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### Upcoming Events

#### Friday, December 8th

One Bright Star's Night  
Kiwanis Holiday Lights  
Sibley Park  
900 Mound Ave., Mankato

#### Sunday, December 10th

6:30pm  
Hospice Children's  
Memorial Service  
Hilltop United Methodist Church  
108 S. Manitou Drive, Mankato

#### Monday, December 18th

1:00pm  
Life After Loss Radio Program  
KTOE 1420AM

#### Tuesday, December 19th

9-10am  
Comfort Coffee  
Courtyard by Marriott Starbucks  
901 Raintree Rd., Mankato

#### Saturday, February 24th

5-10pm  
Celebration of Life Gala  
Country Inn & Suites  
1900 Premier Drive, Mankato

### About One Bright Star:

*One Bright Star's mission is to be a resource for grieving families who have lost a child to death. One Bright Star has created a unique star symbol to recognize and support them.*

### Contact Us:

Phone: (507) 345-1920  
P.O. Box 1084  
Mankato, MN 56002  
onebrightstar.org



## Kiwanis Holiday Lights

One Bright Star's night at the Kiwanis holiday lights is Friday, Dec. 8th! Come help support One Bright Star by coming to see the lights that night. Donations are accepted at the entrance. Here are a few pictures of some of our board members who helped with the lights on November 12th.



Board members Erica Fischer (front left) and Mollie Lamont (front right) and volunteers Kaydra Fischer (back left) and Cassidy Fischer (back right) helped put up the Kiwanis holiday lights on Nov. 12th.



OBS board member Alicia More is helping to untangle lights.

### Christmas in Heaven

I see the countless Christmas trees  
around the world below,  
with tiny lights like heaven's stars  
reflecting on the snow.

The sight is so spectacular, please  
wipe away that tear  
for I am spending Christmas with  
Jesus Christ this year

I hear the many Christmas songs  
that people hold so dear,  
but the sounds of music can't  
compare with the Christmas choir  
up here.

I have no words to tell you the joy  
their voices bring,  
for it is beyond description to hear  
the angels sing.

I know how much you miss me,  
I see the pain inside your heart,  
for I am spending Christmas with  
Jesus Christ this year.

I can't tell you of the splendor or  
the peace here in this place.  
Can you just imagine Christmas  
with our Savior face to face?

I'll ask Him to lift your spirit as I  
tell Him of your love,  
so then pray for one another as  
you lift your eyes above.

Please let your hearts be joyful  
and let your spirit sing, for I am  
spending Christmas in heaven and  
I'm walking with the King.

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# HOW ONE BRIGHT STAR CAME TO BE:

## Four Mothers Find Each Other

**Jan Backlund** lost her daughter, Khia, after a long battle with Leukemia on Nov., 3rd, 1990. Khia was 10 years old.

**Barb Rischmiller** lost her son, Brandon, after a pole vaulting accident on Feb. 4th, 1991. Brandon was 18 years old.

**Linda Janavaras** lost her son, John, after being suddenly stricken with Meningitis on Feb. 3rd, 1995. John was 15 years old.

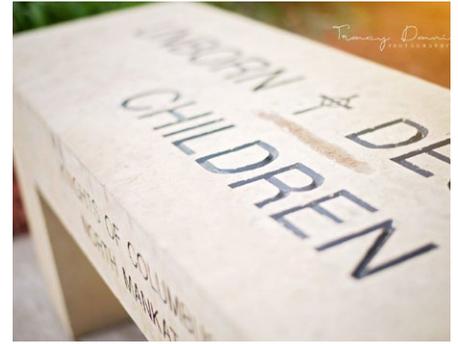
**Vicki Meyer** lost her son, Brandon, in a fatal car crash on May 19th, 1995. Brandon was 17 years old.

They thought it was meant to be, in that they had many similarities. None of them knew each other before the tragedies. Barb and Vicki each lost a Brandon and had one remaining child, a daughter, and they are both named Kimberly. They all lost their youngest child, and they all had two children; one boy and one girl. Jan and Barb lost their children three months apart and Linda and

Vicki lost their sons three months apart.

These mothers first came together and met in Oct. of 1996 as a source of support for one another. As time went by and they got to know each other better, they decided to start One Bright Star, and in 1998 One Bright Star became a 501(c)3 non-profit organization to offer resources to families of children who have died.

One Bright Star still offers many resources to families, some of which can be found on our website: [www.onebrightstar.org](http://www.onebrightstar.org). We mail out grief journals to families who've lost a child and also have unique star jewelry that symbolizes the loss of a child. We also offer many events for families throughout the year, some of which include: A Children's Memorial Service, Celebration of Life Gala, Mothers of Angels painting event, Children's Mini-Camp, and monthly Comfort Coffee. We are working on organizing a Couples Event. We're here for you!



Photos of our One Bright Star Memorial Site.



*In the spring of 2003, a reflection pool memorial was built in Mankato, MN, the founding place of One Bright Star. The City of Mankato donated the park land, and local businesses and labor groups donated materials and labor to fully fund this \$150,000 project. The memorial site is located at Ray Erlandson Park, on the corner of East Main and Victory Drive, in Mankato, MN. The objective of the memorial is to give friends and families a place to gather to remember their special child. It will also be a visible reminder for all of us that the death of a child is not something that one ever overcomes. Nothing in life prepares a person for the death of their child - NOTHING!*

# Meet our Board



Front row left to right: Julie Gruber, Erica Fischer (Pres), Alicia More (VP), Amber Bannerman (ED), Tracy McCabe.  
Back row left to right: Deb Drummer, Mollie Lamont, Molly Sward, Linda Janavaras (Treas), Suzie Hall (Sec), and Cassi Wanous.

## SAVE THE DATE!



*Presents*



## ITS 16TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF LIFE GALA

*Please join us*

Saturday  
February 24th, 2018

Country Inn and Suites  
1900 Premier Drive  
Mankato, Minnesota

5:00pm to 10:00pm

Includes Social Hour, Live  
and Silent Auctions, Dinner,  
and Entertainment by Jared  
Sherlock, an award-winning  
illusionist and comic magician.

Prices: \$60 per person if  
purchased by January 15th, 2018  
\$75 per person if after that date  
(Tickets will be sold until  
February 10th, 2018)

**BLACK TIE AND MASQUERADE ATTIRE ENCOURAGED**

You can register by returning the enclosed RSVP card along with payment,  
or register online at: [www.onebrightstar.org](http://www.onebrightstar.org) (pre-registration is required)

## Tips for Handling the Holidays

**Decide what you can handle comfortably and let family and friends know.** Can I handle the responsibility of the family dinner, etc. or shall I ask someone else to do it? Do I want to talk about my loved one or not? Shall I stay here for the holidays or go to a completely different environment?

**Make some changes if they feel comfortable for you.** Open presents Christmas Eve instead of Christmas morning. Have dinner at a different time or place.

**Consider doing something special for someone else.** Donate a gift in the memory of your loved one. Donate money you would have spent on your loved one as a gift to charity. Adopt a needy family for the holidays.

**Recognize your loved one's presence in the family.** Burn a special candle to quietly include your loved one. Hang a stocking for your loved one in which people can put notes with their thoughts or feelings. Listen to music especially liked by your loved one.

**Don't be afraid to enjoy yourself.** Laughter and joy are not disrespectful. Give yourself and your family members permission to celebrate and take pleasure in the holidays.

**Get enough rest! Holidays can be emotionally and physically draining.**

*Reprinted from \*Bereavement & Loss Resources\*  
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