



SEPTEMBER 2022 - TENTH EDITION

# SIBLINGS OF MURDERED SIBLINGS

*The Unwanted Club*



As we begin the season of hoodies, falling leaves, bonfires, and pumpkin spice, we at SOMS thank each and every one of you for your participation in our Facebook group and ongoing events. Please let us know how we can help.  
We are all in this Unwanted Club together.

*This month, we highlight:*

**Suicide Awareness Month**

**Hispanic Heritage Month**

**Yoga Month**

**Suicide Prevention Week**

September 4-10

**Australian Father's Day**

September 4

**International Day of Charity**

September 5

**National Read a Book Day**

September 6

**World Suicide Prevention Day**

September 10

**Patriot Day**

September 11

**National Video Game Day**

September 12

**Women's Friendship Day**

September 18

**National Voter Registration Day**

September 20

**International Day of Peace**

September 21

**Autumnal Equinox**

September 23

**National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims**

September 25

## NEW AND/OR UPCOMING ITEMS ON OUR WEBSITE:

- *Testimonial Page (submit your testimony of how SOMS has helped you in your journey)*
- *Unsolved Murders*
- *Restorative Justice Reflections*
- *We have new items in our store!*

## SOMS Care Packages

If you have an upcoming hearing or trial date, we offer a care package filled with essentials you may need for the day. Please go to our website for details and to apply!

<https://siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org/survivors-care-package/>

If you would like to donate toward Care Packages for other families, please go to:

<https://donorbox.org/somscarepackages>



# *We remember you*

## *Sibling Birthdays*

SEPTEMBER 3 - KASSIE SPINA'S BROTHER, KENNY  
SEPTEMBER 5 - GINA AURAND'S STEPSISTER, DENISE MARIE HOWER  
SEPTEMBER 5 - SIERRA SPAIN'S BROTHER, MARCUS  
SEPTEMBER 6 - AMANDA SHIPPNICK'S SISTER, KATELYNN MARIE SCHIPPNICK  
SEPTEMBER 6 - ANDREA TILLET MCCONNELL'S SISTER, CINDI TILLET-KNIGHTENS  
SEPTEMBER 8 - ALEXIS MORLEY'S BROTHER, WILLIAM "WILL" GEORGE BOUNDS III  
SEPTEMBER 11 - KIMBERLEY CREWS' TWIN SISTER, AMANDA CREWS  
SEPTEMBER 15 - ALYSSA NORTH'S BROTHER, ZACK & HIS DOG, CHLOE  
SEPTEMBER 17 - DEANNA HEPNER'S SISTER, CARLA BOYD  
SEPTEMBER 17 - LOGAN ADAIR'S BROTHER, GUNNER ADAIR  
SEPTEMBER 18 - VIRGINIA DAVIS'S SISTER, DONNA WILLING  
SEPTEMBER 18 - CLARISSA CAMARILLO'S BROTHER, ALBERT  
SEPTEMBER 18 - MEGAN LEE'S BROTHER, PAUL "STEVE" STEPHEN BERNIUS IV  
SEPTEMBER 19 - KASSIDY FURIOSO'S BROTHER, KODY  
SEPTEMBER 20 - HEATHER SITES' SISTER, AUTUMN ROSS  
SEPTEMBER 22 - KIARA KIKI PALMER'S BROTHER, JALEEL BELL  
SEPTEMBER 26 - JESSICA MCELVEEN'S BROTHER, DONALD CHRISTOPHER "CHRIS" YARBOROUGH  
SEPTEMBER 29 - TASHEENA DURAN'S BROTHER, COLEMAN  
SEPTEMBER 29 - BRENDA CONEY'S BROTHER, ROCKY  
SEPTEMBER 29 - CANDACE BREWER'S BROTHER, DARRYL "PREACH" MILLER

## *Sibling Angelversaries*

SEPTEMBER - JENNIFER MCDONALDS' SISTER  
SEPTEMBER - JENNIFER GAUGHAN'S COUSIN, BROOKE  
SEPTEMBER 1 - NITA CAMMISANO'S BROTHER, CHARLIE  
SEPTEMBER 2 - COURTNEY BROWN'S BROTHER, JOHNATHON  
SEPTEMBER 2 - ALEXIS MORLEY'S BROTHER, WILLIAM  
SEPTEMBER 2 - KIM COLWELL'S BROTHER, DEREK  
SEPTEMBER 4 - THERESA GARDUNO'S BROTHER, RONNIE LEE FOREMAN MALDONADO  
SEPTEMBER 5 - SHIRLEY MARIE'S LOVED ONE  
SEPTEMBER 7 - NICOLE MOON GOLD CANYON'S BROTHER, MICHAEL  
SEPTEMBER 8 - ANGIE DE DIOS' MOTHER, VICKY SALVATORE DE DIOS  
SEPTEMBER 9 - TAYLOR PERRY'S BROTHER, AUSTIN MICHAEL RIPPETOE  
SEPTEMBER 9 - CORRINNA DUTTON'S SISTER  
SEPTEMBER 9 - KATHERINE BAKER'S BROTHER, JAMES MULLEN  
SEPTEMBER 11 - JESS NOHMY'S BROTHER, CAMERON NOHMY  
SEPTEMBER 15 - PAULA OLIVER'S SISTER, SUSAN HENDERSON  
SEPTEMBER 18 - RENAE LEE'S BROTHER, WILLIAM "EDDIE" LEE  
SEPTEMBER 19 - MEGAN LEE'S BROTHER, PAUL "STEVE" STEPHEN BERNIUS IV  
SEPTEMBER 23 - CRYSTAL CASE'S BROTHER IN LAW, MARCUS DWAYNE MCGEE  
SEPTEMBER 23 - LORI MOHR DEISTER'S BROTHER, JAMES LEWIS HILL  
SEPTEMBER 26 - BETTY SIMONS' SISTER, NITA MARIE MOSELEY & HER UNBORN CHILD  
SEPTEMBER 26 - SARA BLAINE MARTIN'S SISTER, LAUREN MARTIN  
SEPTEMBER 26 - ASHLEY ANNE COOK'S BROTHER, COLTON JAMES COOK  
SEPTEMBER 27 - EXIE BUEHLER'S SISTER, LISA  
SEPTEMBER 27 - LILLY HERNANDEZ WINKELJOHN'S BROTHER  
SEPTEMBER 28 - HEYZEL HERRERA'S BROTHER, ENZO SANTIAGO HERRERA GARCIA  
SEPTEMBER 28 - MICHELLE MCBELL'S BROTHER  
SEPTEMBER 29 - AMANDA BERGH'S BROTHER, MAURICE  
SEPTEMBER 29 - ASHLEY SHIRLEY'S BROTHER, DAKOTA

*in  
loving  
memory*





September 9 - Natalya Farrier  
September 9 - Emily Lopretta  
September 14 - Tara Michaud  
September 15 - Sylvia Galvan  
September 23 - Jennifer Allen



# WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We are looking to hear from our members on what kind of mental health help you have received or wished you had received. Please fill out the survey so that we can serve you better!

<https://aytm.com/rFOOEvQ>.



# **PTSD Symptoms in Men**

## **By Tracy Gaudette Langevin**

### **What is PTSD?**

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD) is a condition that can develop when a person experiences or witnesses a traumatic event. The individual may feel scared, helpless, or alone. People with PTSD continue to feel anxious and have symptoms that interfere with their daily lives long after the event is over. These feelings can be so intense that they change the way the person sees the world. It impacts each person differently. PTSD is a serious condition, and it's important to seek help if you or someone you know is struggling.

### **What Causes PTSD?**

There are unique risk factors that men face which contribute to the development of PTSD. For a man, these causes can be extremely overwhelming and can lead to feelings of anxiety, depression, and even isolation.

The most common causes of PTSD in men include:

- Combat experience
- Workplace trauma
- A natural disaster
- A car accident
- Childhood abuse or neglect
- Witnessing a traumatic event
- Natural disasters
- Being the victim of a violent crime
- Sexual assault
- A violent act committed against someone you love

Anyone can get PTSD at any age. However, men are particularly susceptible to PTSD due to the fact that they are less likely to seek help for mental health issues. This is due to the societal expectation that men should be tough and not show emotion.

### **What are the Symptoms in Men?**

#### **Anger**

One of the most common symptoms in men is anger. Men tend to internalize their emotions. They bottle their emotions and do not express emotions. This can lead to outbursts of anger or violence.

#### **Substance Abuse/Other Addictions**

Some men increase the usage of drugs, alcohol, food, exercise, spending excessive amounts of money, and/or gambling. Men use these substances or addictions to try to self-medicate. They try to numb their emotions and make them feel better, but it can lead to other problems, like a severe addiction.

#### **Reckless Behavior**

Men are also prone to taking unnecessary risks like exhibiting road rage. Accidents or injuries are common, too. Some men enjoy participating in dangerous things because they feel that those experiences can help relieve some stress and anxiety.

#### **Detachment**

A man may become emotionally distant and withdraw from previously enjoyed activities. Becoming detached makes it more difficult for them to express their feelings and bond with others. They feel the distance helps them cope, when in reality, the detachment makes them feel more alone.

#### **Insomnia**

Nightmares about the dramatic event make it hard to fall or stay asleep.

Some may have trouble falling asleep because they are hypervigilant, meaning they're always on the lookout for danger. This leads to fatigue and other sleep problems. Studies have shown people with PTSD are more likely to suffer from sleep disorders like sleep apnea, nightmares, and night terrors than the general population.

#### **Intrusive Thoughts**

Intrusive thoughts are persistent, unwanted thoughts, flashbacks and memories of the traumatic event. These thoughts can be triggered by anything that reminds the person of the trauma, such as a sight, a sound, or a smell. Intrusive thoughts cause severe emotional distress or physical reactions like a fast heartbeat, chest pain, feeling hot or agitated, difficulty breathing, and weakness or dizziness.

#### **Other New Health Conditions**

PTSD can be a contributing factor to causing new health problems. Many men have experienced new anxiety, depression, panic attacks, high blood pressure, and heart problems. There are scientific studies relating to PTSD and heart issues. When a man holds in all of the feelings associated with the trauma, it manifests into physical symptoms.

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## **How to treat PTSD in Men?**

### **Cognitive Processing Therapy**

Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) is an evidence-based therapy for PTSD. CPT helps people recognize how trauma changed their views about themselves, others, and the world. In CPT, people learn how to change those negative thoughts and feelings.

### **Prolonged Exposure**

Prolonged Exposure (PE) is an evidence-based therapy for PTSD. PE helps people do things and go places they have avoided since the trauma. It takes place over many repeated exposures.

### **Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing**

EMDR is an evidence-based therapy for PTSD. EMDR helps people process their trauma experiences using back-and-forth movements or sounds while calling to mind the memory. EMDR is incredibly effective for those suffering from PTSD. Some studies show that 84-90% of patients no longer had PTSD symptoms after three 90-minute EMDR sessions.

### **Group Therapy**

A benefit of group therapy is validation. By being in a group with a number of people struggling with the same problem, you can see that you are not alone in your struggles. This is very helpful for men to see and talk to other men experiencing symptoms of PTSD.

### **Medications**

Medication in conjunction with talk therapy can be very beneficial. There are three main types of medication used to treat PTSD: Antidepressants, anti-anxiety, and PTSD-specific medications. Medication alone will not cure PTSD.

### **Coping Strategies**

- Identifying and challenging your negative beliefs
  - Focus on the positive
  - Talking to others
- Writing or talking about your experience
  - Practicing relaxation techniques
  - Increasing pleasurable activities
  - Exercising

If you are a man who is struggling with PTSD, it is important to understand that you are not alone and that you should end the stigma of seeking help. If you or someone you know is experiencing the symptoms, it's important to seek professional help. PTSD can be a very debilitating condition, but with treatment, people can and do recover. The benefits of treatment are: the ability to relax, being able to reconnect with people and feel like yourself again, and your PTSD symptoms will decrease to a manageable level.

### **Resources for Treatment**

Look for a therapist that is highly experienced with PTSD, trauma-informed therapy, and possibly EMDR. There are many types of treatment, and your therapist can best choose what will work for you.

Inquire with:

- Your primary care doctor
- Your insurance company
  - The VA
- Your workplace
- Psychologytoday.com
- Verywellmind.com

### **Sources used for research:**

- Ptsd.va.gov
- Verywellmind.com
- Psychcentral.com
- Traumapractice.co.uk
- Sleepfoundation.org



## **Safest Places in the World**

### **By Tracy Gaudette Langevin**

Safe is a relative term. Safe can encompass so many variables: homicide, physical assault, robbery, sexual assault, etc. In researching the safest countries in the world, I looked at violent crime rates. The safest countries in the world are safest due to similar factors: laws, educational levels, economic conditions, and social welfare.

Europe dominates the top 25 safest countries. According to a global study on homicide, Europe, Oceania, and Asia have the lowest regional murder rates at around three per 100,000 inhabitants, compared to 12.5 in Africa and 16.3 in the Americas. The gap between these regions is huge. Wealth is an indicator of a more secure social environment. The safest region in the world is Scandinavia (Norway, Sweden, and Denmark). The second safest region is small Asian countries, such as Japan, Singapore, Bhutan, and Malaysia. Below are the 10 top safest countries in the world based on the global peace index.

#### **Top 10 Safest Countries**

(per World Atlas)

1. Iceland
2. New Zealand
3. Portugal
4. Austria
5. Denmark
6. Canada
7. Singapore
8. Slovenia
9. Japan
10. Czechia

#### **Countries 11 to 25**

Switzerland, Ireland, Australia, Finland, Bhutan, Malaysia, Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Hungary, Germany, Slovakia, Mauritius, Romania

As of 2019, the United States ranks 128th place. The United States has fallen in ratings in every single report that has been put out since 2016. Some reasons may be a decrease in life satisfaction and a growing wealth gap.

Below are the 10 safest states in the United States.

#### **10 Safest States**

(per World Atlas, measured by crime rate per 100,000 people)

1. Maine
2. Vermont
3. New Hampshire
4. Virginia
5. Kentucky
6. Idaho
7. Connecticut
8. New Jersey
9. Rhode Island
10. Wyoming

The people in the safest states earn at or above the national median income of about \$52,000. The survey also revealed that the safest states have residents who have higher educational levels.

#### **Guns in the U.S.**

The United States has more guns than any other country, and more gun deaths. We have six times more gun deaths than in Canada. The states with looser gun laws have more homicides and, of course, there is a relation between states having stricter laws and fewer homicides. Of course, there is an outlier. Take the city of Chicago, for example. The state of Illinois has strict gun laws, and Chicago is known for homicide. Every American reads about Chicago. The city had 971 shootings during the first five months of 2022, and 239 resulted in murder. The reality is that, in America, "Gun ownership is associated with traditional values of respect and responsibility; however, gun availability empowers the criminally minded and unstable..." [Criminology professor Peter Squires, <https://bit.ly/3CDxj67>]. Gun lobbies are very powerful.

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## **Guns, knives, and other deadly weapons**

It is possible to have a violent society without guns. There are countries where this holds true. There are many countries with gun bans/very strict gun laws that have very high violent crime rates. Some of these countries are: Russia, Turkey, Papua New Guinea, Brazil, Jamaica, South Africa, El Salvador, and Venezuela.

For example, in Europe, guns account for barely 20% of the homicides, but knives are used nearly 40% of the time. In Europe, twice as many people are killed by knives as guns.

Another example: in 2014, in a train station in China, more than 130 people were injured when 10 men and women with knives, swords and meat cleavers attacked others at a train station, killing 28. Violence and different weapons are used to kill in places where people don't have access to guns.

Finally, according to factcheck.org, homicides in Australia decreased more quickly after a strict gun law was passed in 1996; whereas, knife homicides increased. The homicide rate in Australia is fewer in the past 12 years. That is good news.

### **A Final Note**

There are so many factors involving homicide and the manner in which homicides are carried out. We definitely have a lot of work to do in America and around the globe. This country is in a scary place right now. Many people feel uncertain about the economy, the future, our government, big lobbies (guns, pharma), etc. The values that people hold are slipping. Racism is still a huge problem. The media skews stories to pit people against one another, and social media is influencing everyone (children included). We are desensitized to violence, and some have lost their sense of compassion, honesty, and respect. We see it online and in person daily. Our nation is failing at providing mental health services to those who need them. Our laws protect abusers. The justice system is also failing the families of victims. Sentences for murder range from time served, to life without parole, to death. There are heartbreaking stories of people committing horrific murders, and they get less time than people committing non-violent offenses. Our justice system is definitely flawed. We also have people committed to jail/ prison for non-violent offenses, and they are murdered while in custody. We need to try and solve some of these huge problems within our country and society. Violence solves nothing. It has destroyed so many lives.

We need to focus on the good, the helpers, and hope. In America, the day after 9/11/01, the American people came together. People were courteous, helpful, and loving. We need that again. We need to become unified again. As homicide survivors, we cannot stop all violence, but we can build more compassion in our population. We can learn about what is working in other places to prevent more violence/homicide, and we can work together and support each other because what we are going through is not common or normal. Maybe one day, we will not lose our loved ones senselessly to homicide.

### **Sources:**

Worldatlas.com  
Ourworldindata.org/homicides  
Smithsonianmag.com  
FactCheck.org  
Visionofhumanity.org/maps/#/ (Global peace index map)



## International Day Of Peace September 11

A day dedicated to world peace; specifically, a day with no war or violence. A day for temporary ceasefire in combat zones for human aid access. First celebrated in 1981, but has since been held by many different nations, political groups, military groups and people.

On this day, the United Nations Peace Bell is rung at headquarters in New York City. The bell itself is made up of coins donated by children from countries around the world, and was a gift from the UNA of Japan as a reminder for the human cost of war. On the side of the bell, it reads: "Long live absolute world peace."

Since then, this day has been celebrated in many ways: Humans Rights to Waves of Kindness to (more recently) Climate Action and Recovering Better for a Equitable and Sustainable World.



## National Women's Friendship Day September 18

This day is celebrated on the third Sunday of every September. This year, it is the 18th of September. It's a day to promote special friendships among women.

This day was created by women for other women. The Kappa Delta Sorority created this day back in 1999. While there is no "official" documentation making this a national holiday, there are ways to celebrate this with the women in your life:

- Promote friendship between and among women
- Hold and/or attend a breakfast, luncheon or dinner with a women's group
  - Visit your women friends
- If any of your friends are out of town, send an E-card, or make a call to them
  - Spend time with special friends
- Promote the value of women in society







## **Remembering the Lost, but Never Forgotten September 11**

Tuesday, September 11th, 2001 was enough for anyone of any age to remember. This day was when a series of terrorist attacks were carried about by the extremist network group known as Al-Qaeda.

As the story goes, a group of attackers hijacked planes, and their goal was to crash planes into major American buildings causing mass casualties and nationwide panic. Three out of four of these planes made it to their intended targets: two of them to the World Trade Centers in New York City; the other to the Pentagon in Washington, DC.

The North Tower was hit at 8:46 am; the next would come just 17 minutes later, at 9:03 am, to the South Tower. Exactly one hour and 42 minutes later, both towers came crashing to the ground, not only taking everyone who was left within it, but also, anyone who was nearby when they fell. While we watched, they then struck again at 9:37 am, which is when we heard the third plane crash into the west side of the Pentagon. The fourth plane, which was rumored to be heading to the White House, was struck down before it even made it to Virginia.

These attacks resulted in 2,977 deaths, over 25,000 injuries, and many substantial long-term health consequences. It was stated there was more than \$21 billion in property damages, overall. The clean-up of New York City took eight months, completed in May 2002.

The death toll included 265 on the four planes (from which there were no survivors); 2,606 in the World Trade Centers and the surrounding area; and 125 at the Pentagon. Most who died were civilians; the rest were: 343 firefighters, 72 law enforcement officers, 55 military personnel, and 19 attackers. In New York City, more than 90% of the workers and visitors who died in the towers had been at or above the points of impact.

Weeks after the attack, the death toll was estimated to be over 6,000, more than twice the number of deaths eventually confirmed. The city could only identify the remains of about 1,600 of the World Trade Center victims. The medical examiner's office collected about 10,000 unidentified bone and tissue fragments that cannot be matched to the list of the dead. Bone fragments were still being found in 2006 by workers who were preparing to demolish the damaged Deutsche Bank Building.

As of September 2021, 1,106 victims are yet to be identified. The September 11th attacks resulted in immediate responses to the event. This included: domestic reactions, closings, cancellations, health issues (mainly in NYC), economic distress, government pressure, and hate crimes. Also, international and military responses to the event.



## Suicide Awareness Month September 1st – September 30th

Suicide is something a lot of people avoid speaking about, but let's take the time this month to have a chat about it. Where we are the ones who suffer from the loss of someone, we are also the ones who are in the highest state of potentially thinking about this option. With September being Suicide Awareness month, it also holds Suicide Prevention week (4th-10th) and World Prevention Day (10th). So, let's have an uncomfortable conversation about suicide.

Suicide Awareness Month is a time to raise awareness of this stigmatized, and often taboo, topic. We use this month to shift public perception, spread hope and share vital information with people affected by suicide.



### Statistic Time:

- 79% of all people who die by suicide are male
- 46% of people have a diagnosed mental health condition
- 4.9% are Adults
- 11.3% are young adults 18-25 demographic
- 18.8% are high school-aged students
- 45% are LGBTQ+ community



Suicidal thoughts can plague anyone regardless of age, gender, or social status. Commonly linked to depression, there is no foolproof indicator of suicidal tendencies. Many people suffering from depression or suicidal thoughts cover them up quite well. Such was the case with beloved comedian Robin Williams, who committed suicide at the age of 63 in August 2014.

"Sometimes you can have a whole lifetime in a day and never notice that this is as beautiful as it gets" – Robin Williams

Let's talk about prevention. Help is there. The CDC has a suicide and crisis line. Text or call 988 on any phone or online chat at 988lifeline.org. Per the CDC, connect with a trained crisis counselor. 988 is confidential, free, and available 24/7/365.



### Ways to help also include:

- Creating protective environments
- Promote connectedness
- Teach coping and problem-solving skills
- Identify red flags properly and support those at risk
- Lessen harms and prevention education



When it comes to identifying risk factors, you may ask yourself what you should be looking for in your friends, family, and maybe even yourself. Well, this is hard to give you an exact list, but we came across a "basic" list of warning signs one can look out for. This list is a mix of relationship, community, societal and individual risk factors.

### Red Flags:

- Attempted and failed before
- History of depression or other illness
- Serious illness (ex: chronic pain)
  - Criminal/legal problems
  - Job/financial problems
  - Active drug usage/abuse
  - History of childhood trauma
- Impulsive or aggression tendencies
  - Bullying
- Social isolation (a big one recently)
  - Stress
- Lack of proper healthcare
- Heavy community violence
  - Discrimination
- Trauma in general



### Do you know the warning signs for suicide?

If someone is at risk for suicide, you can watch for warning signs, including:

- Talking about being a burden
- Being isolated
- Increased anxiety
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Increased substance use
- Looking for a way to access lethal means
- Increased anger or rage
- Extreme mood swings
- Expressing hopelessness
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Talking or posting about wanting to die
- Making plans for suicide

CDC-related Links to Help with Prevention:

General resources: [www.cdc.gov/suicide/resources/general-resources.html](http://www.cdc.gov/suicide/resources/general-resources.html)

Coping with stress: [www.cdc.gov/suicide/resources/coping-with-stress.html](http://www.cdc.gov/suicide/resources/coping-with-stress.html)



## Australian Father's Day September 4

In Australia, Father's Day is celebrated on the first Sunday of September, which also happens to be the first Sunday of spring.

Father's Day was introduced to Australia in the early 1900s, although for the first couple of decades, it wasn't exactly the annual spectacle we celebrate today.

At that time, it was deemed unnecessary because fathers were already viewed as 'ruling' figures, because, traditionally, they were already the head of the household.

It wasn't until June 1925 that Janet Heyden, a woman from Sydney (who also happened to be the driving force behind introducing Mother's Day to Australia), started to collect donations of small gifts to be given to elderly men in nursing homes. It was Janet's work that proved to be the catalyst for Australia to recognize an official Father's Day. It was a newspaper article from The Newcastle Sun, published in 1936, that seemingly confirmed Australia was to formally recognize Father's Day as an official celebratory event, and was to be held on the first Sunday in September.



## International Day of Charity September 5

The International Day of Charity was established with the objective of sensitizing and mobilizing people, NGOs and stakeholders all around the world to help others through volunteer and philanthropic activities.

The date of September 5th was chosen in order to commemorate the anniversary of the passing away of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 "for work undertaken in the struggle to overcome poverty and distress, which also constitute a threat to peace."

In recognition of the role of charity in alleviating humanitarian crises and human suffering within and among nations, as well as of the efforts of charitable organizations and individuals (including the work of Mother Teresa), the General Assembly of the United Nations (in its resolution A/RES/67/105) designated the 5th of September (the anniversary of the death of Mother Teresa) as the International Day of Charity.



Charity, like the notions of volunteerism and philanthropy, provides real social bonding and contributes to the creation of inclusive and more resilient societies. Charity can alleviate the worst effects of humanitarian crises, and supplement public services in health care, education, housing, and child protection. It assists the advancement of culture, science, sports, and the protection of cultural and natural heritage. It also promotes the rights of the marginalized and underprivileged and spreads the message of humanity in conflict situations.



## **National Read a Book Day September 6**

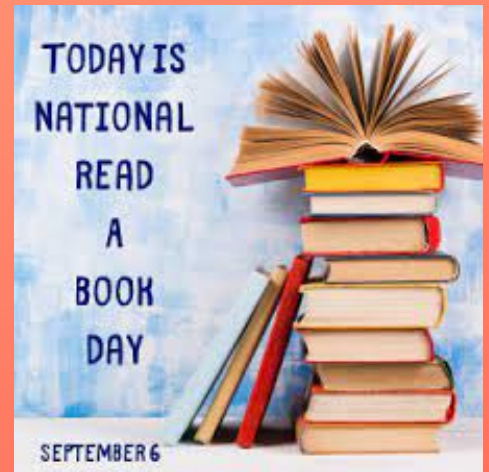
National Read a Book Day on September 6 calls all book lovers to indulge in their favorite hobby, guilt-free. It encourages us to silence the noise and turn the pages for a while.

Over 74% of Americans have read at least one book in the last 12 months. Almost 20% of books consumed are now via electronic platforms. Whatever format you prefer, grab or download the book on the top of your stack and dive in!

359,803 — the number of books and e-books added on Bookly between 2019 and 2020.

16,555 — the number of audiobooks added on Bookly between 2019 and 2020.

25-34 — the ages between which the most books are read.



## **National Video Games Day September 12**

The first video game, 'Nim', is introduced at the World's Fair by Edward Condon in 1940. The first home console, designed in 1967 by Ralph Baer, inspired the classic Atari game, "Pong." Atari's first console, the Atari 2600 (though there was a copyright infringement lawsuit) was released, with games like "Frogger," and sales took off. Some of the best games of the ensuing era included "Space Invaders" and "Donkey Kong."



After the video game market crash in 1983, the Japanese company, Nintendo, burst onto the scene. Nintendo is responsible for some of the most important franchises around: Super Mario Bros, The Legend of Zelda, and Metroid. Nintendo found a challenger in Sega, driving the market into the 3D Gaming world. In the Summer of 1989, Nintendo released the Game Boy, giving gamers the ability to travel with their consoles.

The modern era of gaming was truly kicked off in the early 21st century with the Xbox 360, Playstation 3, and Wii. Video games then invaded media platforms and video game apps flooded the app stores. Lucrative competitions for skilled gamers have begun to spring up worldwide. These days, big video game console companies like Nintendo, Sony, and Microsoft, have their sights set on VR — the exciting future of video gaming gets more and more lifelike every day!

The video game industry is now an \$18 billion industry that constantly churns out new fun favorites for all ages.



## **National Voter Registration Day September 20**

National Voter Registration Day in September urges citizens to register to vote. Make your vote count! The day helps to ensure eligible voters register in their districts each year. If your right to vote means anything to you, make sure you are registered. Change can't happen if we don't vote!

While registration isn't required in every state, every state has minimum requirements. Learn about your voter rights and requirements. Be informed by checking where your polling place is. You can also learn more about mail-in voting.

If you have any questions about voter registration, all the answers are conveniently located in one place.

Each state has different requirements. So, if you've moved recently, be sure to know the requirements where you live. Make your vote count. Visit [www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org](http://www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org) to learn more.



## **National Day of Remembrance for Homicide Victims September 25**

National Day of Remembrance for Homicide Victims is for advocates and community members to commemorate murder victims and surviving family members. The day also honors the work of organizations that provide services, including: support, advocacy, and counseling for families, individuals, and communities coping with homicide-related deaths.

We at SOMS would like to have our members gather together in their area so that we can honor and remember our loved ones that were taken from us. If you are interested in doing so, please fill out the following form:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1\\_Ildm0yWaGW5UUJOTToDCd\\_r5POo0udM3uyT74z7pa5g/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1_Ildm0yWaGW5UUJOTToDCd_r5POo0udM3uyT74z7pa5g/edit)







## National Grief Awareness Day

National Grief Awareness Day is dedicated to raising awareness of the many ways that individuals cope with loss. It was founded by Angie Cartwright in 2014, hoping to encourage open communication on loss and bereavement, and better inform the public on the facts of grief. The term “grief” encompasses all of the emotions around a loss, and “mourning” is defined as the external expression of pain. “Bereavement” is another term for grief.

The topic of grief was poorly researched or treated until the 1900s. In 1917, Sigmund Freud wrote: “Grieving is a natural process that should not be tampered with.”

Elisabeth Kubler-Ross wrote, “On Death and Dying” in 1969. This book laid out the commonly-referenced “Five Stages of Grief,” and was eventually called “The Kubler-Ross Method.” However, this model of grief was established for patients that were suffering from a terminal illness and the emotions and feelings they were going through.

Grief has no timeline and is not experienced in stages. Grief is messy. Each person experiences grief in their own way. Nobody can tell you what or how to feel in your grief journey. While we can’t know the grief that you are experiencing, we are here to hold space with you and journey along with you. You are not alone.

## A Word on Grief By Lexie Connelly



Lexie Connelly

I’m tired of seeing/hearing people advising others on how to grieve and how to cope. It’s one thing if it’s genuine advice trying to help, but it’s an entirely another thing if it’s a backhanded comment trying to tear someone down or belittle them because “enough time has passed” and they’re expected to feel better.

“Their grandparent died, but it’s going to happen, as their age plays a factor in that.” Okay, but it is still painful losing a grandparent.

!“They battled for cancer for a long time and it was bound to happen; they should’ve prepared for it.” Okay, but losing someone to cancer is still painful.

“She chose to stay with a man who abused her.” Okay, but instead of victim blaming, offer kindness. It is still painful losing someone to domestic violence.

## GRIEF HAS NO TIMELINE

Some people struggle with persistent complex bereavement disorder, where it feels like it does not matter how much time has passed; they are SLOWLY DYING every day over the pain they feel.

Grief is grief and it never truly goes away. You just learn how to manage the pain at some point, or you don’t. One person grieves in a different way than the next person. It isn’t a “one-size-fits-all” situation.

My mom lost her firstborn daughter, my sister Crystal, to a traumatic death. She was stabbed 56 times! Who knows at what point she died, or if she made it through all 56 painful stabs before she passed?! One of her own children told her she was “GRIEVING TOO MUCH” and “GRIEVING WRONG”... She was told this only shortly after Crystal died.  
It.Doesn’t.Matter.How.Much.Time.Has.Passed.

You should grieve at your own pace without the pressure of society thinking you should be okay at one point. Traumatic death or natural causes, GRIEF DOESNT GO AWAY and it is PAINFUL.





## National Hispanic Heritage Month September 15-October 15

¡Hola Hermanos y Hermanas, Amigos y Amigas!



September 15 to October 15 is National Hispanic American Heritage Month! The theme this month is "Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation." The observation began in 1968 under President Lyndon Johnson with Hispanic Heritage Week, and expanded under President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988.

Siblings of Murdered Siblings would like to recognize generations of Hispanic Americans who positively influenced and enriched our nation and society by their achievements and contributions, all of which have inspired generations to achieve success!

During Hispanic Heritage Month, many cultures and communities come together to represent what it means to be from these communities.



Being Hispanic is not a race, but rather, an ethnicity.

Our communities highlight:

Food  
Music  
Dances



Cumbia:

Was started by 19th century Columbian African slaves, and also uses native and European elements

Salsa:

Was founded in Cuba and Puerto Rico, with a large Afro-Caribbean influence and music from Spanish guitar notes

Bachata:

Was founded in 19th century Dominican Republic, and its roots are in some African rhythms, Cuban San and Bolero

Merengue:

Is the official dance of the Dominican Republic, originated from the black enslaved laborers and has indigenous and Spanish influences

Jarabe Tapatio:

Was founded in 18th Century Mexico, with huge native and Spanish influences

While the celebration is named Hispanic Heritage Month, meaning you come from or descend from a Spanish-speaking country, many indigenous communities fight to change the name, as the name "Hispanic" is a name that originated from our oppressors, who forced Spanish to become the spoken language. Many native languages and history from our indigenous ancestors were forgotten. Indigenous communities from all over are working hard to save as much of our rich culture as possible!



# MEMBER'S CORNER

The day you died  
I become broken inside  
So many tears I've cried  
Now seeing the world blurry eyed  
My emotions just won't subside  
Feelings I just can not hide  
There's so many times I've tried  
This I've never denied  
I hope you look down on me with pride  
Your signs are my guide  
By Eugene Scardifield



Eugene Scardifield

I've always looked just like you.  
Except your eyes were brown.  
And mine are blue.  
I will still always look like you.

By Laura Hitch



Laura Hitch



Alexis Altman

We were ever so close yet always seemed so far apart  
With love, you were the culprit behind my aching heart  
I've seen you when you were thriving, I've seen you when you were low  
But no matter what you always had that special glow.  
I was always scared we'd lose you eventually, someday  
And even with that in my mind I never thought to say  
I love you Ryan you are needed and adored too  
I'll never be able to laugh with someone the way I did with you  
I feel you when I'm strong I feel you when I'm sad  
Every day I think about how you were all I ever had  
Through our years and growing up, you were my best friend.  
Even through everything, it remained that way in the end.  
I try to look and find things others may or cannot see  
In hopes, it is you trying to reach out to me  
I was one lucky sister to have so much time spent with you  
I promise Aurorah will know she was loved by you too  
I fought so many wars behind you and will never give up  
Only God will ever know why you were taken so abruptly  
Rest now big brother, we got it from here  
For your not really gone, cause in my heart and memories you are still near  
By Alexis Altman



# *In Loving Memory of Marcus Dwayne McGee*

*By Crystal Case*



On September 25, 2019, at roughly 6 pm, we were told that our baby brother, Marcus Dwayne McGee, was murdered on September 23, 2019. We were told at first that Marcus was murdered and died on the side of the road like a dog. As the night progressed on, we learned that Marcus' fiancée had called the police on that Monday to make a police report, and they didn't want to, due to Marcus being an adult and that they felt he would show up.

On September 25, 2019, his fiancée had called the police, and at that time, they took the report. Later, they found out that the John Doe sitting in the morgue at BAMC, a military hospital, due to it being a level 1 trauma unit, was Marcus. At the time of the news, the only thing I wanted to do is to get Marcus's name to him and get him home. This 26-year-old man had a family that loved him and had a name, and it sure was not John Doe.

Marcus was murdered after his only child turned 2 years old. That Friday, we as a family went to the funeral home to start working on getting Marcus his name back and to get him home. That's where we were told by the funeral director that Marcus actually died in the hospital in the trauma unit. As days went by, we start seeing news stations report on the case without us knowing a damn thing. This is how we found out that Marcus was murdered by a homeless man on the street, and that they had caught the guy. Again, the news reported who this man was; we were never notified that they had a person in mind for the murder.

On September 29, 2019, the police did an interview on the man they believed to have killed Marcus, but we never got any answers. Nearly 2 years later, we started Marcus' trial on July 10, 2021. We listened to every gross detail about Marcus' murder and how he was killed, but again, never got answers on why. On July 15, 2021, at 5:52 pm, a jury of our peers -- that's a joke -- found Marcus' murderer NOT GUILTY, and we had to watch this homeless man go free walking the streets of downtown San Antonio.



Crystal Case

# *In Loving Memory of Mona Joslin Davis*

*By Michelle Joslin Myers*



Mona was born May 16, 1966. She was stolen from us on June 5, 2019. We had a terrible childhood.

I had PTSD from all the abuse I suffered. She was a "sickly" child. The funny thing is, after she left home, she was hardly ever sick. She believed mother dearest made her sick so she would get attention. Mona was married twice to abusive men. The last one blamed her for sticking around with our mother if things really were so bad. You know, I stood up for her one last time during our victim impact statement. I said that she had been told that, but that she knew it wouldn't do any good to say anything because when I did, I had gotten beaten. I had a chunk torn out of my cheek and a chipped front tooth as a result. I ran out the back door when my mom was storming after me again.

When I came back after a week, she took me up to the probation office and had me put on probation. I told them what had happened. They didn't believe me. The probation officer told me I was incorrigible. I may have been a freshman in high school, but I knew what that meant.

Mona had witnessed what I went through when I said something against our mother, so why would she say anything? Her no-good ex-husband was in the Zoom meeting they had at court for Mona. I didn't say his name, but I hope he got the message. No good low-life piece of crap. I told Bonnie (Mona's daughter) that if we didn't kill our mother, she certainly had no right to kill my little sister. And that I was ashamed of her.

I'm still angry. I'm angry at Mona, too. When I went to Mississippi to visit her back when the boys were little, Bonnie was already grown with a kid. Mona wouldn't take me around Bonnie because she said she was dangerous. But by the time Bonnie killed her, she had five kids, Mona's only grandbabies, that the state had taken. She was living on the street, homeless, and talked Mona into helping her get them back. Mona let her move in. We weren't talking at the time, or I'd have known something was up sooner.



Michelle Joslin Myers



# Upcoming Events



*2nd Annual* **EVENING OF REMEMBRANCE**  
*Save the Date*

Join us as we pay tribute to our love ones who were killed by senseless violence throughout this state. We will also honor each of our team members for their dedication and their work in the community throughout the state of South Carolina.

**Saturday, November 19, 2022**  
**7:00pm SHARP**  
**LOCATION:**  
**GREENVILLE MARRIOTT**  
**One Parkway East**  
**Greenville, SC 29615**

**MURDER INVESTIGATION**  
**CAN YOU HELP?**  
**1-800-CRIME-TV**  
**amtw.com**

**ANDRA ROSEMOND - RAHJALLOUIS**

**This event is in memory of Andra Rosemond and RahJa Louis who were murdered in their home at 19 Club Rd in Greenville S.C. on November 19, 2003. This is a 19 year old unsolved double homicide.**

**This is a semi formal event. Please RSVP by 11/1/2022 at 864-360-6391. For questions or for more information, please contact Dr Candace Brewer at 864-360-6391 or by email at SouthCarolinaChapterOfPost@Gmail.com**

Would you like to meet up with other survivors in your area? If so, please fill out and submit the form below!



**DO YOU WANT TO MEET WITH OTHER SURVIVORS IN YOUR AREA?**

**LET'S GET TOGETHER!**

**NATIONAL HOMICIDE VICTIM REMEMBRANCE DAY**  
**SEPTEMBER 25, 2022**

<https://bit.ly/3RfaVDV>

# GRIEF *Support*



We now have someone we can recommend for you to contact for traumatic grief: Belinda Greene-Strachan, GSS. Belinda is a certified Grief and Trauma Support Specialist. She can be reached at [soletosoulss@gmail.com](mailto:soletosoulss@gmail.com) or 863-546-8111. Sessions are \$35.00.

If you are experiencing a hardship, please contact Alexandra Barry at [abarry@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org](mailto:abarry@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org) to see if we can financially assist you.

Belinda offers her services via Zoom or in person.





**DO YOU WANT TO START A SOMS CHAPTER IN  
YOUR STATE?**

*Now's your chance!*

*For more information, please reach out to  
Alexandra Barry at  
[abarry@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org](mailto:abarry@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org) OR  
Nickky Wise Neff at  
[nneff@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org](mailto:nneff@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org)*

# HAVE YOU VISITED THE SOMS STORE LATELY?

## CHECK OUT WHAT'S AVAILABLE!



Candles \$7.77

Available in black & red, purple, black,  
blue, green, orange, pink, red, and yellow.

SOMS Window Cling \$6.50

Available in White, Metallic Silver, Gray, Black, Matte Black,  
Yellow, Golden Yellow, Metallic Gold, Copper, Orange, Soft  
Pink, Pink, Red, Burgundy, Yellow Green, Green, Dark  
Green, Turquoise, Ice Blue, Light Blue, Azure Blue, King  
Blue, Purple, and Violet

Decal is approximately 6 inches wide and 2 inches tall.



*Coming Soon!!*  
Wish Bracelets \$5.55





# GET YOUR SOMS GEAR, SUPPORT SOMS, AND HONOR YOUR LOVED ONE

Are you looking for a T-shirt, mousepad, or koozie that lets everyone know that you support SOMS?

Are you wondering how to get these things customizable with your loved one's name or in your favorite color?

Reach out to Dawn Belville, the head of SOMS' Kansas Chapter

Dawn is able to do any color of shirt that Hobby Lobby or Joann Fabrics carries, and she can make the lettering whatever color you want.

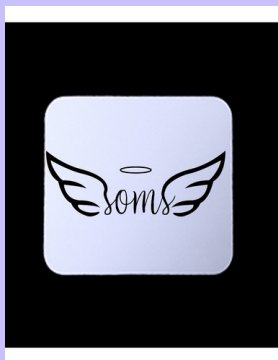
T-shirts will have the SOMS logo, and then below, it will say "In honor of...." with your loved one's name.

T-shirts are \$25.00 each (+ shipping), and \$10.00 from each shirt will go to SOMS. Window clings can be done the same way for \$12.00 (+ shipping), and \$5.00 of each one sold will go to SOMS.

Koozies and mouse pads are \$12.00 each (+ shipping), with \$5.00 going to SOMS.

Get your SOMS gear, support SOMS and honor your loved one.

Items will be made when ordered, and will be shipped within a couple of days.



Mousepad  
\$12



T-Shirt  
Customizable in your  
loved one's name!!  
\$25



Window Clings  
\$12



Koozie  
\$12



## **TRIAL CHECK-IN PROGRAM**

Let us know the dates of your court hearing and/or trial. We will call, text, email, or send a card so you don't have to go through this journey alone.



## **GRIEF MAP PROGRAM**

We'll input your city and state and add it to a map that can be found privately on our website, which will allow you to connect with other members near you.



## **MEMBER TO MEMBER PROGRAM**

We will connect you with another member based on trauma or location. You are also able to provide your sibling's name, birthday, angelversary and picture, so that we can honor them on their days.



# ***VOLUNTEER*** *Opportunities*

## **The Correctional Project**

Identify what states are pro-victim and collect other data on the Google Docs sheet we provide.

## **Homicide Tracker Project**

Build a list to identify recent homicides in Palm Beach County and others. Google Docs will be created to build a database for the victim outreach specialist to connect and let victims know we exist and offer care packages.

## **Link to Pharmaceuticals and Homicide**

Document and list all the names of the medications that have caused a person to become homicidal, whether they were on the medication or coming off the medication if any mind-altering substances were involved. There's already an existing list for school shootings, but we would want to start perhaps with members of our group. Locate any lawsuits that families have won as a result of an adverse drug reaction to homicide. Locate the lawyers who represent these cases and create a list. We will create a Google Doc for this, and this will be a long-term project.

## **Victim Outreach**

We are looking for someone to reach out to homicide survivors and offer our love and support. We will create an email for you and help you with the process.

## **Recruiter / Donor Request**

We want to continue to keep our survivor care packages unique, so we are looking for someone to go on Etsy, eBay, and big-box retailers to ask for donations, or if they do not want to donate, ask if they will provide a discount. Build a database for the grief gifts.

## **Recruiter**

We are looking for someone to help us find other grief services that want to work with us, partnerships, and someone to help get our name out there. Also, find donors, along with EMDR trauma therapists and trauma and grief specialists who are experienced with homicide survivors; professionals we can refer our members to.

## **Website**

We want to continue to expand our site, and the more minds put together, the better. We especially need help with Google Ads; we have a grant that we have not been using.

## **We need website and Google Ads help ASAP.**

If you are interested in applying for any of these volunteer positions, please email Alexandra at [abarry@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org](mailto:abarry@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org) or Nickky at [nneff@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org](mailto:nneff@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org).

You can also apply via our website:

<https://siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org/volunteer-opportunities/>

ADD YOUR SIBLING TO OUR...

# Memorial Board



## HOW TO ADD YOUR LOVED ONE

If you would like to add a photo of your loved one(s) to our Memorial Board, go to the Memorial Board page on our website and fill out your information, or email the following information to: [nneff@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org](mailto:nneff@siblingsofmurderedsiblings.org) and we will add it ASAP!

Please provide a clear photo (headshots preferred), first and last name (and a nickname, if you'd like), date of birth, and date of death. All photos will be arranged by last name. This board will be for memorial purposes only. A separate page for anyone who would like to share their story will be forthcoming.

Also, if your loved one has a memorial website that you would like to include, please provide the URL. Want to create a memorial website? Check out these sites to help you get started:

<https://www.weremember.com/>, <https://everloved.com/memorial/create/?flow=101>,  
<https://memories.net/>, <https://www.wix.com/website/templates/?criteria=memorial!>

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## NEW ADDITIONS!

*Add your loved one to our Memorial Board so we can remember their lives with you.*