



# The Dragonfly Buzzette



Newsletter for The Dragonfly Project

Volume 21

Spring 2016

## A Memory in the Ashes

By Anne Wayman



**Luke Richard Wayman**

My son, Luke, committed suicide on May 14, 2015, that is when I stopped living and began “coping.” In the days that followed we prepared. I don’t really remember a lot of what happened during that week before his service but I do remember sitting with the mortician discussing memorial jewelry they offered. Nothing spoke to me but I do remember thinking I wanted a piece of glass with his ashes inside to hold close to my heart. In the months that followed I began to teach myself how to make fused glass. I knew it would be beautiful, a colorful piece of fused glass with his ashes suspended inside but what I didn't expect was the peace I felt while making it and the love I felt when I wore it close to my heart. I made glass for his father, sister, brothers and girlfriend. Seeing their love for Luke as I gave them their glass has given me purpose, helping others keep someone they lost close to their heart.

It is the first year still and all the “firsts” are tough, Christmas Eve was one of them. I was weepy all day home alone and wrapping presents I didn’t want to give. I needed something from the store and dashed out in a sullen mood. I keep a CD in the player; I punched the button and cranked up “Simple Man” by Lynyrd Skynyrd. Luke had the song playing on a continuous loop while he

STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 4

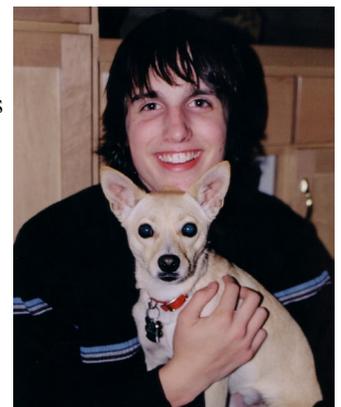
## Dragonfly Wonders

By Joan Blomquist

On December 14, 2004, my 16-year-old son, Justin (a junior in high school), was riding his skateboard across the street from our home to deliver his girlfriend’s Christmas gift when he was hit by a car. He didn’t survive. He left us way too soon. Justin was the youngest of our three children. His sister Meagan, then 19, and brother, Christopher, 21, were away at college. We were suddenly empty nesters.

We received a dragonfly card in the mail from The Dragonfly Project from someone we didn't know. The card was exactly what we needed; it gave us hope when we had none. Since then, we have shared it with others to help bring them hope.

One of the first dragonfly moments we experienced was when Justin's dad, Mike, was really having a rough day and decided to go outside and work in the yard a bit to try and distract himself. I looked out the window and saw thousands of dragonflies, more than I’ve ever witnessed before in my life. I ran outside and had asked Mike to come out of the garage to see. He couldn’t believe there were so many flying about. I then reminded Mike that it was Father’s Day. We both burst into tears because Justin was letting us know that he was with us, and he didn't forget.



**Justin & Zoey**

STORY CONTINUES ON PAGE 5

## Introducing Our New Executive Director: Pete Bonde

By Valerie Marquardt, Board Chair

We are proud to announce the appointment of Pete Bonde as Executive Director of The Dragonfly Project. Pete comes to The Dragonfly Project with a wealth of knowledge and extensive background working with volunteers, donors and supporters for TDP since 2005. Pete has been in the field of management for over 24 years at Thrivent Financial.

Pete remarked, “I enjoy spreading a message of hope to those who are grieving and seeing how our mission impacts people’s lives. I want to see the organization stay around for many more years. I would also like to see The Dragonfly Project help our culture to understand that grieving is not a class or process that you work to completion. It is not something that you get over, but it is a lifelong journey. Working for The Dragonfly Project also helps me to honor my son, Hans, who died at the age of 11.”

We are thrilled to have Pete as our executive director. We look forward to Pete applying his previous knowledge, experience and expertise to assist The Dragonfly Project to grow and expand.

## Executive Director’s Corner : *Building on Gratitude*

By Pete Bonde

I opened up the letter and inside there was a card with a simple note – *Thank you*. As I turned over the check that was in the card, I was very surprised. Five hundred dollars! I realized at that moment the ‘*Thanks*’ was more than a simple one. The card must have had a big personal impact on the recipient. I imagined the gratitude they may have felt.

Hi, I’m Pete Bonde. I was recently offered the position to be Executive Director of The Dragonfly Project. I accepted with gratitude. I have been gratefully volunteering for The Dragonfly Project since 2005 and am thankful to the board for this opportunity to serve, to connect with the community and manage the day-to-day operations.



The Dragonfly Project is a project built on gratitude. The initial card was received with much thanks. Those early years filled scrapbooks with stories of thanks and gratitude for the gift of the card and the dragonfly story. Since then, we have received hundreds of responses from people thanking us for sending them a card and telling us the impact it had on their lives. Many of our donations, perhaps most, come from gratitude.

Our son, Hans, died of brain cancer at age 11. After those initial tough years of grief, we started to give thanks for the life that we had with Hans. He was an enthusiastic boy with a big heart. It is an honor for my wife, Julie, and I to serve The Dragonfly Project in memory of our son, Hans.

I look forward to serving The Dragonfly Project as executive director. Please contact me at [execdirector@dragonflyproject.org](mailto:execdirector@dragonflyproject.org) if you have any questions or comments about The Dragonfly Project or would like to share your “Dragonfly Gratitude Story.”

### The Dragonfly Project Board of Directors

**Valerie Marquardt**  
*Chair*

**James Smith**  
*Treasurer*

**Katie Schmalz**  
*Secretary*

**Donna Brandell**  
*Member at Large*

**Denise Jubert**  
*Member at Large*

**Executive Director**  
**Pete Bonde**

**Founder**  
**Anne Marquardt Brooker**



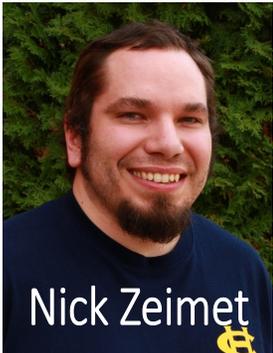
# 14th Annual Dragonfly Project Celebration and Remembrance Event

April 16, 2016

Hopeful Stories  
Great Speakers



Amy Hennan



Nick Zeimet



Joan Blomquist



Ayaka Theisen

Inspiring Musicians

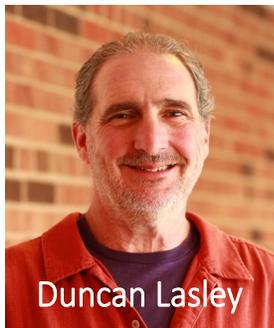


The Golden Toads

On April 16, 2016, The Dragonfly Project celebrated its fourteenth birthday at Nativity Lutheran Church in St. Anthony, Minnesota. Everyone at The Dragonfly Project would like to thank all of our volunteers who help us make and send out packets, donate their time or money, or help coordinate everything else. We would especially like to thank Duncan Lasley for organizing the Celebration once again. Of course, thank you to Amy Hennan, Nick Zeimet, and Joan Blomquist for sharing their own Dragonfly stories with everyone. Their stories were moving and beautiful. The Lost Golden Toads and young Ayaka Theisen provided wonderful music. And let's not forget the heartfelt moments all around as we celebrated our volunteers and remembered the 78,000 families who have received our packets since the Project began in 2002. We hope to see some new faces over the course of the coming year.



Remembering



Duncan Lasley

Faithful  
Leadership



Celebrating  
with Friends



## Finding Comfort in Volunteering

By Ann Danko

I started going to Nativity Lutheran Church in 2011 after losing a family member to cancer. I heard about The Dragonfly Project in a roundabout way through PJ Tombarge. Not knowing me very well, but being the concerned person that she is, we talked a bit and she heard about my loss. Shortly after that I received a dragonfly card and key chain. It had been two or three months after the death of my family member. It meant so much to me to know that someone who didn't know me well took the time to mail me a card.

I read the story and it touched me. I attended my first Dragonfly Project Celebration & Remembrance event in 2012. I was so moved by the stories that I wanted to get involved. I first started to help with the Project via the Woman in Action. We met to put key chains together one Monday evening. Through that group, I met Julie Bonde.

I organized a group of my friends to come to my home to put key chains and cards together, and to introduce them to the Project. After that, I decided to help a little more. I took parts of the key chains home and put them together for the next step in the process. I've been doing that for close to a year.

A couple of months ago, Pete and Julie Bonde approached me to see if I would be willing to help fill orders. I started a couple of weeks ago after a brief orientation with Julie to learn the process. The first week was very busy catching up but the next week didn't take long to fill the dozen orders.

Helping do what I can for this organization makes me feel good, knowing that someone else will get the same comfort I received from that card I got five years ago.



## Meet New Board Member: Denise Jubert

By Valerie Marquardt

Denise Jubert is our newest member on the Board of Directors. She was introduced to The Dragonfly Project by Donna Brandell, another board member, after they'd met through the Courage Kenny Golf for People with Disabilities group. Denise began to get involved with The Dragonfly Project after a friend of Denise's received one of our packets following the death of their daughter. When asked why she had taken the position she said, "I thought it was a great idea to reach out to others in need, so I joined the Board of Directors. I am currently a "Member at Large" and I'm looking forward to serving on the board from here on in." Aside from being a Member at Large, Denise is involved with various projects through the Courage Kenny Institution. When asked how she thought Denise would do as a Board Member, Donna Brandell had one thing to say. "The Project is very lucky to have her. She will give 110 percent."



### *A Memory in Ashes.....CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

hanged himself, a song to his mother, a song to me. I cried as the song loudly filled my car. I played it the whole way there and back. When I got to the mailbox I had calmed down, I opened the box to find one piece of mail. A single card addressed to "the family of Luke Wayman."



I sat in the garage reading the card from The Dragonfly Project, barely able to focus through the tears in my eyes. I went into the house with a sense of peace for the first time that day. Christmas was made a bit easier to face because of the very well-timed thoughtfulness of a stranger named Julie.

I was inspired to create dragonflies in fused glass after receiving that card, a beautiful watery iridescent glass in the shape of a droplet. I also make fused glass for survivors, with or without cremation ash.

Anne Wayman

[www.asbartglass.com](http://www.asbartglass.com)

*Ashes in Glass Cremation Keepsakes*



**Dragonfly Wonders.....CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

Justin’s friend got married a few years later. His girlfriend was in the wedding and she walked down the aisle unescorted so she could hold a place for Justin. Valerie carried a dragonfly in her flower bouquet. Just before the wedding, the photographer was taking a photo of the wedding rings, and wouldn’t you know it: a beautiful dragonfly landed on the pillow. We all knew that Justin wouldn’t have missed the wedding. Everyone was crying happy tears.



My story: I was sitting outside and I saw the biggest dragonfly I've ever seen in my life. I grabbed my cell phone and called “Justin” to me and to my surprise he landed on my hand. This dragonfly's body was larger than my hand. He hung on for a few minutes so I could get photos. I called him back several times and he kept resting on my hand. His grasp was so strong my heart immediately lifted and I said my thanks.

The most amazing experience that happened was when I was in a very deep state of depression. I couldn't stop crying and didn't know how I could get through this and go on. I missed Justin so very much. I went to my espresso machine for my morning coffee, like I do every day. I pushed the button for a latte and to my utter amazement there was a dragonfly shape made in the froth. I took several photos of it, so I'd never forget this miracle. It never happened again, but I knew it showed up for a reason.



The dragonfly has influenced every aspect of our life. Our daughter Meagan makes costumes and does photo shoots. She designed a few amazing Art Nouveau dragonflies. She even flew to Iceland for one photo shoot for a tribute to her brother Justin. For her senior project in college, she made a sculpture of Walter Dudley Calvert’s poem. You can see the pond with the weeds below and dragonflies flying above the pond looking down.

After receiving my dragonfly keychain, I decided to try to make keepsakes for others who have lost loved ones. I took a few classes on jewelry making. I have received so many comments on how much they treasure these gifts. The dragonfly also has a prominent place on my business card and will



always hold a special place in my heart. Thank you for sending me my first card and inspiring me to share the dragonfly story and joy to others.

Joan Blomquist— [www.etsy.com/shop/JBJewelryDesign](http://www.etsy.com/shop/JBJewelryDesign)

## HOW TO ORDER

### DRAGONFLY PACKETS:

1. Each Packet contains a dragonfly card with the story printed on the inside and a dragonfly key chain inside.
2. Go to our website: [www.dragonflyproject.org](http://www.dragonflyproject.org)
3. Click on the “Order Cards” tab.
4. Click on “Dragonfly Cards with Key Chains”
5. When you are finished picking which cards you want, continue to Checkout. Your shopping bag will show your order. Continue to “Payment Details.”

### IMPORTANT NOTES:

- ⇒ When you get to “Payment Details” you will be able to choose to pay by **credit card or check**.
- ⇒ If you choose to pay by check:
  1. Please print the order number in the note section of your check.
  2. Please print out a copy of your order and send it in with your check to:  
The Dragonfly Project  
P.O. Box 19264  
Minneapolis, MN 55419
- ⇒ Please allow 3 to 6 weeks for your order to arrive. Our volunteers are doing their best to help you and it is never too late to offer your sympathy.



## 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—December 2015 through February 2016

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| In Memory of James (Jim) Anderson<br>Given by Benerval Grimes                   | In Memory of Kyle Halligan<br>Given by Delphine Arme           | In Memory of Gary Perrella, Brother<br>Given by D A Durken               |
| In Memory of Ashlyne<br>Given by Ladonna Kiefat                                 | In Memory of Keith House<br>Given by Jennifer Lang             | In Memory of Layna Peterson<br>Given by Michelle Pryors                  |
| In Memory of Benjamin & Jacob Baalson<br>Given by Kay Baalson                   | In Memory of Jamy & Ivy<br>Given by Beverly Mahoney            | In Memory of Office Joseph Plant<br>Given by Vicki Plant                 |
| In Memory of Matthew Becker<br>Given by Anne Spangler                           | In Memory of Patty Johnson<br>Given by Julie Wylie             | In Memory of Don Polly<br>Given by Patricia Polly                        |
| In Memory of Hans Bonde<br>Given by Dwight Dyrud                                | In Memory of Josh, Darlene, DOT<br>Given by Michele Moskwa     | In Memory of Barb Preiner<br>Given by Ladonna Kiefat                     |
| In Memory of Hans & Earl Bonde<br>Given by Gerald and Denise Bonde              | In Memory of Linda Kriskewic<br>Given by Kelly Segnello        | In Memory of Jake Rebecek,<br>Our Precious Son<br>Given by Sandi Rebecek |
| In Memory of Steve Castner<br>Given by Michele Moskwa                           | In Memory of Bernice Leichtram<br>Given by Cheryl Biegler      | In Memory of Nicholas Rocca<br>Given by Laura Feld                       |
| In Memory of Amy Cibuzar<br>Given by Gina Cibuzar                               | In Memory of Wally Marquardt<br>Given by Marcy Marquardt       | In Memory of Jayson Rome<br>Given by Kelly Segnello                      |
| In Memory of Kayla Cunningham<br>Given by Delphine Arme                         | Given by Valerie Marquardt<br>& Greg Brooker                   | In Memory of Jeffery Schutz<br>Given by Sandra Schutz                    |
| In Memory of Lois W Curry<br>Given by Ladonna Kiefat                            | In Memory of Dawn Massmann<br>Given by Colleen Kiffmeyer       | In Memory of Chris Scott<br>Given by Kathy Krauss                        |
| In Memory of Jennifer DuBois<br>Given by Jim and Janet Cloud                    | In Memory of Dr. William McEachen<br>Given by Sharon Schroeder | In Memory of Austin Shimon<br>Given by Lois Shimon                       |
| In Memory of Jillian Flink<br>Given by Jerry G Flink                            | In Memory of Larry Moretz<br>Given by Karen Noggle             | In Memory of Michael Steadland<br>Given by Janice Steadland              |
| In Memory of Sheila Marie Froemming<br>Given by Melissa Erickson                | In Memory of My Brother<br>Given by Fred Septka                | In Memory of Ilah Sutphen<br>Given by Marcia Willett                     |
| In Memory of Ryan Gavin<br>Given by Judith Schlieff                             | In Memory of My Daughter<br>Given by Marie Schultz             | In Memory of Dan Vonch<br>Given by Michele Moskwa                        |
| In Memory of Mike Gruenhagen<br>Given by Dennis Kinney                          | In Memory of My Father<br>Given by Jon Maurice                 | In Memory of Alberta Whitaker<br>Given by Norman Whitaker                |
| In Memory of Kendra Guthrie<br>Given by J. J. Guthrie                           | In Memory of Lucille Myers<br>Given by Ladonna Kiefat          | In Memory of Margie Willems, Mom<br>Given by Janet Fahey                 |
| In Memory of Kim Haines<br>Given by Joyce Paumen<br>Given by Morgan Stanley CSA | In Memory of Katie Narem<br>Given by Marilu Narem              |  |
|   | In Memory of Jacob Nelson, Our Son<br>Given by Kay Cafferty    |  |

### Honorariums

- In Honor of Dale & Dee Waddellm  
Given by Jeralyn Guthrie

## Memorials, *continued*

### Group/Business Support

Allina Health System  
Amazon Smile Foundation  
Faith Methodist of St. Anthony  
Grace Lutheran Church of Nerstrand  
Integrated, Inc.  
Morgan Stanley  
Morgan Stanley CSA  
Nativity Lutheran Church  
Prudential Financial, Inc.  
Thrivent Choice  
Thrivent Financial  
Thrivent Financial Action Teams  
Thrivent Financial Foundation  
Thrivent Financial, Appleton Employee Volunteer Com.  
Thrivent Financial, Minneapolis Employee Volunteer Com.  
United Way of Central Ohio

### Did You Know?

- We've sent 78,000 packets since 2002!
- 10,000 packets/yr for 2013, 2014, 2015!
- 1/3 of these were sent via the Adopt-a-State program
- We have over 75 volunteers! Wow!
- Over 40 of those are Adopt-a-State volunteers in 23 states! Wow!
- 445 packets were sent to 8 different schools, in MN, WI & NY in 2015 with our School Outreach Program!
- 17 packet assembly events in 2015!
- Total Donations in 2015 was nearly \$50,000, a 20% increase over last year!
- Wow! Thank you for your support!



**SAVE THE DATE**

**For the 15th Annual**

**Dragonfly Project Celebration & Remembrance Event**

**March 25, 2017**



*The Dragonfly Buzzette* is the official newsletter of The Dragonfly Project and is published twice a year. The next issue comes out in Fall 2016. The Dragonfly Buzzette team consists of Julie Bonde, Peter Bonde, Patsy Kahmann, Valerie Marquardt, Jan Stanton, Stefanie VanWyck and Sara Weingartner.

If you would like to share your dragonfly story with us, please email us [mystory@dragonflyproject.org](mailto:mystory@dragonflyproject.org). We'd love to hear how The Dragonfly Project has touched your life.



P.O. Box 19264  
Minneapolis, MN 55419  
www.dragonflyproject.org

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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.