Editor
Illene Noppe, PhD
noppei@uwgb.edu

Diversity Issues
People of Color/
Multicultural Committee

Books and Other Media
Paul Metzler
pmetzler@hospice-pca.org

Printing
Impressions Unlimited

Chief Staff Officer
Rick Koepke, MSW, MSIS
rkoepke@adec.org

Administrative Manager
Bret Beall, MS
bbeall@adec.org

Communications Manager
Patricia Sullivan
psullivan@adec.org

Copyright © 2005 by the Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC). All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without written permission from ADEC Headquarters. *The Forum* (ISSN 1091-4846) is published 4 times a year by ADEC.

Contributors should contact the Editor for Author's Guidelines. Send to the Editor all manuscripts and review copies.

Advertisers should request rates and publication dates from ADEC Headquarters. *Send HQ* all advertising *prepaid* and *camera ready*. ADEC reserves the *right of approval*, regarding suitability, of all advertising and illustrations.

Subscriptions to *The Forum* are a member benefit. Annual Membership dues are payable in US dollars: Individual \$135, Students \$60, Seniors \$70, Institutional \$275.

Mission Statement: The Association for Death Education and Counseling is an international professional organization dedicated to promoting excellence in death education, care of the dying, and bereavement counseling and support. Based on quality research and theory, the Association provides information, support, and resources to its multicultural, multidisciplinary membership and, through it, to the public.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

**BOARD NOMINATIONS DUE
OCTOBER 31, 2005**

**2006 STUDENT PAPER
SUBMISSIONS DUE
NOVEMBER 15, 2005**

**2006 AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE
DECEMBER 31, 2005**



Communicate Electronically!

E-mail: info@adec.org

On the Web: www.adec.org
Search Membership Directory
• Members Online

Certification
• Handbook and application

Human Resource Network

Conference Information
• Brochure and registration

Notify Headquarters with address changes and membership inquiries:

Association for Death Education and Counseling

60 Revere Drive, Suite 500
Northbrook, IL 60062
Phone: (847) 509-0403
Fax: (847) 480-9282
E-mail: adec@adec.org
Web site: www.adec.org

ADEC Board Roster 2005 – 2006

President, Sherry Schachter, PhD, CT (2005-06)
sschachter@calvaryhospital.org
Oversight: Task Forces, Professional Affairs, Leadership Recruitment & Development, Audit Committee

First Vice President, Jack P. LoCicero, PhD, CT (2005-06)
jllocicero@madonna.edu
Oversight: Professional Development

Second Vice President, Helen S. Chapple, RN, MA, CT, CCRN (2005-06)
hsc4a@virginia.edu
Oversight: Member and Public Services

Secretary, Carolyn Hames, RN, MN, CT (2005-06)
chames@uri.edu
Oversight: Archives, Small Gifts

Treasurer, Stephen R. Connor, PhD (2005-08)
sconnor@nhpco.org
Oversight: Finance and Investments, Fund Development

Immediate Past President, Madeline Lambrecht, EdD, RN, CT (2005-06)
madeline@udel.edu
Oversight: Small Grants, Awards

Board Members
Regina Dixon, MA, LP (2005-08)
gdixon@smdc.org
Oversight: Membership Development

Rev. Richard B. Gilbert, DMin, PhD, BCC, CT (2004-07)
dick.gilbert@shermanhospital.org
Oversight: Conference Steering

Nancy Hogan, RN, PhD, CT (2003-06)
nsh6761@aol.com
Oversight: Technology, Newsletter, Publications

Dennis Klass, PhD, CT (2005-08)
csklass@earthlink.net
Oversight: Continuing Education

Terry L. Martin, PhD (2005-08)
thandoc2182@adelphia.net
Oversight: Leadership Recruitment and Development

Rita Milburn-Dobson, RN, MA, CT (2003-2006)
preciousgemscos@aol.com
Oversight: People of Color/Multicultural, Member Retention, Mentoring

Carla J. Sofka, MSW, PhD (2004-07)
csofka@siena.edu
Oversight: Credentialing

Howard Winokuer, PhD, CT (2004-07)
hwinokuer@carolina.rr.com
Oversight: New Member Recruitment & Development, Public Relations & Marketing Strategies

Pat Zalaznik, BS, MA (2003-06)
zalaz002@tc.umn.edu
Oversight: Chapters, Special Interest Groups & Human Resources Network

Forum Newsletter Editor
Louis Gamino, PhD, ABPP
lgamino@swmail.sw.org

Credentialing Council
Gordon Thornton, PhD, CT
thornton@iup.edu

death experiences to remain cohesive and hopeful, and maintain an undying loyalty to the city under those conditions? Except through poetry and rap songs, which seldom reach helping professionals (e.g., clinicians, clergy), we know less about the perspectives of African American youth within the city regarding their experiences with death. In my research, I talked to the people who seemed most affected by the violent death rate, teen-aged African American males reared in New Orleans, to get their perspective on the deaths of their loved ones as violent and the subsequent second line rituals as celebratory.

What are Jazz or Second Line Funerals?

Jazz or second line funerals are musical processions that typically occur in addition to traditional funerals (i.e., church, funeral home), often following the burial of the deceased. However, the timing and number of their occurrences vary across individuals. Second lines may occur shortly following the death of the deceased, days after the burial and on special anniversaries (e.g., birthday, anniversary of death). The processions are comprised of a small band, playing spirited music (e.g., “When the Saints Go Marching In”), that moves family members, friends and people passing by to a dance-like strut (Touchet, 1998). The body of the deceased may also be included as a part of the procession that travels past the home or other memorable places of the deceased (e.g., restaurant, school, place of death). As one teen described, “They’ll ride around the neighborhood with his body. The band’ll come too.”

People literally flood the streets wearing attire ranging from suits to the more popular trend of white T-shirts and other paraphernalia (e.g., bandanas, umbrellas) adorned with pictures of the deceased, quotes (e.g., bible scripture), and the person’s date of birth and death. Whereas it may be odd for a total stranger to attend the traditional funeral of an unfamiliar individual, it is generally acceptable for unfamiliar individuals to be included as a natural part of second lines. In fact, although natives often refer to the actual event as the “second line,” the term technically refers to the uninvited, yet welcomed guests who join in on the dancing to commemorate the life and death of the deceased (Jones & Batiste, 1995).

The teens were keenly aware that the purpose of second lining at death is to celebrate, remember and unite on behalf of the deceased. As one teen explained, “It’s the person that died, that’s their day.” The teens also understood that celebratory death rituals are a unique aspect of the city: “We have a lot of things that other people don’t have, like ‘second lines’ and ‘parades’.”

Who Gets to Have One?

Anyone who is interested and can cover the expenses, from the city’s highest-ranking official to the most economically disadvantaged, can have a second line. For the teen-aged African American males in my study, the ritual was particularly important in that it afforded them the opportunity to publicly celebrate the lives of deceased individuals who were significant to them and died otherwise disenfranchised deaths (Doka, 1995).

Unlike traditional funerals, which are often organized and paid for by family members, second line funerals may be organized by friends or people within the community who pool their resources,

with little or no involvement from the family of the deceased. Consistent with this notion, the teens reported a more active role in the planning and observance of second lines as compared to traditional funerals. At second lines, one can witness the diversity in the adaptations made by the teens, particularly regarding the type and specialization of paraphernalia (e.g., unique quotes on T-shirts, flags blowing in the wind from car antennas featuring the deceased) to make the second line experience their own.

Is Everyone Happy or Joyful at a Second Line Funeral?

Not necessarily. Although the overall climate of second lines is joyful, particularly compared to traditional funerals that the teens described as useful but more somber, a full range of emotions may be expressed during this ritual. Most of the teens in my study were happy to celebrate and pay tribute, through dance, to the life of their deceased loved ones and their transition to a “better place.” In fact, some felt too sad to dance, but were comforted by the dancing of others on behalf of their deceased loved ones. Still others were angry about the death. Second lines gave them a chance to constructively express their anger through creative dance movements (e.g., jumping, tumbling).

Participation in second lines gave African American teen-aged males in New Orleans a unique perspective on life and death, and a creative, physical way to express their feelings at the often violent deaths of their peers. ■

References

- Breaux, E. Y., & Aristimuno, L. (1997). *Jazz funerals in New Orleans*. Retrieved from http://www.wwoz.org/html/story_jazz_funerals_NO.html
- Doka, K. J. (1995). Friends, teachers, movie stars: The disenfranchised grief of children. In E.A. Grollman (Ed.), *Bereaved children and teens: A support guide for parents and professionals*. Boston: Beacon.
- Jones, D. M. (Director & Producer), & Batiste, M. (Co-Producer). (1995). *New Orleans jazz funerals from the inside*. New Orleans, LA: WYES TV.
- Touchet, L. (1998). Rejoice when you die: *The New Orleans jazz funerals*. New Orleans, LA: Louisiana State University Press.

About the Author

Tashel Bordere, PhD, is an assistant professor of child and family development at Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, where she teaches a course in childhood death and bereavement. Her research focuses on African American children’s experiences and perceptions of violent death, and on rituals surrounding death within the context of New Orleans. Tashel is a member of ADEC and a native of New Orleans.

Upcoming Themes

If you would like to contribute an article to an issue with these upcoming themes, contact Illene Noppe, Associate Editor of *The Forum*: noppei@uwo.edu.

Topics under consideration:

- Sibling Grief
- Spirituality
- Effects of War
- African American Experience of Death
- Complicated Grief
- Grief in the Workplace
- Mental Illness and Death

Bringing Grief Back Home

By Patrick Hogan, MS

On a beautiful fall day in 1995, Alison Sanders, a bright and vibrant seven-year-old girl, was riding home with her brothers in her father's vehicle. In an instant, an accident occurred and Alison was killed by her deploying airbag. At the hospital, Beth Knox, Alison's mother, made the decision to bring Alison home for the wake. She decided that in the same manner that she had cared for Alison every day of her life that she would now care for her in death. For Beth, this was not a choice but the only fitting conclusion to her daughter's life. With the help of a supportive funeral director, Alison was brought home to her room where she was cared for by her family and friends amidst the toys and stuffed animals that she had loved so well. After two days, she was transported to a funeral service attended by more than 700 family, friends and schoolmates. Alison and Beth introduced a school and community to an event that combined both conventional ritual and created ritual at a time of tragic loss and began a legacy that still continues.



From this seminal event, Beth, some close friends and I formed CROSSINGS: Caring for Our Own at Death, a non-profit corporation, and began the work of educating families about their choices in after death care—choices to make the time after death more personal, beautiful and sacred. This process is engendered by listening to one's deepest impulses regarding the life that has been lived and manifesting what is meaningful according to traditional and/or self-created ritual. Gamino, Easterling, Stirman, & Sewell (2000) found that, "Funeral rituals appeared to enhance mourners' comfort at the time of death, both by facilitating social support and by connecting the griever with deeper levels of meaning with which to understand and frame their loss experience," (p. 91). Enacting ritual and care can bring meaning from the moment of death through the funeral or memorial service and well beyond.

Ritual on the day of death and just after can be simple or complex. When Richard decided to return to Washington, D.C., to care for Stephen and Helen, his wheelchair-bound parents who were near the end of their lives, he knew that there would be more to his commitment than an all-absorbing schedule in the time ahead. He knew that at the end of his parents' health decline, he would have to deal with their deaths and all that would entail. In making this decision, it was important for Richard to complete this long-term commitment by continuing to provide care through the time of each of his parents' deaths and in the days afterwards. He received his brothers' agreement that, upon their parent's deaths, he would be the funeral director. Richard knew that this continued involvement would sustain him in his loss and provide a last opportunity for honoring his parents. Enacting ritual and care in death that would bring meaning to his parents' lives went hand-in-hand for Richard with his loving care in life.

In a simpler scenario, Sherry, a 43-year-old woman, had died of cancer and several friends began the process of washing and dressing her for a wake at home. Her sister watched this and, when invited to wash Sherry's hair, she engaged in this simple act of care while crying tears of acceptance, release and farewell.

Another woman, Cindy, whose father's body was kept in a funeral home for several days before the funeral, spent hours alone with her father each day as a way to bring completion to her loss.

In a traditional manner, many Jews engage in the ritualistic observance called *shiva* wherein, after burial within one day of death, the family and community gather for companionship and prayer each day for a week at the home of the deceased to care for the family, honor the life that has been lived and bless the spirit of

their loved one.

Most of us, however, do not have meaningful ritual on which to rely on the day of death and in those intense, challenging and sometimes wonder-filled days just afterward. We live in a society that has lost its way in bringing grace through grief. We often settle for vicarious displays of concern when real human contact is demanded. For those who will open themselves, there is no experience like death to lead one to a place of intimacy, vulnerability and presence to life. Hundreds of families who have enacted their own meaningful care in the days just after death experience greater healing amidst the sadness, desolation and loss. This is consistent with findings by Doka (2002) that there is often increased benefit for family and friends through active involvement at the time of a close death.

This corresponds to descriptions of working through grief in Worden's (2002) task model of mourning that, "implies that the mourner needs to take action and can do something," (p. 26). It may seem counterintuitive, but meaningful involvement right at the time of death can lead to greater acceptance of the death, working through the pain of the loss and adjusting to an environment in which the deceased is missing. Involvement places one in the environment where these tasks can be meaningfully engaged in an immediate way.

How is meaningful engagement created? First, by understanding what would truly honor the life of your loved one (or yourself) upon death. Second, by knowing the resources, such as time, energy, money and family/friends support, that are available. These practical considerations help individuals recognize themselves as co-creators (rather than as passive spectators) in the care provided after death and help people find the living rituals that best mark this sacred transition. It is recognized that, "meaning can *flow from* the rituals that are selected or devised," (Gamino et al. 2000, p. 89) and reframe the death and loss experience.

For many people, knowing their full and complete choices provides a sense of control at a time when they feel most helpless and out of control. Some may benefit from limited involvement such as washing and dressing a loved one. For an expected death at home, some may keep their loved one there for several hours for a personal goodbye before bringing in a funeral director. For others, meaningful engagement entails creating a wake at home for one to four days in familiar surroundings wherein the cycles of let-

Continued on page 5

ting go and grieving find their natural expression in the attentive care that only family members and close friends can provide. Much of this simply involves remaining present to the rhythms of silence and activity of these days, a time of stillness and possibility located between the consummated past and the awaiting future.

Such was the case with Richard who, supported by others, washed and dressed Helen upon her death and laid her in her wedding bed from 60 years before. Kept cool with dry ice, she was waked around-the-clock for several days with a person reading scripture or other literature, playing music or just being present. Then she was lovingly transported in a family vehicle for a final ceremony before cremation.

Upon Stephen's death several months later, Richard and his family went through a similar experience except that a funeral director was hired to transport Stephen back to his birthplace in West Virginia for burial. When Stephen was laid into his casket, Richard's brother proposed an impromptu toast to honor a life well lived. The next day, the family had a traditional funeral service and burial followed by a meal with friends and old neighbors.

Every life is unique and the honoring of each death should be unique as well. When family and friends take upon themselves some or all of the tasks of caring for a loved one after death, there is a blending of traditional and created ritual as they meaningful-

ly engage life-changing transformation, bring forth meaning from confusion, and eventually complete Worden's (2002) final and often challenging task of reinvesting themselves in life and living.

Such was the difficult task confronting Beth upon Alison's death. As with others, her journey demonstrates that somehow tragic loss can be accompanied by grace and eventually supplanted by growth through the intentional honoring of loved ones in death and the engagement of activities and rituals that breathe forth new life from loss. ■

References

- Doka, K. J. (Ed.) (2002). *Disenfranchised grief: New directions, challenges, and strategies for practice*. Champaign, IL: Research.
- Gamino, L. A., Easterling, L. W., Stirman, L. S., & Sewell, K. W. (2000). Grief adjustment as influenced by funeral participation and occurrence of adverse funeral events. *Omega*, 41, 79-92.
- Worden, J. W. (2002). *Grief counseling: A handbook for the mental health practitioner* (3rd ed.). New York: Springer.

About the Author

Pat Hogan works in pastoral counseling and is co-founder of CROSSINGS: Caring for Our Own at Death (www.crossings.net) in Silver Spring, Md. He is author of *Alison's Gift: The Song of a Thousand Hearts Opening* (1999, Nosila Publishing, Silver Springs, MD). Pat received a certificate in thanatology from Hood College, Frederick, Md.

Dame Cicely Saunders Dies

You matter to the last moment of your life, and we will do all we can, not only to help you die peacefully, but to live until you die.

— Dame Cicely Saunders

Dame Cicely Saunders, regarded as the founder of the modern hospice movement and a pioneer in the field of palliative care, died peacefully on July 14, 2005, at St. Christopher's Hospice in London. She was 87.

The founder of St. Christopher's Hospice, she dedicated her life and professional work to alleviating the pain and suffering of the dying. St. Christopher's opened its doors in 1967 and provided a model of care that gave birth to one of the most significant grassroots movements of the late 20th century. Cicely Saunders' guiding principle was: "To cure sometimes, but to comfort always."

Barbara Monroe, chief executive of St. Christopher's Hospice, said, "Dame Cicely's vision and work has transformed the care of the dying and the practice of medicine in the UK and throughout the world. She is an inspiration to us all. We had been caring for Dame Cicely at St. Christopher's Hospice as a patient for some time. We will miss her very



much. Her influence will carry on around the world as we work together in hospice and palliative care to support dying people and those close to them."

As a physician, Dame Cicely felt she could make the greatest impact on improving the culture of care for people at the end of life. She emphasized the importance of listening to the patient.

"The world is a better place because of Cicely Saunders. Few people can go to their rest having done more to relieve suffering and to advance compassion in the world than Dame Saunders. She was our matriarch and our guiding light, never wavering in her quest to advance care for the dying," said Stephen Connor, vice president, Access for End-of-Life Care, Research and International Development at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and ADEC Treasurer.

Article courtesy of National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO)

Incorporating the Extraordinary Experiences of the Bereaved into Personal Rituals

By Louis E. LaGrand, PhD, CT

For 63-year-old Jeanne, her mother's death came unexpectedly since she had been in good health even though she was suffering from dementia. The day following her death at 7:30 in the evening, Jeanne was lying in bed watching television trying to take a break from the stress of the past 24 hours. Suddenly, she looked to her left out of her bedroom window, having been distracted by something on the roof of her neighbor's home. At first she thought it was a cat, and then realized it was an unusually large bird. She called to her husband to come and take a look. He immediately recognized it as a great horned owl, a species very rare in the state of Florida. Her husband grabbed his camera, went outside and was able to take a couple of pictures. The end of a welcome distraction, or so she thought.



for connection. We all search for a symbolic union with the loved one. Rituals not only help us stay connected, they give us comfort, and, most importantly, provide meaning. In the above instance, Jeanne's beliefs about an afterlife were reinforced. The meaning of the owl's appearance was that her mother lives on, she is whole again. Acceptance of her death finds support in the EE.

Other Uses

The owl experience could also be used to develop an affirmation to help in coping with the loss or in moving forward into the mourner's new life. "I know you are OK and I will be OK too" or "I will practice giving to others as you have given to me" are examples of ritualistic affirmations that could be used in transition. Many mourners who experience the extraordinary will automatically replay the experience at times when they are feeling sad or wish to refocus on happy memories. Visualizing the experience as a ritual can be employed when lying in bed at night, on a long train or plane ride, or when meditating.

EEs can also be used as part of a yearly or anniversary remembrance. The experience should be written down as accurately as possible so that no details are forgotten. It can be read to an audience, if appropriate, or silently to oneself, and kept as part of family history. It could also be the subject of a poem read to give time to pause and reflect. In Jeanne's experience, she bought a small crystal owl that will be displayed at family holiday get-togethers in her home to symbolize her mother's presence.

Finally, it may be appropriate to ask the mourner if she would like to create a ritual that sends a message back to the deceased, a reply of sorts for the gift received. Expressions of love, thanksgiving or inspiration can be written ("You will always be loved." "Until we meet again." "Always remembered.") or inscribed on an object that can be used each day such as a plate, glass or cup. If the mourner does not want the message displayed for others to read, then a symbol or word picture can be constructed that will have meaning only to the mourner.

These and many other informal rituals can evolve from EEs and they answer the critical question Carl Jung posed many years ago: "Are we related to something infinite or not?" ■

References

- LaGrand, L. (2001). *Gifts from the Unknown: Using extraordinary experiences to cope with loss & change*. New York: Authors Choice Press.
- Volkan, V. (1981). *Linking objects and linking phenomena: A study of the forms, symptoms, metapsychology, and therapy of complicated mourning*. New York: International Universities Press.

About the Author

Lou LaGrand is Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus at the State University of New York College at Potsdam and gave a keynote address at the 2002 ADEC Conference in Portland, Ore.

The next day, the task of cleaning out her mother's room weighed heavily on her mind. She came home in a buoyant mood despite her ordeal for one reason: in her mother's effects she found nine pieces of jewelry, pins and pendants of owls of various sizes. Two days later, when cleaning out two boxes of her mother's belongings that had been stored in her garage, she found four more owl pins of various sizes. Although she knew her mother loved birds, she never knew that owls were her favorites. Now the episode of the previous day had a purpose. She was convinced that her mother had sent a message. As the owl is a symbol of wisdom, Jeanne was sure that, "My mother has her wits back. She's in a good place." What a gift she had received to cope with her loss.

How can this or other Extraordinary Experiences (EEs) be used to create rituals of remembrance, continuity or to symbolize the presence of the deceased? There is a multiplicity of possibilities (LaGrand, 2001). Most caregivers and mourners think of ritual in a formal sense, although all of us have personal rituals that are practiced daily. Some of these rituals are primarily internal in what we say or think, like saying a morning prayer or remembering an uplifting affirmation to silently repeat at the appropriate time. Others are practiced in overt behaviors at various times such as talking out loud to the deceased or lighting a candle of remembrance.

Jeanne could use the owl experience to honor and keep her mother's memory alive by purchasing a replica or picture of an owl and placing it where she will see it each day and be reminded of the gift she was given. Here's what she actually did. She bought a picture frame. On one half of the frame she mounted the largest owl pendant. On the other upper half, she placed an enlarged picture of the great horned owl that her husband had taken that eventful evening and below it a picture of her mother. This linking object (Volkan, 1981) hangs on the wall at the entrance to her bedroom. She is ritually reminded of her mother and her gift each time she passes by.

Like all informal bereavement rituals this one is built on a desire

Incorporating Loss into Our Holiday Rituals

By Candice Courtney

Incorporating loss into our lives requires that we also incorporate the loss into our rituals. Because ritual is often done in a more conscious and focused way, incorporating the loss into our rituals can help us to incorporate the loss into our lives. Whether rituals are simple or elaborate, practiced alone or in community, they serve a multitude of purposes in our lives. In grief, they can help us move toward acceptance, and they can help us to create a place in our life for the one(s) we have lost. They can also provide us with space to honor our sorrow, and to express our love.



alternative that draws upon the very early roots of this tradition. We know it was practiced by ancient Celts, and undoubtedly by people long before them, in a time when even the continued presence of the sun was not certain.

When the days got shorter and the nights grew colder, the world all around began to speak of death. Trees and shrubs lost their leaves, turning into skeletons. Plants shriveled and turned brown before descending into the earth to decay. The earth became stark and barren.

Yet there were certain trees and plants that held onto their green life when all else died. It was believed that these held a special life force. So the people gathered branches from these magical trees and shrubs and brought them into their homes to give them faith and hope that somehow life could survive the darkest of times.

Unlike those ancient people, we trust that after the winter solstice the sun will rise higher in the sky, but we may not fully trust that the light will return to our lives once again. The cycles of the year are predictable, but it is sometimes hard to trust in the cycles of life.

On December 15, the day before the anniversary of my husband's passing, I gather boughs of pine from the forest or a florist. I put some of the greenery in vases of water, and some of the pine branches I lay on the table around a candle. Both ancient Celts and American Indians associated pine with immortality, and the scent

of pine was believed to help soften the sharp edges of grief. The sight and scent of the pine branches are a silent affirmation of faith and hope during the dark time. I add rosemary—for remembrance. And a red rose for love. Sometimes I also add a few simple decorations, such as

apples and pinecones, or angels.

The fragrance and the rich green of the pine boughs can bring us into connection with this holiday tradition in a new way, and in a way that honors and supports us where we are in our grief. Gathering the greens and placing them in our home can be a way not only of affirming our faith, but also of honoring our beloved and honoring our sense of loss. We can allow this practice to give us hope, not only that we can survive, but that the cycles of life will indeed turn, and that some day, however distant spring may seem, daffodils will push their way up out of the ground and into the strengthening light of the sun. ■

About the Author

For more than 10 years, Candice Courtney has been working to make the rituals of life more personally meaningful by creating custom ceremonies for funerals, weddings, and other life passages, as well as offering workshops on holiday rituals. She is writing a book on healing rituals for holidays and dark days. Candice can be reached at cccourtney@earthlink.net.

Special times usually accentuate our sense of loss, and it is often suggested that we change how we normally do our holiday rituals to help make them less traumatic, such as having Thanksgiving dinner at a new location. But changing things just to change is not enough of a solution. We need to change the rituals so that they address the needs we have in grief. As I worked my way through the difficult years that followed my husband's death, I learned how to change life's rituals to fit where I was in my grief.

For those struggling through this holiday season, I offer two simple rituals that may help as they make their way through the darkest season of the year, in the midst of what may be the darkest season of all their years.

Thanksgiving

One of the reasons some people choose to have Thanksgiving dinner in a new location is to avoid "the empty chair." If yours is a family where everyone has their own place at the table, you might have everyone sit in a different place to avoid the stark reminder of the empty place.

Some though, might choose to leave the chair empty, and place a candle in front of it to signify that the spirit of this person is still present. Just before the meal the candle can be lit with words such as:

We light this candle in memory of Tony. His spirit still is a part of our lives. His love still shines onto us, and our love for him still glows in our hearts.

As we share this feast of Thanksgiving, let us talk about those things for which we are most thankful to Tony — the things we learned from him, and the times that we laughed with him. In doing so, we affirm that he lives on in all of us.

Christmas/New Year

The end of the year festivities are still the hardest times for me, as they are for many people—our grief weighs heavier, and everyone else is celebrating. However, there are meanings among the roots of the traditions that offer comfort and support. Through their metaphors they address our sense of loss.

For years, I could not bring myself to put up a tree and decorate it. It felt too festive, too poignant, and seemed like far too much work. Instead I have practiced a simpler, but more meaningful

"The end of the year festivities are still the hardest times for me, as they are for many people."

A Pre-Death Ritual for Mable

By O. Duane Weeks, PhD, CT, CFSP

In memory of Mable Thomforde, on the 10th anniversary of her death.

Our family matriarch was dying. She was suffering from congestive heart failure, physicians explained, and we should expect her death within the next few months. The dying woman was my mother-in-law, a woman who had quietly reared her two children and steadfastly supported my wife and me in the rearing of our four children. In preparation for her impending death, we decided to participate in a rite common to liturgical Christian churches, "Communion for the Dying."



Because we had been told to expect Mable's death at any moment, her Communion for the Dying ritual was held in her home. Participating in the ceremony with Mable were two pastors, Mable's two children, four of her grandchildren and me.

The pastors represented two branches of the Lutheran faith. The pastor at Mable's church was not helpful during her dying. He seldom visited her unless we called him and strongly reminded him of his responsibility to his members. He did, however, participate in the communion ritual willingly. Our pastor, a young man fairly new in his work, provided wonderful support to our immediate family, including Mable, during the last weeks of her life. He often visited Mable, was with us in her hospital room when she died, and grieved with us following her death in June 1995.

One January afternoon, we met in Mable's home where we all sat in a circle in her living room. We began with her pastor's prayer. Then our pastor asked Mable to explain her faith. In a quiet but strong voice, she told about her upbringing in the Lutheran church, her belief in God and Jesus and how important her faith was to her. This frail little woman, who had probably never before spoken publicly, enthralled us as she clarified her beliefs of more than 80 years.

Following Mable's poignant talk, we went around the circle and each one explained what Mable met to her or him. This was a wonderful opportunity to share intimate thoughts and feelings with the dying person. Not only is such sharing unusual, but it also revealed to Mable how much we loved her. Usually, of course, such conversations are held around the casket where it is too late for the dead person to participate or hear. What a rich and wonderful memory this ritual provided for Mable.

One of our sons told his grandmother how he always enjoyed visiting her and knew he was always welcome in her home. He went on to describe why he felt she was such a wonderful grandmother.

In all the 32 years I had known her, I had never told Mable I loved her. When it was my turn to talk, I did tell her that I loved her. I also explained how grateful I was for the way she and her husband had influenced their daughter, providing me with a fantastic wife and mother for my children.

When it was our daughter's turn to talk, she said:

Grandma, I remember when you and Grandpa lived on the farm. Often at night, when I was leaving, I would see you standing in the door light behind you.

You stood there waving goodbye to me, and wishing me a safe trip home. Now Grandma, it's my turn to stay behind and see you leave, and as difficult as it is for me to say "goodbye," I have to wish you a safe journey home.

By the time Karla had finished, nearly everyone was crying, and it was hard for others to continue with their comments. It is also difficult to remember what was said by those who followed Karla.

When everyone had an opportunity to share thoughts and feelings, the pastors served communion to us. This seemed especially appropriate given Mable's strong religious faith and her enthusiasm to pass that faith along to her family. It was a fitting way to complete this very personal ritual.

The next morning, I visited Mable and asked her what she thought about the ritual we had shared the previous day. Her response was succinct: "Remembering it is almost as good as the experience itself." Interestingly, Mable regained her stamina following the communion ritual, and lived another five months.

Our oldest son, Doug, had worried about his grandmother's health for several months and experienced difficulty sleeping. He woke during the night, nearly every night, thinking about his grandmother. The night following our communion ritual, he slept soundly and completely throughout the night.

Several years after Mable's death, our pastor accepted a call to a church in Los Angeles. When he left our town, he wrote a letter to my wife and me. The letter included this reflection, "I will always remember the communion service we held for Mable. In my years of ministry, this stands out as my fondest experience."

What made this communion ritual such a great ritual, a warm memory, a wonderful experience? Why was it any different from any other ritual?

First, the ability to tell someone how much you really love and appreciate her, or him, is often lost in today's western civilization. How often, outside of the throes of passion, do we tell people we love them and really mean it? The communion ritual was our opportunity to tell Mable how we loved her.

Second, we funeral directors often witness the sad experience of family members standing beside the casket, expressing their love to the dead person long after that person is capable of hearing the heartfelt, but belated, emotions. This ritual provides a lesson in expressing love today, in the here and now.

Third, not only was Mable able to hear and appreciate what we had to say, but she also participated in the pre-death ritual. All of us present that day participated and experienced the family love articulated during the afternoon.

Can anyone use a similar pre-death ritual? Certainly. A comparable ritual can be designed for anyone, whether or not that person is Christian. Family and friends can gather to express their feel-

Continued on page 9

A Pre-Death Ritual for Mable

Continued from page 8

ings toward the dying person and say "goodbye" as poignantly as Karla did. Refreshments or a meal can be shared and any of the other elements of the communion service can be duplicated in a non-Christian setting.

As we begin the 21st century, more and more Americans attempt to deny death, disassociating themselves from funerary rituals that should be helpful. In the words of our colleague, Harold Ivan Smith, "Americans do death lite." Pre-death rituals, like "Communion for the Dying," can involve both the dying person and the survivors. They are an opportunity to disrupt such foolish denials and disassociations. ■

About the Author

A licensed funeral director for 46 years, O. Duane Weeks has owned and operated funeral homes since 1966. He completed his doctorate in sociology at the University of Minnesota in 1994. In 1999, Dr. Weeks retired as director of New England Institute at Mount Ida College in Newton Center, Mass. Together with Catherine Johnson, he edited *When All the Friends Have Gone: A Guide for Aftercare Providers* (2001, Baywood, Amityville, New York).

Student Paper Awards

To submit a paper for consideration, the writer must be currently enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student. ADEC invites the submission of student papers to be considered for one of three awards: the *Undergraduate Student Paper*, the *Graduate Paper Award*, and the *Cross-Cultural Award*.

Each award consists of \$100 and a Certificate of Recognition that will be awarded at the 2006 Conference, reimbursement for travel expenses up to \$200 and waiver of conference registration fee. Winners will be invited to present winning papers as a poster during the Conference.

Especially welcomed are student papers that reflect diversity of culture as well as philosophical, clinical and educational approaches to death, dying and bereavement. Papers will be judged by a multidisciplinary committee through blind review based on the following criteria: *the topic is related to death, dying, or bereavement; topic importance; clarity of writing; originality of content; depth and breadth of content; documentation of resources; writing style; and adherence to format.*

To submit a paper, follow the guidelines that appear online at www.adec.org or contact Headquarters for a hard copy submission form: (847) 509-0403.

The deadline for paper submission is November 15, 2005: Sheri Goldstrohm, PhD, Chair Student Paper Awards Committee, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, WPIC, 3rd Floor, 3811 O'Hara Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. **Do not send papers to ADEC Headquarters. Questions can be directed to Sheri at goldstrohmsl@msx.upmc.edu.**

2006 Award Nominations

The Awards Committee is seeking nominations from the membership of individuals meriting special recognition by the Association for their contributions to the field of death education and grief counseling and to our organization. Deadline for submission is December 15, 2005.

Please take the time to consider your nominations in light of the awards criteria listed below. The 2006 ADEC Award Recipients will be honored at the Annual Conference in Tampa, Fla.

Criteria for each award can be found on the Web site or mailed from ADEC Headquarters: (847) 509-0403. ADEC Executive Board Members cannot be considered candidates, nor can those who have received ADEC Awards within the past five years.

- Contributions to the Field Award
- Service Award
- Death Education Award
- Clinical Practice Award
- Research Recognition Award

Please send any nominations for the awards listed above together with a short letter of support by for each nominee by December 15, 2004, to: Madeline Lambrecht at madeline@udel.edu.



Quality Education for Professionals Working with People who are Grieving
October - December 2005 Seminar Schedule

Bereavement Facilitator - Level I November San Diego, CA January 2006 Dallas, TX	Advanced Bereavement Fac. November Sacramento, CA January 2006 St. Petersburg, FL
Spiritual Counseling Facilitator Nov.-December San Francisco, CA January 2006 Phoenix, AZ	Different Ways of Grieving Different Ways of Healing October OR, WA, ID November CO, NM, AZ
Grief Counseling Clinical Practice November NJ, NY	Forgiveness October WV, PA, NY, TX November IN, OH, MI December NY, NJ, AR, TN, AL
Helping Grieving Children & Teens October GA, MO Nov.- December CA, WI, IL	Working With Survivors of Homicide, Suicide & Violence October NJ, PA November MN, IL, IN
Working with Challenging Clients October MI, RI, MA Nov.-Dec. FL, CA, IA, NE, PA, OH	Grief & Depression October CA Nov.-December WA, OR, MI
When Parents Die October VA, DC, MD November SD, IL, NE	Grief Counseling Revisited Oct.- November CA, OK, MO
Coping with Grief Nov.-Dec. VT, MA, RI, CA, PA, NJ	Tools to Assist the Dying December MN, SD, OH
Grief Counseling: Cutting Edge December VA, MD, NC	

For details, visit www.CMIEducation.com or call 1-800-726-3888

Teen Theatre Troupe as Ritual

By Lauren Chandler and Shelly Steward

Stomp stomp stomp CLAP, stomp stomp stomp CLAP, stomp stomp stomp CLAP! Such is the beat created by adolescent performers as they file on and off stage to mark the beginning of the 2004-2005 Courageous Kids Theatre Troupe performance. With the rhythm, a ritual commences. Literally and metaphorically, a stage is set. Space is created where it is acceptable to speak truthfully and personally about death and grief in the lives of young people — a topic that is too often proscribed in mainstream society. The performers engage and educate the audience by sharing stories about the day of the death, anecdotes about going back to school, original poetry and music inspired by their feelings, and honest appraisals of what they have found helpful and challenging since the death. Each year, a new combination of performers brings changing wisdom and insight to the show.



Background

Courageous Kids is a grief support program based in Eugene, Ore., offering peer support groups and a four-day overnight camp for children and adolescents. Participants have the option to join the Theatre Troupe in which teens create and perform an original production about death and grief in the lives of youth and tour it in area middle and high schools.

Rationale

The stories closest to us are often the ones hardest to share. To divulge them, we need somewhere we feel secure — a space in which the sharing of such stories has become acceptable, expected and comfortable. In a religious or spiritual ritual, individuals can find a safe space for explaining the unexplainable, concepts like the afterlife or human altruism. In the setting of a church ceremony, discussions of such topics that would otherwise seem unnatural and somehow taboo, become natural and acceptable.

Adolescent grief needs its own ritual for expression free from the traditions of religion or family and the constraints of modern society. The ritual of Theatre Troupe exists outside the context of an established ritual and therefore is more socially acceptable to young people. The unique ritual of Theatre Troupe provides a space in which performers are able to tell and audiences are able to hear stories unhampered by exterior influences. For adolescents struggling to define themselves against institutions and conventions, Theatre Troupe is empowering. Theatre Troupe creates exactly the nonsectarian ritual needed for many adolescents to normalize discussions of death and grief. Through this medium, teens are able to share stories of great pain and loss, the sharing of which may otherwise involve extreme emotional discomfort. The intentional space is especially important for adolescents, as young grievers often feel isolated by their feelings and lost among a sea of seemingly happy peers.

Functions

The functions of Theatre Troupe as a ritual for the performers align with the three dimensions Neimeyer (2000) describes as nec-

essary for funerals to address in order to meet the needs of the bereaved:

1. Transformation of the mourner's sense of self, while recasting one's attachment to the deceased.
2. Transition to a new social status.
3. Connection to that which is lost, as an alternative to "severing ties."

Neimeyer acknowledges that although funerals may contribute to healthy grieving,

"they are rarely adequate to fully memorialize a death in the minds of survivors." Theatre Troupe is not intended to emulate or replace a funereal ritual, yet it offers a safe medium that promotes the aforementioned purposes.

Theatre Troupe's ritual of sharing grief stories is not without risk. Some participants reported feeling an emotional distancing from their own most personal stories and memories, a result of repeated telling. In the repetition, the stories can become mundane to their tellers, those individuals to whom they originally were so powerful, so provocative, so personal. In order to minimize this effect, it is important for performers to stay in constant connection with their own and each others' experiences as both performers and grievers. To ensure that these connections are maintained, the script of the performance is loose, allowing participants to modify or eliminate pieces throughout the year, based on the evolution of their process. Doing so keeps the performance fresh yet familiar for performers, and most evocative to audiences.

Benefits

After a performance, one adult audience member remarked, "A problem I had in life was no one ever talked about my parents' death." Hopefully, those involved with the ritual of troupe, both audiences and participants, will not have to endure such feelings. Through Theatre Troupe, participants are empowered as agents of change working to dismantle societal taboos surrounding grief. Audiences of all sorts benefit, seeing their own emotions reflected in those of the performers. Death, divorce and geographical moves are only a few of the many life changes that elicit feelings of grief. Audience members need not have experienced the death of a loved one to relate to the feelings discussed in the show. Grief does not discriminate. The ritual of Theatre Troupe grants the permission necessary to disclose what is real, even if it is painful, and encourages dialogue about a topic so difficult to approach. ■

References

Neimeyer, R. A. (2000). *Lessons of Loss: A Guide to Coping*. Memphis, TN: University of Memphis.

About the Authors

Lauren Chandler is the former director of the Courageous Kids Theatre Troupe. She is a first year student in the masters of social work program at Portland State University in Portland, Ore. This article is based on her presentation at the 2005 ADEC Conference in Albuquerque, "Grieving Teenagers Create Peer Support Performance Troupes." Lauren is committed to the development of new theater troupe programs based on the Courageous Kids model. Her e-mail is laurenbchandler@gmail.com.

Continued on page 11

An Open Letter to ADEC Members: Presence and Absence

By Rabbi Daniel A. Roberts

I spent hour after hour at the 2005 Albuquerque conference listening to the advice of colleagues who spoke about the importance of “presence,” the act of being there for another without the need to say anything. I learned about the three Hs: Hang Around, Hug, Hush. During my time with friends from the conference, I felt that sense of “presence” and of being hugged physically and spiritually. So many came up to me upon hearing of my mother’s recent death and just hugged me. Their presence in my arms was enough and words were unnecessary.

It was later in the convention I felt absence so keenly. I sat at the memorial service so beautifully led by Howard Winokuer and David Meagher. As I listened to Howard sing that life was a circle, and David prepare to read a meaningful poem, I looked around. Not only was I feeling the absence of my mother, but also the profound absence of so many of my colleagues. Their places at the tables were empty and so was my heart. I suddenly felt very much alone. I asked myself, “Why would my colleagues, who are such a caring and compassionate group, who understand the anguish of loss, who are empathetic and loving, desert their fellow companions who are in pain and anguish?” Yes, they may not be experiencing a loss themselves, and maybe they do not see personal value in the service, but they left me, and all the others who remained in the room, feeling very much alone.

I suggest that next year we let conference attendees know just how much their presence would be a comfort to the bereaved in our midst at the memorial service. I was also very distressed that



there was not a public reading of the names of our colleagues who died during the past year. I think that we need to make a greater effort to honor their memory by publicly mentioning their names at the memorial service. “Memorializing” is very important not only to the survivors, but also for the well being of everyone. No one wants to think that they will be forgotten after they have died. For me, and I believe for others, it would be meaningful to know that the very organization to which I have dedicated a portion of my life will remember me.

I suggest that all ADEC members become a “committee of the whole” so when we learn of the passing of a colleague, we e-mail ADEC’s administrative manager. ADEC’s president could send a letter of condolence and ask for a picture of our colleague and a short biography. These pictures of deceased colleagues could then be shown during the memorial service and the originals placed in an attractive memorial book. Might I also suggest that at the registration desk there be a table where people could individually memorialize the names of loved ones and these names could be read publicly during the service.

What I am suggesting, out of my sense of my loss this past year, is that we, as a thanatology organization, need to pay greater attention to the emotional needs of our fellow adventurers in this field of death and dying. Even though we might not know each other personally, the one gift we can give each other is the great gift of our “presence.” ■

ADEC’s Proposed Bylaws Revisions

By Helen S. Chapple RN, MA, CDE, CCRN
ADEC 2nd Vice President

At the spring 2005 meeting, the ADEC Board of Directors decided to update ADEC’s election procedures for board members and officers. We had two reasons for doing this: 1) to extend the time frame for the nomination process, and 2) to enable online voting in addition to paper ballots. Both of these required us to revise the bylaws.

What began as a relatively simple process evolved into a major project as we identified more items in the bylaws that needed to be updated and/or made more consistent—not unlike a housecleaning project!

The Guide to Bylaw Changes, located on the ADEC Web site in the members only area (log on and click on Resources &

Links, then select Bylaws) will allow you to read through the results of our work and see if you agree with our assessments. The Guide indicates which changes are editorial and which are substantive, (although this division itself is a value judgment, of course). References to committees have been omitted, unless the committees are defined within the Bylaws.

Of note, we’ve added the category of “research” to ADEC functions. All members will be asked to vote on the changes, either online at www.adec.org, or on paper. An e-mail will be sent to members with more information. If you have questions, you may e-mail any board member or me at hsc4a@virginia.edu.

Teen Theatre Troupe as Ritual

Continued from page 10

Shelly Steward is majoring in sociology at Harvard College with a special interest in the societal influence of art. She is a founding member of the Courageous Kids Theatre Troupe and was recognized as one of the nation’s top young leaders in 2004 by the Toyota Company. She is cur-

rently starting a theater troupe with teens at the Children’s Room, a center for grieving children and adolescents serving Boston, Mass. Her e-mail is steward@fas.harvard.edu.

Reflections on Hurricane Katrina

By Sherry R. Schacter, PhD, CT

I am sitting in my office just a week after Hurricane Katrina devastated a portion of the Gulf Coast of the United States and I am outraged at the delayed response for aid. And while relief efforts have increased significantly as we close in on the end of the first week since the hurricane hit, my initial reaction (and those of the many ADEC members with whom I have communicated) is shock. I feel shock and disbelief at what appears to be the government's indifference and complacency. Like many, I feel a need to do something. At this point, the most sensible and important impact we can have as an organization is to disseminate information to our members on how they can help and assist those who are in need. As an organization with ADEC's rich diversity of professionals, there is much we will be able to do over time—rest assured there will be many opportunities to help.

We started addressing how ADEC should respond to natural disasters even before Hurricane Katrina was a blip on the Doppler radar. Members of the ADEC board began discussing our potential response to natural disasters after last year's tsunami. How and when ADEC should intervene after a disaster has long been an issue for our membership. ADEC has frequently been described as "the best kept secret."

Earlier in August 2005, a task force was created to address what the ADEC response to such tragedies should be. This task force is chaired by Pat Zalaznik (board oversight for Public Services) and members include Nancy Hogan and Jack Jordan. Nell Hanks and Kathleen Foster-Morgan, in their capacity as co-chairs of the Public Relations Committee, and Jane Moore as Web Site



Committee chair have also been working collaboratively with the task force. Rick Koepke, our CSO, has shared his expertise and experience as well. Recommendations will be forthcoming during our mid-year board meeting in October.

Several other committees have been actively communicating with one another via e-mail and listservs. Members of the People of Color/MultiCultural Committee have been exchanging ideas and sharing thoughts with one another since last year's annual conference. These ongoing, online interactions are yet another way for ADEC members to stay connected and current. Ideas generated can lead to discussion groups and presentations at our conferences.

And speaking of conferences, Co-Chairs Liz Bradley and Wayne Leaver have been hard at work organizing our Tampa conference. Their team, including many members throughout the ADEC community, has been involved in planning and executing what promises to be an exciting event in Tampa. Gina Dixon and Jack LoCicero have started planning the Annual Community Educational Program that will take place on the Tuesday before the conference begins. Last year's event in Albuquerque, with presentations by Madeline Lambrecht and me, was our first attempt at offering an educational program to the community hosting our conference. It was well received and brought several newcomers to the conference and to our ADEC community. In my next column, I will continue to focus on what other ADEC committees and task forces are accomplishing.

Call for Board Nominations

ADEC is accepting nominations for the following positions:

- **Second Vice President** (one-year term) The Second Vice President automatically becomes the First Vice President for a one-year term, then President for a one-year term. The nominee for Second Vice President must have served at some time on the ADEC Board.
- Three (3) **Members of the Board of Directors** (three-year terms)
- One (1) **Member of the Leadership Recruitment and Development Committee (LRDC)** (two-year term)

All regular ADEC members are eligible to be nominated. All potential candidates should be asked by the nominator and must consent to being nominated before their names are submitted to the LRDC. To help you make your selection, the LRDC offers the following guidelines. Qualifications for Nominees for ADEC's Board of Directors:

- **Been a member for a minimum of three years**
- **Attended at least two ADEC conferences**

- **Committed to attend annual and mid-year board meetings at his/her own expense — Note: Up to \$500 of expenses to attend the mid-year board meeting will be reimbursed by ADEC.**
- **Must have e-mail**
- **May not have an obligation that would prevent attendance at the board meetings**
- **Been active on one or more ADEC committees**
- **Shown an interest in, knowledge of and enthusiasm for ADEC**
- **Agreed to serve if elected**
- **Vice president must have been a member of the board**

After all nominations have been received, the LRDC will select nominees to appear on the ballot in accordance with Article IX, Section 2 of the Bylaws, which states: "The Committee shall place on the ballot one or more candidates for each of the positions to be elected. Selection shall be based on number of nominations, willingness to serve, and the needs of the Association." E-mail your nomination by October 31, 2005, to Madeline Lambrecht, at madeline@udel.edu.

Associate Editor Sought

Illene C. Noppe succeeds Louis A. Gamino as Editor of *The Forum*, when his term expires later this year (in October 2005). Noppe assumes editorial duties beginning with the first 2006 issue of *The Forum*.

Just as the ADEC Board has vice presidents who follow a path of succession to presidency of the Association, it is anticipated that a new associate editor will be selected to work with Noppe and, hopefully, become editor when her term is completed. The editor's term is three years. **A new associate editor is being sought at this time.** The associate editor works collaboratively with the editor in conceptual planning of professional development themes for future issues, assists with decision-making and editorial policy, coordinates some aspects of bimonthly publication and will "grow into" independent editorial duties by "guest editing" an issue of *The Forum* each year. *The Forum* is published four times per year (approximately 16 pages per issue).

Interested ADEC members should submit the following information to Illene C. Noppe, PhD, Editor, *The Forum*, c/o Human Development, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, 2420 Nicolet Drive, Green Bay WI 54311 or e-mail noppei@uwgb.edu.

- Copy of curriculum vitae
- Two letters of reference
- A personal statement outlining his/her interest, qualifications and vision for *The Forum*.

If you would like more information about responsibilities, time commitment, or other aspects of this position, contact Illene Noppe at noppei@uwgb.edu. It is hoped that a new Associate Editor of *The Forum* will be selected in the near future and begin serving immediately (2006 - 2008).

Take Note

ADEC changed its headquarters office. Contact us at:
ADEC • 60 Revere Dr., Suite 500 • Northbrook, IL 60062
(847) 509-0403 • info@adec.org

Editor's Adieu: "A Wonderful Ride"

By Louis A. Gamino

When I saw the movie, "Seabiscuit," it illustrated how wonderful it is to ride a race horse who has heart and verve and determination. Supported by a magnificent cast of contributing authors, editing *The Forum* these past three years has been just such an experience for me. I have contacted many of you to write for *The Forum* and I have been overwhelmed and gratified by the affirmative response. *The Forum* is your newsletter and you have exercised ownership admirably! Thank you so much for your support. It has been a "wonderful ride."



I want to thank publicly my editorial staff including Associate Editor Illene Noppe, who is already preparing her January/February/March 2006 inaugural issue as incoming editor, and Paul Metzler who writes so dependably the "What's New" column. Also, previous Editor Kevin Oltjenbruns has continued to be helpful in an "emeritus" sort of way.

I appreciate also the individuals who have constituted the production staff these last three years. Formerly, that was Helene Weston and Liz Kohanski from Association Resources and now includes Jill Hronek and Patricia Sullivan with the Sherwood Group.

During my tenure as editor, there have been four different ADEC presidents, all of whom have been strong supporters of *The Forum*. My thanks go to Sherry Schacter, Madeline Lambrecht, Kathleen Moore and Gordon Thornton.

Not all of you have had the honor of meeting my wife, Marla, but she too deserves my deepest gratitude for sustaining me through many late night conversations about issues, themes, authors and the subtleties of the English language.

Thanks again to all of you for the opportunity to have one of the greatest jobs in this organization. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve ADEC members as editor of *The Forum*. After this "wonderful ride," I am looking forward to a more pedestrian stride as a regular member. See you around. ■

ADEC Upgrades Members Only Section of Web Site

In early September, ADEC Headquarters sent an e-mail to all ADEC members letting them know about upgrades to the member services section of the ADEC Web site and the new method for logging in to the Members Only area.

In case you missed it, we're providing this reminder here:

To access the site, follow these instructions:

1. Visit www.adec.org. In the left navigation menu, click on "Members Only Section."
2. Enter your username and password. Click on "Sign On," and you're in. (Your username is your first initial and your entire last name. If you have forgotten your password, ADEC headquarters can reset it for you.)

3. You can change your own password, and visit any portion of the members only area and change your own database entries.

What's New?

- The Membership Directory is searchable by more data fields. Find and connect with your colleagues easier and faster. [Log in and Click DIRECTORY at the top of the page.]
- The Announcement Board provides updates on ADEC activities and news for members. Check frequently to stay in touch. [Click on "Groups" then "Announcements" under the Forums heading.]



ADEC 28th Annual Meeting Grief and Loss: Wisdom and Insight

March 29 – April 2, 2006

Tampa Marriott Waterside Hotel & Marina • Tampa, Florida, USA

Keynote Highlights:

Personal grief, crisis management and deregulation are among the topics that will be addressed by keynote speakers at the ADEC 28th Annual Meeting, March 29-April 2, 2006, in Tampa, Fla.

Keynote presentations include:

Crisis Management: Experience, Partnerships and Intuition

Kathryn Turman, MSW

Program Director for the Office of Victim Assistance, FBI and

Sharon Bryon, LPC

Director of the Office of Transportation Disaster Assistance, National Transportation Safety Board

Teams in the Face of Death: The Threat of Deregulation and the Promise of Wisdom and Growth

Danai Papadatou, PhD

Professor of Psychology, University of Athens, Greece; Former Chair of the International Work Group on Death, Dying and Bereavement

A Grief Professional's Personal Story of Grief, Loss and the Caregivers

Vanderlyn R. Pine, PhD

Internationally Known Educator, Former ADEC President and Founding ADEC Member

See www.adec.org for more information.

Certification News

Certified in Thanatology (CT), Re-Certification, Fellow in Thanatology (FT)

Even though the October 3 deadline for submitting applications for the 2005 certification exam has passed, approximately 505 individuals have completed their applications and will be taking the exam on November 12. We wish them well.

Individuals whose certification expires this year have until December 31, 2005, to submit documentation of their 45 CE/contact hours to ADEC Headquarters. If you have any questions, contact Administrative Manager Bret S. Beall before December 1, 2005, to assure adequate time for response.

ADEC is continuing to accept applications from those individuals who wish to upgrade their CT to the new certification, FT (Fellow in Thanatology). Individuals with a current CT may apply for FT at any time; individuals who wish to bypass the CT and apply directly for the FT certification must now wait until the next exam cycle has been established.

Applications, fees and other data are available online at www.adec.org or by calling ADEC Headquarters at 847/509-0403.

New from Dr. Alan Wolfelt and Companion Press

COMPANIONING FOR FAMILIES AT A TIME OF PERINATAL LOSS

A Practical Guide to "Companioning" for Nurses, Physicians, Social Workers and Chaplains in the Hospital Setting

By Jane Heustis & Marcia Meyer Jenkins
Foreword by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

The OB unit is the only hospital environment where life begins and, sometimes, tragically ends. Staff must alternate masks of comedy and tragedy as they care for the estimated 2-4 percent of deliveries that end in the death of a baby. Many OB caregivers feel unprepared to handle the intensity of perinatal loss. Most hospitals have bereavement care standards but offer little instruction in following them. Written by seasoned support nurses, *Caring for Families at a Time of Perinatal Loss* outlines a framework for bereavement care in the obstetrical arena. Based on Dr. Alan Wolfelt's principles of companioning, it describes loss from the family's perspective, defines the caregiver's role, offers bedside strategies and reviews the work of mourning in the weeks and months after. Real-life stories teach what is important during times of intense sorrow.

ISBN 1-879651-47-5 • 176 pages • softcover • \$19.95



To order books or to request a complete catalog, please call the Center for Loss or visit our website, www.centerforloss.com.



Companion
PRESS

An imprint of the
Center for Loss and Life Transition

3735 Broken Bow Road
Fort Collins, CO 80526
(970) 226-6050

www.centerforloss.com

To order books or to request a complete catalog, please call the Center for Loss or visit our website.

By the Rev. Paul A. Metzler, DMin

Averill, Steven D. *Grief and the Healing Process: Understanding Our Losses.* Phoenix, AZ: Hospice of the Valley, revised edition, 2003. Spiral bound, 71 pages.

Written in 1993 as a curriculum guide to assist in bereavement outreach programs, this newly revised edition offers additional materials to enrich grief support groups. Averill has a particular interest in identifying story and enlisting the full range of human senses to provide a balanced approach to healing in the grieving process. The curriculum includes leader outlines for adult sessions and children and family sessions, as well as handouts to be used in designated sessions.

Folken, Molly Hill. *Living on the Edge. Growing to the End of Life.* Baltimore, MD: PublishAmerica, 2005. ISBN: 1-4137-5097-4. Softcover, 64 pages.

Folken has written a brief but poignant guide on aging to encourage all of us to “turn the stresses of aging’s losses into gains in emotional and spiritual growth, completing our life cycle in dignity and peace.” Her nine chapters cover many issues that need attention and reflection as we personally age, as well as support others in the aging journey. This booklet might profitably be read by everyone as they approach retirement or other marker moments in their senior years.

Jeffreys, J. Shep. *Helping Grieving People. When Tears Are Not Enough.* New York: Brunner-Routledge, 2005. ISBN: 0-415-94603-4. Hardcover, 169 pages.

Jeffreys’ 10 chapters comprise a very useful tutorial to enable professional caregivers to respond helpfully to griever. Using “exquisite witness” as a core concept for exploring the personal, cognitive and practical dimensions of the helping process, Jeffreys draws from an impressive familiarity with the thanatology literature. An especially helpful feature is the frequent sidebar comments that offer practical applications for caregivers to consider.

Nickel, Timothy. *The Labyrinth of Grief.* Elizabethtown, PA: Masonic Villages, 2003. (717 367-1121). Softcover, 39 pages.

Written primarily as a resource for use in the Mourning Star Bereavement Program at the Masonic Villages, Nickel has used the image of the Chartres Cathedral labyrinth to encourage grievers to journey spiritually through the many loops and curves of grief. This brief booklet offers encouragement and support for the challenges of the mourning process.

Rosenblatt, Paul C. and Beverly R. Wallace. *African American Grief.* New York: Routledge, 2005. ISBN: 0-415-95152-6. Softcover, 193 pages.

Part of the Routledge Series in Death, Dying and Bereavement, this book contributes compelling insights into African American patterns of grief and mourning. Building upon the sparse existing literature, Rosenblatt and his co-author offer 16 chapters drawn from a qualitative study approach to in-depth interviews with 26 African American individuals. This book will provide academics and bereavement professionals with substantial information to assist in further research and deepen current practice. An appendix, references, as well as author and subject indexes complement this volume’s value.

Underwood, Donna Reutzell. *Grief Works: Sudden Death.* Kearney, NE: Morris Press, 2005. ISBN: 0-9663970-1-0. Softcover, 82 pages.

This brief booklet provides important clarity, information and empathy to those coping with, or responding to those grieving, sudden deaths. Drawing from both personal and professional experience, Underwood has organized her insights into seven chapters and concludes with the personal writings of several mourners reflecting on the sudden death of their loved ones.

Wolfelt, Alan D. *When Your Pet Dies. A Guide To Mourning, Remembering, and Healing.* Fort Collins, CO: Companion Press, 2003. ISBN: 1-879651-36-x. Softcover, 79 pages.

Wolfelt has provided a small book that speaks directly to the heart of the pet owner grieving a companion pet. He encourages the reader to actively experience and express the grief, even providing pages to guide the reader in journaling thoughts and reflections. The brevity of this book makes it a suitable gift to companion someone in the journey of grief for a pet. ■

“What’s New” is a listing of educational materials written or produced by ADEC members. Each listing is run once and is intended to showcase contributions of our membership to the field of death, dying, and bereavement. Send an actual copy (not just an announcement) of recent materials (2002 to present) to:

The Rev. Paul A. Metzler, DMin
 Director, Public Education & Community Bereavement
 HOSPICE CARE/Visiting Nurse Service of NY
 1250 Broadway
 New York, N.Y. 10001-3797
 (212) 609-1979
 paul.metzler@vnsny.org

Cookbook

Morsels and Memories, ADEC’s cookbook, makes a great gift.

Order forms can be obtained from ADEC headquarters, from the Web site or from Sherry Schachter: sherryrise@aol.com.



Association for Death Education and Counseling
60 Revere Dr.
Suite 500
Northbrook, IL 60062
www.adec.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 445
Northbrook, IL

Don't miss the upcoming ADEC Annual Conference! Grief and Loss: Wisdom and Insight



Keynote Speakers:

Kathryn Turman, MSW
Sharon Bryon, LPC
Danai Papadatou, PhD
Vanderlyn R. Pine, PhD

28th Annual Conference
March 29 - April 2, 2006
Tampa Marriott Waterside
Hotel & Marina
Tampa, Florida, USA