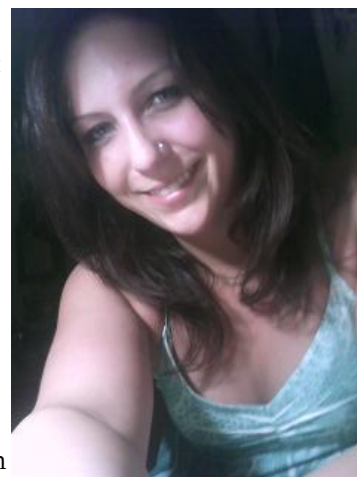




Tammy's Story by Crystal Cullerton-Sen

Six years ago, while sitting in a courtroom for the trial of one of the men who had shot and killed her only child, Tammy was touched by The Dragonfly Project. A good friend who had accompanied Tammy to the trial had received a Dragonfly packet after losing her son. Leaning over to Tammy, the friend asked, "Did you get one of these?" Tammy looked at her friend's key chain made with a dragonfly. Her friend said, "I'll give it to you, and give you a copy of the story that came along with it." The next day Tammy's friend brought a copy of the dragonfly story with her to court. When she read it, Tammy immediately knew this was a connection with her daughter. "My daughter loved dragonflies! I was inundated with dragonflies after she died," Tammy told me when we spoke. "I went home and read the story again," she said.

"It's such a comforting story – to know they are still with you. They die, but they go on living in another way." Tammy laughs, "I've got dragonflies everywhere in my house!"



Katelyn "Katie"

Shortly after that Tammy became an "Adopt-a-State" volunteer with The Dragonfly Project. Dragonflies and the dragonfly story had quickly become an integral part of her life, and one of the ways in which she remembers and connects with Katelyn ("Katie"), to this day.

STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 3

My Dragonfly Story (in memory of David Eric Murray) By Bobi Murray

David, you were born on the day with the greatest amount of light...you would have been 40 today but I have no doubt you are still with us in spirit. I have hesitated in sharing this story, but you continue to prod me on so on this, the remembrance of the day you were born, it seems an appropriate time to share.

March 1st...it began in Florida. Your sister Andria was visiting us. As we approached our front door, a dragonfly the size of my hand was on the wall. A feeling of awe in being greeted by this beautiful insect with its iridescent colors, filled me.

March 8th...we stopped in Georgia to visit Aunt Patti before driving back to Minnesota. I noticed that she has several dragonflies, one hanging from her rearview mirror, another one in her bathroom. I shared with her the story of the dragonfly we'd seen in Florida. Later, your dad and I were taking a walk in Patti's

neighborhood, we noticed a dragonfly doorknocker on the neighbor's house. (Her husband had recently lost his son.)

April 6th...Andria sent me a text with a picture of her monitor screen at the ER where she works. It was a dragonfly. I was out shopping when her text came through and I was drawn to the colors of a scarf. I spread it out to see what the pattern was... dragonflies. I sent a picture of it to Andria and said "OK, this is bordering on weird."



David Eric Murray

STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 4



Executive Director's Corner : ***It's a Job from the Heart***

By Pete Bonde

I have been in my role as Executive Director for over a year now. My how the time flies. In my role, I often think about some of our core volunteers – our Adopt-a-State volunteers. Most of these volunteers have been impacted by a loss of their own and have received a packet from The Dragonfly Project. Out of appreciation for the gift, they want to give back.

What impresses me about these volunteers is that they do their work alone, without much personal contact from The Dragonfly Project. You see, our Adopt-a-State volunteers are spread out across the United States. They read the obituaries where they live or other city/states that they have adopted. They then find addresses for people who need a Dragonfly Project card, story, and key chain sent to them. They sign the cards. Once they have addressed enough envelopes, they send the envelopes and cards to Minneapolis. There, volunteers put the cards together with key chains. Other volunteers get them to the bulk mail center and we send out to the recipients. Soon we start getting more replies and our website and in our PO Box. People are responding to the small message of hope that we send out. It's amazing.

My dream is to visit these Adopt-a-State volunteers personally, talk with them, hear their stories, and thank them for all they do. I did get the chance to visit one of them this summer in Le Mars, Iowa. Her name is Valerie Loutsch. It was such a pleasure to talk with her and give her support. Valerie has been an Adopt-a-State volunteer for many years. She has shared The Dragonfly Project with many people in her home town. And her work is done from her heart, in memory of her son Wesley.

So, if you are an Adopt-a-State volunteer, I want to thank you very much for the work you do. Your volunteering makes a huge impact to The Dragonfly Project's mission – providing a message of hope to those who are grieving. Your efforts can impact a whole family's grief journey, giving them that glimmer of hope to make it to the next day, and then the next.

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

You can make a difference by volunteering your time. Please consider these positions.

The Dragonfly Project needs volunteers to fill to the following open positions:

Adopt-a-State volunteers coordinator

This position has two main functions – adding new volunteers and resupplying current volunteers.

Adding new Adopt-a-State volunteers consists of emailing prospects information about the volunteer tasks, confirming a location, sending them start up materials, and tracking them. Resupplying current volunteers consists of tracking inventory, sending out cards and envelopes to the volunteers, making Post Office trips, and tracking the volunteer. After getting set up, this position takes about 2-4 hours per week.

Gmail administrator

This position consists of managing the email system for The Dragonfly Project. It involves setting up new people, resetting passwords, and removing people. It can also involve adding new functionality to the email system for users. This position takes 1-2 hours per month.

Newsletter project manager

This position consists of managing the bi-annual newsletter from start to finish. It includes initiating the process, setting out a schedule, following up on tasks assigned to multiple volunteers, doing miscellaneous tasks, and keeping on schedule. This position takes 10-20 hours per newsletter.

QuickBooks data entry of expenses

This position consists of using QuickBooks 2017 and entering all expenses of The Dragonfly Project. Expense information is received by mail, email, and by accessing Dropbox folders. This position can also include using QuickBooks and a spreadsheet to create the 990 report (nonprofit reporting) for The Dragonfly Project. This position takes 3-5 hours per week.

If you are interested in any of these volunteer positions, email Brianna Walvoort, our volunteer coordinator, at volunteer@dragonflyproject.org.

“Tammy’s Story” continued from page 1



Katelyn “Katie”

mean I cried! Then...one...two... then four dragonflies started circling above my head.” Tammy felt reassured by their presence. “I said out loud to myself, ‘OK. It will be OK,’” Tammy said. She felt it was Katie reassuring her. Tammy said, “It was like she was telling me, ‘He’ll be OK. He’ll be with us. He’ll be whole again.”

Katie’s death was tragic, but her life was not. “Katie wanted everyone to be happy,” Tammy explained. “If someone asked for 25 cents, she would give them a dollar. She was a sweat-pea. And a teenager. She was determined to meet someone new each and every day. Her motto was ‘Live life to the fullest.’ She even had this tattooed in Italian!”

Today, Tammy is taking the things she has learned – through her grieving and through the messages of hope and inspiration that come from how her daughter lived and the dragonfly story – to reach out to others who are grieving, especially those who lost someone due to violence. She wants people to know that there can be hope – even in death. “They do not need to be alone or isolated, nor stuck in their grief,” she says. Tammy knows that the loss never goes away, but there can be healing and meaning.

In September this year, Tammy was invited to speak at the Shock Trauma Medical Center in Maryland, the hospital where Katie died. The first couple of times Tammy attended the annual memorial, it had been held at a pediatric care center focused on children with a terminal and/or chronic illness. Though quite moved by these memorials, Tammy felt there should be a place

In December of 2016, Tammy lost her husband to cancer. “He went into hospice in August, and made it until December 16. I was the full-time caregiver. That can be hard. There was one day when I had to go back to court while taking care of him, and I just went outside on our deck and let it all out. I

or way to honor and remember those who died of violence and to connect with the parents and family members who had to cope with all that comes from a sudden, unexpected and traumatic death. “I didn’t have that hope that she might live. I didn’t have the chance to say goodbye” she expressed to those organizing the services.

The following year she was asked to be the speaker at the pediatric care’s annual memorial service. “I felt like I had won the lottery! I said to myself, ‘Katie, I get to tell our story!’ And tell it, she did. Tammy’s story moved people so much and spoke to so many who were coping with the shock of the sudden, violent deaths that this year, in September, the Shock Trauma Medical Center had Tammy tell their story for a memorial attended by more than one hundred people.



Tammy Messina (right) with her friend Dawn Ekevich

“Both times I brought the Dragonfly story insert. It’s a part of the story. My main message was that our loved ones are still with us, even though we can’t see them. They will send us signs, and want us to live and not be sad. This is what my story is about.”

To really bring that message home, at Tammy’s request, The Dragonfly Project sent her 100 key chains. She whole-punched each little envelope and tied a purple ribbon on each one. She personally handed out a keychain to each person in attendance. “People came up to me afterward and I could see it worked – it made people feel good. It gave them hope. I wanted to share our story and the dragonfly story and connect with each person personally. I wanted them to have the key chain so that they could remember the story when they needed it, and remember not only the presence of their loved one, but the hope of a new life as well. That’s what I’m trying to do.”

“My Dragonfly Story” continued from page 1

May 24th...I work in some amazing flower gardens as a seasonal job. At one of our client's houses, I was walking to my truck when I felt something on my arm...yup...a dragonfly. I brought it over to my truck and placed it on the rear tire, so it could fly away. I went back to work. An hour later, driving home, I heard this buzzing. I looked back and there was my dragonfly IN THE TRUCK on the back window. I have no idea how it got in. When I got home, I opened the back hatch and it came flying out and landed on my arm. I placed it in Dad's hand and we put it my garden.



May 27th...We were at a TWINS baseball game in a company suite. I was sitting on the balcony which is quite high up from the field and a dragonfly flew right in front of me.

June 5th... our 46th wedding anniversary! We decided to go golfing with very dear friends. Susan's ball went into the woods and Dad went to look for it. It was so dense, he couldn't find it. When we

finished our golf round, Dad noticed his hearing aid was missing. We went back to that same spot and I said, "Fat chance that we're going to find it when we couldn't even find a ball." He didn't find the hearing aid, but he did find Susan's lost ball. So, I went into the woods, looked down and THERE IT WAS! I couldn't believe my luck (thank you, David). We drove the golf cart back to the clubhouse and flying alongside of us was a dragonfly.

After all these appearances, I researched the symbolism of dragonflies. In Japan, it is a symbol of joy and rebirth. In some Native American traditions, it is a symbol of the departed souls. The dragonfly is connected to the symbolism of change and light. When the dragonfly shows up in your life, it may remind you to bring a bit more lightness and joy into your life. You may be called to live and experience yourself differently. Nothing will ever be the same again...it will just be different.

I realized the appearance of the first dragonfly happened around the time that Ally got remarried. I feel that this is your way of telling us you understand how much we miss you, but we need to move forward with



lightness and joy. You are giving all of us your blessing to do this. It really would be in your kind and loving nature to want this for all of us.

In my own garden of late, I can't believe the number of dragonflies that surround me while I'm working. Is it all coincidence? Am I just seeing what's been around me all the time and I just never was sensitive enough to recognize the little miracles that surround us in nature every day? Some people may call this synchronicity or the Baader-Meinhof Phenomenon, but I'd prefer to think...AND GOD WINKED.

"Where there is great love there are always miracles." Willa Cather



The Dragonfly Buzzette is the official newsletter of The Dragonfly Project and is published twice a year. The next issue comes out in Spring 2018. The Dragonfly Buzzette team consists of Julie Bonde, Peter Bonde, Crystal Cullerton-Sen, Patsy Kahmann, Valerie Marquardt, Jan Stanton, and Stefanie VanWyck.

If you would like to share your dragonfly story with us, please fill out the form online at this page:
<http://www.dragonflyproject.org/blog>

Welcome New Board Member Brianna Walvoort

Brianna Walvoort became a board member of The Dragonfly Project about 6 months ago and we wanted to spend a little time getting to know her.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I am a Physical Therapist and work at Mercy Hospital in both an outpatient clinic and on the hospital floors and have been there for about two years, which is where I first heard about The Dragonfly Project. I met my husband Peter in undergrad and we have been married for three years. He is a Wisconsin native who was willing to move to Minnesota but never gives up cheering for the Packers. We moved to Blaine a year ago and have enjoyed being able to be homeowners and becoming pet parents to our new cat Zazzles. I also enjoy spending time with friends and family whenever possible, volunteering with the high school youth group at my church, and am an avid reader.

How did you hear about The Dragonfly Project?

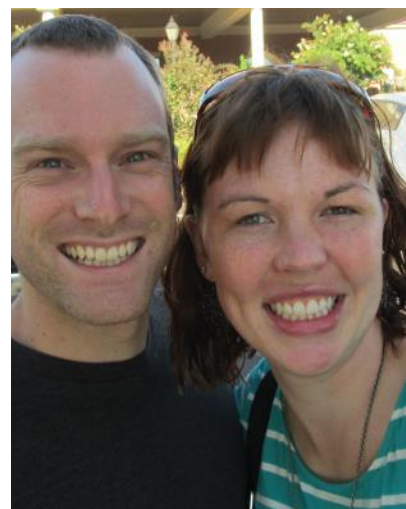
The first I heard of TDP was when Valerie Marquardt brought the school outreach packets to our department at work to be signed. I was very intrigued by what we were doing and started looking more into what the organization did. I loved the support we were providing to the friends and families of the lost ones and started taking every chance I had to sign the cards when they came to work.

What brought you to be a board member and what are you looking forward to about being on the board?

Former board member Donna Brandell approached me one day at work and told me how she thought I would be a perfect fit for the board. I felt honored to be nominated by her and loved the possibility of being able to be part of an organization

that I could tell was benefiting everyone it touched and getting a chance to play a larger role in that process.

I have recently taken over the Volunteer Coordinator position and am looking forward to being able to interact with people wanting to help with TDP. I look forward to meeting many new people and getting the chance to help touch the lives of those involved with The Dragonfly Project.



The Dragonfly Project

Board of Directors

Katie Schmalz

Chair, Secretary

James Smith

Treasurer

Brianna Walvoort

Member at Large

Crystal Cullerton-Sen

Member at Large

Executive Director

Pete Bonde

Founder

Anne Marquardt Brooker

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I order cards?

Go to <http://www.dragonflyproject.org/online-store>

Please note that volunteers are doing this work. It sometimes takes a week or more to receive your order.

When do I send a card? It is our experience and our suggestion that the day you decide to send a dragonfly card is the right day. Don't worry about how long it is been. The Dragonfly Project waits 3 to 6 months to send the cards.

How can I volunteer?

Go to http://www.dragonflyproject.org/get_involved

and click on the "Volunteer Application" button or the "Host an Event" button and fill out the form.

Distribution of The Dragonfly Door Books by Valerie Marquardt

In August 2016, author John Adams gifted The Dragonfly Project with 4,000 copies of *The Dragonfly Door*, a book that helps children understand death. One year later, we have “only” 3,123 books left in stock. Over the past year, these books were mailed nationwide to various schools touched by the loss of a student or staff member. These sites included: Harwood Union High School in Moretown VT, Kimball Union Academy in Meriden NH, Mounds View High School in Mounds View MN, Lansberry Elementary School in Trinity TX, Chaska Middle School in Chaska MN and Woodmore Elementary School in Chattanooga TN. Each school received 25-30 books which were inscribed with the deceased student’s name and signed by volunteers.



In addition to schools, books were sent to the Jacob Wetterling Resource Center in memory of the Wetterling’s son, Jacob, who died at age 11. Faith’s Lodge (faithslodge.org) also received 240 books to share with the grieving families they serve.

The Dragonfly Project is grateful that we were able to send this

comforting book to so many schools and organizations throughout the U.S. It fits with our mission of “sending a message of hope to those who are grieving.” This grief outreach would not have been possible without the kind-hearted donation from author John Adams or without the many volunteers who gave of their time to sign the books.

We are embarking upon year two of sending schools and organizations *The Dragonfly Door*. If you have any suggestions for the distribution of this beautiful book on grief and loss, please contact Valerie Marquardt (volunteer for TDP) at valeriem@dragonflyproject.org. If you wish to purchase a book to personally send to someone, you can purchase one from our website at www.dragonflyproject.org.

SAVE THE DATE*YOU’RE INVITED* SAVE THE DATE*YOU’RE INVITED* SAVE THE DATE*YOU’RE INVITED

16th ANNUAL DRAGONFLY PROJECT CELEBRATION & REMEMBRANCE EVENT

1:00 P.M., SATURDAY, MARCH 17, 2018

Join us in honoring loved ones and celebrating The Dragonfly Project at:

**NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
3312 SILVER LAKE ROAD
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55418**

To let us know if you are coming or to find out how to help,
please contact celebration@dragonflyproject.org

If you have a photo of a loved one that you would like included in our photo montage, send a digital copy to julieb@dragonflyproject.org with “photo montage” in the subject line. Please include the name and date. You may also include a comment or some words to honor them (up to 10 words)—due by Feb. 15th, 2018



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,

Memorials—March through August 2017

In Memory of Bob Ayres

Given by Alison Overstreet

In Memory of Benjamin & Jacob Baalson

Given by Kay & Roger Baalson

In Memory of Laura Balfour

Given by Ruby Benson

In Memory of Hans & Earl Bonde

Given by Kris Bonde

In Memory of Hans Bonde

Given by Charlotte Bonde

Given by Bill & Barb Bonde

Given by Pete & Julie Bonde

In Memory of Don Brooker

Given by Valerie Marquardt

& Greg Brooker

In Memory of William Dugan

Given by Edward Mattei

Given by Frances Veiga

In Memory of Jayden Ecker

Given by Justin Bussler

In Memory of Ilsa Ernst

Given by Catherine Jordan

In Memory of Virgil Fashing

Given by Charlotte & Paul Englund

In Memory of Amanda Foot

Given by Priscilla Jerrell

In Memory of Robert Fuller

Given by Mickey Fuller

In Memory of Nikki Gebhardt

Given by Beth Anderson

In Memory of Shelley Grimes

Given by Lori Prairie

In Memory of Jim Grundmeyer

Given by Nancy Dvoracek

In Memory of Cole Hammond

Given by Gayle Hammond

In Memory of Helen Johnson

Given by Penny Amrani

In Memory of Joseph & Sean Kelly

Given by Jaymie Kelly

In Memory of Edward Kraycer, Husband
& Jason Kraycer, Son

Given by Susan Kraycer

In Memory of Senicha Lessman

Given by Joanne Thompson

In Memory of Jonathan Masin

Given by Eleanor Masin

In Memory of Tim Mauck

Given by Janet Otten

In Memory of Linda McAndrews

Given by Karen & Vince Noggle

In Memory of The Moe Family

Given by Tammy Kuglin

In Memory of Wayne Moengen

Given by Charlotte & Paul Englund

In Memory of Jesse's Mom

In Memory of Maggie's Mom

In Memory of Victoria's Mom

Given by Cary Tate

In Memory of Gabriel Murn

Given by Jacqueline Crocker

In Memory of Matt Orth

Given by Ann Schug-Peters

In Memory of Jason Peck

Given by Robert & Marcia Kurtz

In Memory of Marlene Penford

Given by Debra Tokheim

In Memory of Amy Pichiotti

Given by Eleanor Masin

In Memory of Joseph "Joey" Plant

Given by Vicki Plant

In Memory of "Papa" Richard

Given by Jeanne Lochner

In Memory of Lyn Ruetten

Given by Joan Ruetten

In Memory of Severin Savat

Given by Georgia Savat

In Memory of Sara Schewe

Given by Ruth Schewe

In Memory of Rachel Schreiner, Daughter

Given by Palmer & Lois Ruschke

In Memory of Fumie Sikkila

Given by Peggy Iverson

In Memory of Sonny & Jacob Skar

Given by Bonnie Skar

In Memory of Gary Sonntag

Given by Robert & Marcia Kurtz

Given by Charlotte & Paul Englund

In Memory of Michael T Steadland

Given by Janice Steadland

In Memory of Kyle D Strand

Given by Roxanne Orth

In Memory of Edith Tauer

Given by Judy & Richard Olsen

In Memory of Alex Thatcher

Given by Peggy Boyle

In Memory of Mrs. Theiler

Given by Patti White

In Memory of Kelly Jeanne Thompson

Given by Jeanne Walz

In Memory of Charlene VonBerghoff

Given by Edward Mattei

In Memory of Alberta Whitaker

Given by Kathryn Whitaker

Given by Amy Hennen

Given by Norman Whitaker

In Memory of Julie Woltzen

Given by Joyce Woltzen

Honorariums

In Honor of Anna Coppin

Given by Valerie Marquardt

& Greg Brooker

In Honor of Anne Brooker

Given by Valerie Marquardt

& Greg Brooker

In Honor of Carol & Albin Walz

Given by MS Community Affairs

In Honor of Joan Grun

Given by Dana Jackson

In Honor of John Adams

Given by Valerie Marquardt

& Greg Brooker

Group/Business Support

Amazon Smile Foundation

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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 keychain.

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 an 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 and order a card to be shipped to you. Then you can sign and send the card on to whomever you wish. The cards in our store have room for you to insert your own message. Please allow 3 to 6 weeks to receive your order.