



The Dragonfly Buzzette

Newsletter for The Dragonfly Project

Volume 33

Spring 2022

Dreaming of You

by Mike McClendon

Last night I had a dream about my departed son,
I treasure those dreams, since he was my only one.
My tears had become a river that was taking me away.
Drowning in depression, to where I couldn't say.

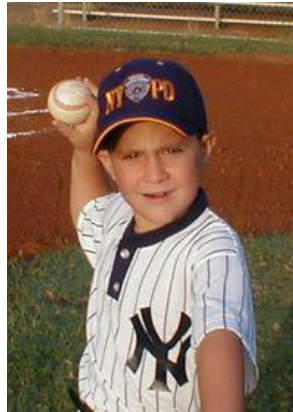
My heart was very heavy, full of so much pain,
And my head wasn't helping, driving me insane.
The river seemed to take me out towards the sea,
As I was busy praying it would set me free.

Please Lord can you help me? I deeply miss my Dan.
He was my only child and my little man.
If only for a moment, anything that you could do,
I'd gladly give my soul when our minute was through.

I seemed to flow into a valley, while on my river ride.
Not evenly divided, with love and hate on either side.
I had to blink a couple of times as I couldn't believe the sight,
One side filled with sunshine and the other as dark as night.

My pulse was quickly racing as my heart jumped for joy,
For there in the light for all to see, stood my little boy.
While swimming towards him, I watched him laugh and smile.
That is when he told me, "It's not your time for a while."

His sweet and tender voice, as I remembered from before.
Swam as hard as I could, but never made it to the shore.
Then he just disappeared, despite all of my screams,
But I knew that God had answered, if only in my dreams.



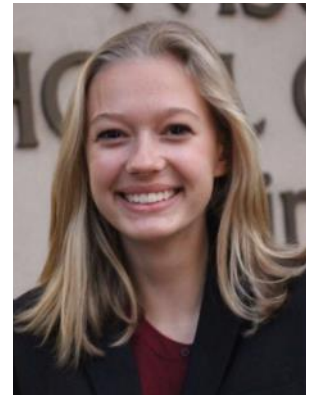
Daniel Ray McClendon 12/27/95 – 7/16/16

Danny was a very kind, caring, charismatic, and God fearing young man. He had a big heart and always made time for others. The light he left behind continues to shine for those who loved him.

1 Corinthians 13:13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is Love.

Introducing our New Board Member—Emma DeBruin

My name is Emma DeBruin, and I'm a Freshman at the University of Wisconsin Madison studying business. I've been an active volunteer in my community since I was young. I've been passionate about The Dragonfly Project nonprofit for years and started volunteering with this incredible organization when I was thirteen years old. As I watched and listened to my mom share her project ideas and passion about giving back to such a meaningful cause, I knew I wanted to help too! I started by tagging along with her on card packet events. I started telling my friends and classmates about it, and soon began leading my own events. It was natural for me to share my excitement for The Dragonfly Project as it had been a part of my life for years, thanks to my mom. I continued to teach my friends and peers about the mission during high school community service events and now expanded to leading events at college as well as sharing my fresh ideas as a member on the board.



This poem is written in memory of Danny.

Mike McClendon is pictured here with his son Danny.

STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 3

Executive Director's Corner: Support a Growing Dragonfly Project

By Pete Bonde

I hope you enjoy our newsletter this Spring. Mike McClendon sent us a wonderful poem about his son Danny. I am thrilled to have Emma DeBruin join the board of directors. She adds some young energy to our board and I look forward to working with her. Jeanne Bartlett tells about her volunteering for The Dragonfly Project. Also on page three, are some wonderful recipient responses that we have received. Julie Bonde wrote a nice summary of our annual event. On page five, learn about our new card that we introduced at our annual event. Lastly, we are thankful for Thrivent Choice Dollars. The dollars we receive from this program continue to grow each year.

I am still amazed at how this organization continues to provide a message of hope to those who are grieving. We continue to reach out to the newly bereaved and receive back many notes of appreciation for sending them a card and keychain. Some of the stories are amazing.

We also continue to grow in the ways we receive financial support. We connect with many organizations that support us in many different and direct ways. Nativity Lutheran Church, Allina Health Community Engagement, Facebook, Contemporary Beads and Castings, Culvers of St. Anthony, Amazon Smile Foundation, and the PayPal Giving Fund are some of these organizations.

We receive employer-matching funds from many companies. Here are a few of them: Thrivent, 3M, US Bankcorp, Prudential, W. K. Kellogg, Xcel Energy, Microsoft, and Abbot Laboratories. Please check out your employer to see if they have a matching program where you can double your donations to The Dragonfly Project.

Over the past three years, Thrivent is by far our largest supporter with its many programs: Thrivent Foundation (matching employee gifts); Thrivent Champions program which pays for supplies at Thrivent employee volunteer

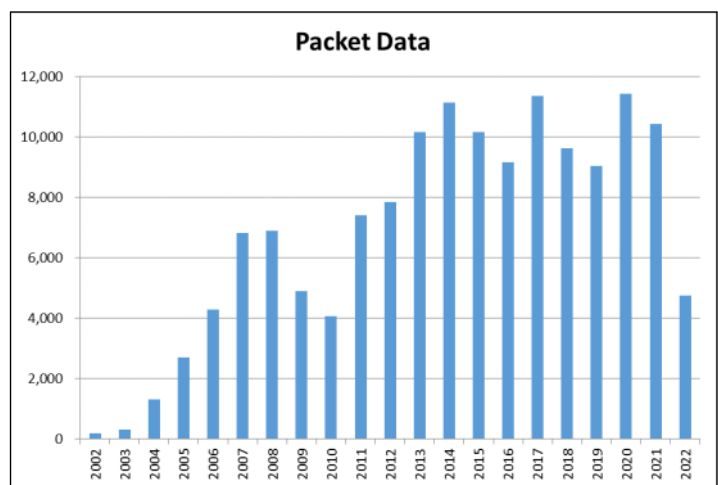
packing making events; and Thrivent Choice where members designate funds based on their membership. Thrivent Action Teams, which pays for supplies at member volunteer packet events, and the Thrivent Personal Donation Fund are other Thrivent support systems.

Once again, this year we have a goal of sending out 13,000 dragonfly packets to those who are grieving. This is an ambitious goal. We are currently at about 5,415 packets, 12% short of our goal. Below I have included a chart of our packets distributed over the years. You can help us by getting some packets (cards with keychains and dragonfly story) from our website ([Condolence Cards](#)) and sending to someone in need. To provide more impact, sign up to be an Adopt-a-State volunteer ([Volunteer Form](#)) or recruit someone else. We are especially looking for people to find recipients to send a message of hope to in the states of Idaho, Indiana, and North Dakota.

If you would like to give a donation to The Dragonfly Project, you can use the included envelope (if you received the hardcopy of this newsletter), or use this link to make an online donation: [Make-a-donation to The Dragonfly Project](#).

Please contact me at execdirector@dragonflyproject.org if you have any questions or comments about The Dragonfly Project.

~ Pete



The Dragonfly Buzzette is the official newsletter of The Dragonfly Project and is published twice a year. The next issue will be published in Fall 2022. The Dragonfly Buzzette team consists of Julie Bonde, Karen Bonde, Peter Bonde, Valerie Marquardt, Patsy Kahmann and P.J. Tombarge.

If you would like to share your dragonfly story with us, please fill out the form by clicking the link on this web page: dragonflyproject.org/share-your-story

A Chance to Share Hope: my volunteer story *by Jeanne Bartlett*

I learned about The Dragonfly Project in 2005 when the company I was working for was looking for volunteer opportunities for the staff. Anne Brooker was one of the recipients of the KARE11 "Eleven Who Care" award. We began by doing some clerical work: creating documents, etc. and putting together keychains. When the Adopt-A-State program originated, I volunteered to adopt my home state of Montana, looking up obituaries, survivor addresses and addressing envelopes. I participated in packet parties where keychains are affixed to the cards, sealed and readied for mailing. For a time, I took care of preparing the packets for bulk mailing and taking them to the post office. After 10 years, I took a break but I'm back at it once again adopting Montana.

I enjoy being able to volunteer at home when it works into my schedule. I put on my detective hat and get to work at my computer doing my best to locate an address for the survivor(s). That's not nearly as easy as it sounds. I'm tenacious by nature so I don't give up until I have exhausted every possibility to locate a survivor. I love the feeling of accomplishment when I'm able to complete my mission. I have received notes of gratitude from those grieving the loss of a loved one when the outpouring of grief from friends and relatives may have diminished, so I know this is important work. Because the dragonfly packets are sent months following the published obituary, it truly delivers a message of hope when the



Jeanne Bartlett

New Board Member— Emma DeBruin *continued*

I'm from Neenah, Wisconsin and in my free time, I enjoy being outdoors, hiking, swimming, and painting landscapes. Now that I'm away at college in Madison, I enjoy exploring the city, getting involved in philanthropic clubs, and playing games with my friends. Another one of my hobbies is traveling as I adore learning about new cultures and exploring new adventures. I'm ecstatic to be a part of the board of this incredible team of volunteers to continue the growth and impact of The Dragonfly Project.

More Recipient Responses

Thank you for the beautiful dragonfly pendant and card. It's been a healing time for us since the Waukesha parade and when we received the lovely cards with the beautiful dragonfly, it was very comforting. The card is very meaningful and a lot of us wear our dragonfly pendant on a short chain around our necks. I hope you know how much this has helped us.

~ The Milwaukee Dancing Grannies

A friend of mine just told me about this project! I love it! I lost my 22-year-old son in 2014. My sign has always been a dragonfly...I truly believe! I lost my 7-month-old grandson to SIDS two years ago...there are too many stories that involve dragonflies, that can't be coincidence.

~ Sheryal

My niece received a card and keychain from you today and she shared it on Facebook. I can't begin to tell you how perfect the timing of it was not only for her ... but for me. Losing my brother has been the single most difficult thing I've experienced, and lemme tell you, I know grief and loss. It wasn't sent to me ... but it impacted me as if it was. I needed that poem. It prompted a conversation that might not have been had otherwise. Until now I've felt so isolated in my grief, especially the last couple of months. Your timing, this project and its message is everything.

~ Lisa

Thank you so much for the special card. It was so thoughtful and brought quite a few tears. I'm very grateful and thank you again so much. Family of Alexis Mills and Wyatt Mills.

~ Leddy

Celebrating 20 Years of Dragonflies!

20th Annual Celebration & Remembrance Event
March 12, 2022



by Julie Bonde

This year we had the privilege and joy of celebrating 20 years of The Dragonfly Project in person! It had been three years since we had been able to meet in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic shutting us down days before our 2020 celebration. In 2021, we held our entire celebration live-streaming on Zoom. So this year, we were back together again!



Anne Marquardt-Brooker

We also had some very special guests. It was a treat to have our founder Anne Brooker back with us, as well as her mother, Valerie Marquardt. Both Anne and Valerie shared memories from the early days of starting the Dragonfly Project in their home. It was amazing to hear how many of the people who supported them, either as donors or volunteers, are still involved after all these years. Valerie was able to recognize some of these people as well as board members. Anne shared some early photos with her memories. She's grown up a lot and so have all the rest of us. Anne is now a Physician Assistant practicing in New York City. Thank you Anne and Valerie for being with us on this very special 20th Anniversary Celebration!



Valerie Marquardt



Janelle Stanton Soderberg

It is our custom to begin each celebration by reading "The Dragonfly Story" written by Walter Dudley Cavert. This year's reader was Jacob Bonde, Hans Bonde's older brother. Janelle Stanton Soderberg, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors, shared the Business Update. In our 20 years, we have sent 140,500 packets out to all states and to some locations in other countries, especially Australia. She shared how Nativity Lutheran Church continues to be a mission partner as well as providing many volunteer hours. She also shared that Thrivent Financial continues to be one of our biggest financial supporters through Thrivent Action Team events and other means. The Dragonfly Project also continues to grow in relationships with other groups including The Compassionate Friends. For more business updates you can check our website for the annual report (coming soon) or watch the recording of this celebration.



Jacob Bonde



Gary Nereson

This year our recipient speaker was Gary Nereson. Gary shared the tender story of losing his wonderful wife to breast cancer and how The Dragonfly Card and keychain brought him hope. He has been supporting us ever since and says his "condolence card of choice" is our dragonfly card and keychain. We are grateful to Gary for sharing his story. If you'd like to read more, you can check out Gary's story, "Post Office Mary" in our Fall 2021 edition of this newsletter.



Following the speeches, we had some time to remember our loved ones during our Memorial Montage and our Candle Lighting Ceremony. Both of these traditions allow more time for special



Candle Lighting Ceremony

STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 5

music as well. Our musicians this year were amazing. Many people mentioned their appreciation for the special music provided by Heartfelt, a wonderful group of accapella singers that includes Diana van Dusen, Emily Hager-Garman, Mara Hennen and Katie Larson. In addition, Luke Bonde, Hans' younger brother, provided his sweet piano reflections for both the Memorial Montage and the Candle Lighting Ceremony. We heartily recommend that you look all these musicians up when you get a chance.

(Heartfelt Sings website — heartfeltsings.com or Luke Bonde songs — soundcloud.com/lukebonde)

Pete Bonde, our Executive Director, then told us about this year's challenge match. We are grateful to Ann and Skip Bromstedt for offering a challenge match of \$4000. Thanks to many generous friends and supporters, we were able to meet that match! In addition, we raised funds through our silent auction and sales. Thanks to all who donated items and cash. Here are the totals of money we raised during our celebration.

\$4,611 in donations
 \$4,000 Challenge match
 \$870 from auction
 \$478 from sales
 \$9,959 total raised



This year's silent auction fundraiser was both online and in person. Following our program, in-person visitors had a chance to mingle and look at auction items while others were bidding from home. And as always, we had a few giveaways. It was just good to see our dragonfly friends in person again.



Thanks again to all of you who keep this mission going with your volunteer work hours, your tender hearts sharing hope, your donations and help in celebrating. We couldn't do all this without all of you! Thank you!



Heartfelt sharing their beautiful voices!



Luke Bonde sharing his lovely piano reflections.

Videos of the annual celebration and the photo montage are available on our website as well as a PDF of the program that has more information. Go to dragonflyproject.org/2022celebrationvideos

OLD CARD/NEW CARD



In honor of our 20th anniversary, we have reprinted our original hand-stamped design that Anne and Valerie used to make! We're calling it the Brooker Stamp card. You may now purchase this card and our other cards in our website store.

dragonflyproject.org/online-store



DONATIONS

A huge **THANK YOU** to all our faithful supporters. We are so grateful for your generosity with both financial and volunteer support. The Dragonfly Project is able to continue bringing our message of hope only because of your generosity! Memorials and honorariums are listed below and on the next page.

Memorials—September 2021 thru February 2022

In Memory of Trevor Ball
Given by Eric Ball

In Memory of Charles Beard
Given by Patricia Beard

In Memory of Tony Berger
Given by Teresa Berger

In Memory of Jean & Joe Boerner
Given by Sue Lang

In Memory of Earl Bonde
Given by Gerald & Denise Bonde

In Memory of Hans Bonde
Given by Julie and Pete Bonde
Given by Steve Stensrud
Given by Chris & Dwight Dyrud
Given by Gerald & Denise Bonde

In Memory of Carter Bowman
Given by Kris Piehl

In Memory of James S Carpenter VI
Given by Nancy Carpenter

In Memory of Aunt Arlene (Dedee) Champion
Given by Lisa Meyer

In Memory of Tara Christensen
Given by Diane Christensen

In Memory of Ryan Dale Cross
Given by Jane Cross

In Memory of Ann Czech
Given by Mitch Czech

In Memory of Cory Daniels
Given by Robin Holland

In Memory of Adam Djerf
Given by Steven Djerf

In Memory of George Docken
Given by Nancy Docken

In Memory of Marina Manos Emms
Given by Ann Walton

In Memory of Verna B. Flippin
Given by Marsha Davenport

In Memory of Charlie Geurts
Given by Mary Geurts

In Memory of Peter Hillesheim
Given by P. J. Heidelberg

In Memory of Matthew Innes
Given by Michele Geis

In Memory of Bryce Gary Johnson
Given by Gerald & Denise Bonde

In Memory of Phyllis Grace Johnson
Given by Gerald & Denise Bonde

In Memory of Dale Juenemann
Given by Patrick & Janet Juenemann

In Memory of Jeremy Junston
Given by Kimberly Vuckovich

In Memory of Kathleen Woulfe Kalaguano
Given by Ann Marie Woulfe

In Memory of Xander Katona
Given by J Wienand

In Memory of Paul Christian Keller
Given by Gloria & Steve Keller

In Memory of Tim Kispert
Given by Jeanette Kispert

In Memory of Vaughn Kispert
Given by Jeanette Kispert

In Memory of Jay Lechler
Given by Jack & Jermaine Lechler

In Memory of Stan Liedman
Given by Marlene Schmidt

In Memory of Zachary Timothy Loosbrock
Given by Margaret Wagenlander

In Memory of My son, Adam MacDonald
Given by Cheryl Morris

In Memory of Verna Mae
Given by Gwen Enzler

In Memory of Mr. Man
Given by Marcia Kurtz

In Memory of Wally Marquardt
Given by Marcy Marquardt

In Memory of Zachery Scott Matschiner
Given by Kathy Matschiner

In Memory of Herbert & Kathryn Mcclish
Given by Dianne Sparks

In Memory of Sean McQuillen
Given by Paula & Dan McQuillen

In Memory of Christopher Napierala
Given by Antoinette Potrzebowski

In Memory of Joe Reinbold
Given by Andrea DiBattista

In Memory of Mitchel Scheitler
Given by Jeannie Scheitler

In Memory of Sara Schewe
Given by Ruth Schewe

In Memory of Alex David Schleif
Given by Judith Schlieff



In Memory of Rachel Ruschke Schreiner
Given by Palmer & Lois Ruschke
In Memory of Sam Schuneman
Given by Michele Moskwa
In Memory of Jeffery Schutz
Given by Sandra Schutz
In Memory of Jared Sparks
Given by Dianne Sparks
In Memory of David Steward
Given by Lori Wagner
In Memory of Dan Downs & Dusty Taber
Given by James Taber
In Memory of Sarah Tilman
Given by Catherine Tilman
In Memory of Kevin Tureson
Given by Jean Tureson
In Memory of Adam Van't Hof
Given by Gene & Becky Van't Hof
In Memory of Jeffrey C Wagenlander
Given by Margaret Wagenlander
In Memory of Charles Weber
Given by Mary Weber
In Memory of Frank Weber
Given by Mary Weber

In Memory of Wally Whipple
Given by Kris Piehl
In Memory of Alberta Whitaker
Given by Norman Whitaker
In Memory of Julie Wotzen
Given by Joyce Woltzen
In Memory of John Zanatta
Given by Lori Wagner

Honorariums

In Honor of Pete & Julie Bonde's 40th Anniversary
Given by Pat Hendricks
In Honor of James R Doering
Given by Marie Doering
In Honor of Paige
Given by Stacy Nugent
In Honor of Doug Spelbrink
Given by Debra Gorczycki
In Honor of Ryan Trunzo
Given by Jill Trunzo

Support The Dragonfly Project with Thrivent Choice Dollars

The Dragonfly Project Board of Directors

Karen Bonde
Chair

Janelle Stanton Soderberg
Vice Chair

Brianna Walvoort
Secretary

Winda Roets
Treasurer

P.J. Tombarge
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Jennifer DeBruin
Member at Large

Emma DeBruin
Member at Large

Executive Director
Pete Bonde

Founder
Anne Marquardt Brooker



Thrivent Choice is a member-advised charitable grant program of Thrivent Financial in which members help Thrivent effectively distribute program funds among eligible organizations. The Dragonfly Project is one such organization and in 2021 we received \$2350 in donations. These following members have designated dollars to The Dragonfly Project:

Audrey Parochka	Jennifer DeBruin	Peter Bonde
Barbara J Fagerberg	Joan M Ruetten	Robert Walberg
Bonnie Kay Kranzusch	Julie Bonde	Roxanne Dallmann
Brian Macho	LaDonna C Lexvold	Sara L Bauer
Cynthia Sue Kaske	Lisa Kajer	Thomas Kajer
Debra A Stang	Michael J Kranzusch	
Gary N Miller	Patricia A Walberg	

Thanks to everyone above who has made it possible for The Dragonfly Project to receive additional donations through the Thrivent Choice program. If you are a Thrivent Financial member, please visit <https://www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice> to find out how you can donate Choice Dollars to The Dragonfly Project.

Thrivent Financial is a financial services organization that helps Christians be wise with money and live generously. They offer a broad range of products and services – including life insurance, annuities and mutual funds – along with guidance from financial representatives nationwide. For more than a century, they have helped nearly 2.4 million member-owners make wise money choices that reflect their values. In addition, they provide opportunities for them to be even more generous where they live, work and worship.



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A message
of hope
to those who
are grieving.



What is The Dragonfly Project?

The Dragonfly Project is a registered 501 (c) (3) non-profit that sends condolence cards carrying a message of hope to people who are grieving. Our organization consists of volunteers who look up names in obituaries and help put together and mail packets out to people who are grieving, usually 3 to 6 months after the death has occurred. Each packet contains a condolence card, a copy of the dragonfly story printed on the inside cover and a dragonfly key chain.

Each year, thousands of dragonfly packets are sent throughout the United States and other countries to individuals who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Each dragonfly packet costs \$4.00 to make. The Dragonfly Project is operated by volunteers and a board of directors. Donations are welcome. Your donations are tax deductible.

OUR BEGINNINGS

In 2000, when 11-year-old Hans Bonde died from a brain tumor, Anne Marquardt Brooker and her mother sent his family a story about dragonflies and their significance in the cycle of life and death (written by Walter Dudley Cavert). The small gesture so moved the grieving family with its "message of hope" that it inspired Anne to create a nonprofit corporation that would reach out to others who were grieving the loss of a family member or friend. In 2002, when Anne was 11, she founded The Dragonfly Project to share this message of hope with others.

HOW CAN I GET A PACKET TO SEND TO SOMEONE?

To get a packet sent to you, please go to our website store (dragonflyproject.org/online-store) and order a card to be shipped to you. Then you can sign and send the card to whomever you wish. The cards in our store have room for you to insert your own message. Please allow 2 to 3 weeks to receive your order. It is never too late to tell someone you care about their loss.