



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

FEBRUARY 2015 ISSUE

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OUR NEXT MEETING

will be Feb 4th, first Wednesday
of the month at 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:

The Neighborhood Church
415 Paseo Del Mar
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274

(South of Torrance Beach)

"This newsletter is sponsored
by an anonymous family in
memory of our children".

DIRECTIONS: Pacific Coast Hwy. to Palos Verdes Blvd. → Palos Verdes Blvd. becomes Palos Verdes Drive West. Veer Right. → Go to Via Corta (stop sign just past Malaga Cove Plaza). Turn right. → Go down hill to Arroyo (stop sign). Turn right. → Continue down hill to end of street. → Turn left on Paseo Del Mar. → Meetings are held at the west end of the church.

--Please remember to park in the church parking lot and not on the street.--

The Compassionate Friends Mission Statement...

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

To control printing and postage costs, we are trying to go paperless— We are asking everyone to return their updated information form that you will be getting in the mail ASAP. (See pg. 18)

The February 4th meeting will start with "Fear And Our Grief".

For a free Picture Button of your child, call Ken at (310) 544-6690.

TCF Lunch Group meets for lunch at Mimi's Café every Friday at 1:00. (Crenshaw and PCH). All members are invited.

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The February 4th meeting will start with "Fear and Our Grief." With all the many things we have to deal with in our grief, fear plays a vital part. The pain that slices through you as you learn of your child's death is unfathomable. No matter how you thought you would act if anything this traumatic was ever forced upon you, you will be surprised by the uncontrollable fears that will emerge. Who's next? How will we survive without our child? How can anyone be expected to deal with this pain? How can I go on without my child?

The anxiety builds daily. Simple daily tasks seem overwhelming. You question everything. The apprehension as you wait for the next tragedy to come crashing down on you starts your mornings and continues to weigh on your mind until you can fall fitfully into bed. Sleeplessness and nightmares may emerge. The "would-a", "could-a", "should-a's" fill your mind. The unanswerable questions race through your head. (There are no answers as to the "Why me, why my child?") You begin to realize you have very limited control over your life and the distress and doubt seem overwhelming.

We invite you to join us as we share what helps to overcome these fears and to regain a sense of normalcy in our new role as a bereaved parent.

Phases Of Bereavement, Part III: Fear and Your Loss



Fear, so all encompassing that you have trouble breathing. Fear, so gripping that you cannot think clearly. Fear goes to the depths of your being and oozes into the marrow of your bones. Fear of this moment. Of tomorrow, next week, next year. Fear of never, never feeling safe again.

It is not an imaginary monster or a shadow or a loud clap of thunder that has caused this fear. Oh, no, if only it were imaginary! This fear is real. It is fear of change and of facing the unknown, feeling alone, unprepared, and unprotected.

The fear, the change, and the unknown are interwoven into a dreadful tapestry that covers every pore of your body. It starts with terrible news that you never wanted to hear. As an icy coldness creeps over you, you do not feel much or even hear much except those dreaded and horrible words - and the drumbeat of your own heart.

Almost all of us have experienced the usual mild fears during our lives - fear that we might not pass an exam, one in school or other types, like the

driver's license eye test... Fear that we might have made an error in figuring our Federal income tax and have to pay a penalty. But, then, there are more heart-wrenching fears like those that occur when we are awaiting the results of medical tests or the fears that surface when a woman is carrying a baby through a high risk pregnancy and is wondering if that child will be normal when, and if, born.

Yes. All of these fears seem to be more "ordinary" fears when compared to the terror a person experiences when that pregnancy ends in a miscarriage or a stillbirth, or when an infant dies prematurely.... Or the terror one experiences when learning about a serious or terminal illness, and it is a child who is involved. Now we are dealing with, what is for us, new and uncharted emotional territory. We feel out of control and helpless.

Before, life had been so good and safe and predictable; now the future appears misty and unfathomable. Waves of fear engulf us. We feel lonely and see emptiness, and we seem to grow old overnight. Many of us become angry at ourselves and believe we are selfish for worrying about what will become of us. Feelings and thoughts are always accompanied by a horrible fear. Dorothy's story, described below, recounts what so many of us in The Compassionate Friends have experienced first hand.

From the moment that Dorothy opened the door and saw the policemen standing there, icy fear gripped her heart. She knew, even before they spoke, that her beautiful beloved child was dead. A seventeen-year-old, new driver, Ellen, in her car, had skidded out of control on the ice and had been hit by an oncoming truck. In that instant, Dorothy's life was shattered.

Fear replaced the calm predictability and security that Dorothy had known. She had never wondered or worried about what would happen to her. She had worked hard her entire life. At eighteen, she had lost both parents. She had been divorced when Ellen was only two years old; yet she had managed to keep going and to build a good life for herself and her child. She had been forty-one when her beloved Ellen was born, and now that wonderful reason for working and cooking and living and breathing was gone.

In an instant, her entire world changed and darkened. Suddenly, Dorothy, who had cared for other people's children in her younger days and who had waited tables in rough neighborhoods, experienced the most overwhelming fear- fear that

her daughter had been in pain or frightened and that there was nothing that she could do to help; fear that she could not go on without Ellen; fear that she could slip into an endless abyss of meaninglessness.

Dorothy lived like a robot after Ellen's death. She breathed because she had to: she worked because she had to; she ate because she had to. She often thought of taking her own life, but she feared that with her death, no one would remember Ellen. She was afraid that it would be as if Ellen had never existed. So Dorothy continued on each day putting one foot in front of the other, with fear her constant companion. Every time she went shopping, she feared that she would see a girl who was Ellen's age. Whenever she was tempted to smile or laugh, she feared she would be disloyal to Ellen's memory. She feared that would reopen her wound. She feared that she could no longer cope.

Fear is one of the least recognized emotions experienced during bereavement. When the illusions of safety, security, predictability, and control have been shattered by death, there appears to remain only the empty, gaping hole of the terrifying unknown. The emotions the bereaved experience are all new and are unwanted, and they are feelings of change. Any changes, even happy ones can cause fear, because predictability is gone and fear of the unknown has taken its place. The bereaved are thrust into multiple new experiences with no preparation, and this is frightening.

It is by living with the fear each and every minute, but not permitting the fear to paralyze, that there is progress, and the fear can slowly begin to abate.

Initially, each new experience and emotion is experienced only once. Subsequent emotions can and will recur, but with each recurrence, the newness will wane with experience.

The bereaved are similar to toddlers who are learning to walk over rocky, moving ground. Falling is a given, but walking, despite the fear, will happen! --Susan Arlen Bereavement Magazine,

“You Can’t Heal What You Won’t Feel”



The month after Ashley died, I wrote these words on a sticky note placed on my computer screen so I would see them every day. There were many times when I would feel like “I just can’t go there”... but, those were exactly the times I needed

to “go there” the most.

One of the first commitments I made in my grief journey was a promise to feel everything. No matter how painful, no matter how beautiful. I was committed to fully feeling every aspect of Ashley’s life, but also her death.

Ashley’s death left behind a lot of unfinished emotional business. I soon understood that if I was willing to feel everything it would empower me to process anything. Like most parents who have had a child die, I had many feelings of guilt and regret. My feelings surrounding my perceived responsibility for Ashley’s death were very powerful in the beginning.

Good grief information taught me that the only thing that mattered in processing my grief was my own reality. It didn’t matter how many people told me “Oh Alan, you were a good dad”... my reality was different. In my reality, I was Ashley’s daddy, and I should have protected her, and therefore I failed as a father because she died. In my reality, I should have somehow prevented her from being in that car that day. In my reality, I should have done a better job of making sure she always wore a seatbelt, because a seatbelt would have saved her life. In my reality, I felt guilt and regret because I did not get to say goodbye.

It was a long and slow journey, but just as I made a commitment to feel all my feelings, I also made a commitment to own all my feelings and to take responsibility for each of them. I lead a very popular workshop around the country called “Healing Guilt and Regret”... and part of the exercise we use in that workshop to help process guilt and regret calls for each person to take an inventory of their regrets, categorize them, and then work through them one-by-one.

It amazes me how once we take ownership of our guilt and regret, somehow we can begin to let go of them a little at a time. Guilt and regret suppressed and kept silent by us has great power, guilt and regret openly expressed by us tends to shift some of that power back to us. Just like grief is a lifelong journey, so too is processing guilt and regret. Do we ever completely get past all of our guilt and regret? Perhaps for some of us no, but we can truly lessen the hold by letting loose of the feelings, sharing those feelings with someone who will not judge us, and by taking the lessons we learned from our guilt and sharing those lessons with the world.

My dear friend Dr. Darcie Sims (www.griefinc.com) is a genius and in my opinion

she is the foremost expert in the field of grief and loss. She helped me with my regret about not getting to say goodbye to Ashley... she simply said "Alan, if you knew the last time you saw Ashley would be the last time you saw Ashley, would you have dared to waste your breath saying goodbye?" She shared with me how her son Big A, (Austin) was in her arms when he died of a brain tumor...she had the chance to say goodbye...but she didn't...she explained how she said to Austin the very words I would have said to Ashley..."I Love You."

You can't heal what you won't feel. I invite you to open the closet door of your emotions and dig deep, there is beauty to be found...I promise! Thanks to everyone who ever walked with me, shared with me, cried with me, and laughed with me. I am who I am today because each of you has cast your beautiful shadow on my life.

—Alan Pederson, Executive Director, The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

When Crisis Has Changed Your Life

By James E. Miller



Sometimes life hurts us. Sometimes it robs us of something, or someone, very dear. Sometimes it causes us pain—a pain we did not choose and do not want. Sometimes life severely restricts us. When that happens, we feel out of control. We may be tempted even to question the meaning of our lives, asking, "Why me?," "Why mine?," "Why this?," "Why now?"

A future we had taken for granted will not come to be. Plans, carefully drawn up, will not lead where we expected. We find ourselves face-to-face with life circumstances not of our liking. Life choices not of our making. A life, in short, we don't quite know how to live. We wonder: how do we go on? Where is the meaning? And how do we re-design our lives when the future that is before us is so different from the one we've foreseen?

What must happen first is quite clear, quite natural—and perhaps quite overwhelming. We must let out our feelings. And we will have many of them. There may be anger, even outrage—that this unfairness has happened to us, and "ruined" our life. There may be fear, even terror—that we won't be able to cope, that we'll fall apart.

There may be sadness—for something important to us has ended, something that gave us joy is gone. There may be despair—as we doubt if life will even be as good as it once was. There may

be feelings of guilt—for the role we played in what happened, or for the pain that what has hurt us hurts others as well.

Our feelings matter, whatever they are, for they arise from very deep within. Whatever our feelings are, they are uniquely our own, for no one has been through exactly what we have been through.

So whatever we feel, it is ours to feel. And however we feel, it will help to give our feelings words, either spoken or written, sung or unsung, full-throated or whispered. And we may need to do this, not once, but many times, for our feelings ebb and flow over the course of days, weeks, months.

What will not help is to bottle up our feelings, keeping them tightly sealed. Because eventually pressure will build, and our feelings will demand to be released, one way or another.

We may surprise ourselves with the strength of our feelings, but that is okay—and even good. For the presence of strong feelings today is a good prediction that we'll have strong ones tomorrow as well. Tomorrow, when we'll feel something very different, and more encouraging. So this is our first fragile step: to release our feelings, so that eventually they will release us. As we do so, we will discover an inner strength beginning to grow inside us, giving us hope, leading us on.

Gradually, the initial shock wears off and it becomes a time for exploring. A time to learn more about what has happened to us, so that we'll know more about what to expect, about what we need to do, and not do.

If we are diligent in our search, we will uncover riches of information—others who have persevered, and how they have done so; others who share our lot in life, and how we can be connected.

The more we explore, the more we will learn about the choices we have before us, for no matter what we're dealing with, there are choices. We are free to choose what steps we will take today, and what steps we will put off until tomorrow. And even though we may have no control over what has happened to us, we do have certain control over how we respond to what has happened.

We may choose to go into hiding, from others, from ourselves—or we may choose to be as open and as honest as we can be. We may choose to give up, thinking "What's the use?" —or we may

choose to marshal all our resources in our drive to rebuild our future.

We may choose to become embittered—or we may learn to become more understanding, more accepting, and wiser.

We may choose to become locked in unceasing anger—or we may release ourselves to give more freely with our love.

As we learn more about this crisis in our life, it will serve us well to remember what crisis actually means: It is a turning point which challenges our ability to cope. It is a time when forces collide, and the outcome is unknown. It is that point when life will go one way or another, when it is ripe with possibility.

--Reprinted from HopeLine, Syracuse, NY

The Coming of Another Anniversary

As I approach my son's third anniversary, feelings of how I will feel ponder me. My son Kristian died on February 23, 1997 of a heroin overdose. He was nineteen and a half. He was a wonderful child, well liked, a good student, but got lost along the way during his teen-age years. His death was not a shock to us, for he was being treated for his addiction. The shock was the hope of his recovery and that he would live on to help others survive addiction, which he was struggling to overcome.

My struggle with Kristian's death began when I tried to express my grief with others who had lost children under different circumstances. I was not ashamed of my child and his cause of death, for certainly if you met him, you would have liked him. I was sitting with others and feeling perhaps judged as to my parenting skills, and not worthy of their support. Please know that no one made me feel that way. I made myself feel those negative emotions.

A few TCF meetings later, a very kind lady who was further into her grief journey, approached me as to how I was doing. I expressed my insecurities to her. She hugged me and said, "Dead is dead. It is not how they depart this world, it is that they are not here to share their life with us." Her son had died from cancer.

The meeting opened the doors for me. It took me some time to totally feel worthy. But as I approach another year without my dear Kristian, what matters is not how he died, but that I will never see him grow up to be the wonderful human being

that he always was.

Without TCF and that very kind lady (who I am truly grateful to) I would not be where I am in my journey of grief today.

--Barbara Mattson TCF New Jersey



Memory -- A Treasure Box

Sometimes we bereaved parents begin to fear that our dead children may be forgotten and we desperately don't want this to happen. We want our children remembered. We may fear that we will forget the sound of the child's voice or what his or her face looked like.

Our children lived as real people in this world, and they mattered. Now, they are gone from us, and the only place they exist (on this earth) is in our memory. We are told by well intentioned people "don't look back, look ahead." We know we cannot turn the clock back, but we can look back. Indeed, we must look back, and we must remember, for it is in memory where our children are now, and we begin to develop a new relationship with the child.

Memory can become a special treasure box for us. We hold the key. We can use the key, open the box, and spend time among our treasures. In time we learn what to remember and what to forget. And though it is true that we cannot hold a memory on our lap, wash a little face or fix a peanut butter and jelly sandwich in memory, in our treasure box, we can do these things. I'm sure if we were allowed to choose to keep our memories or to have them forever banished from our minds, we would choose to keep them.

In Compassionate Friends meetings we come together with our special memories and share with one another in an acceptable atmosphere. We do not judge one another here. Instead, we reach out in love, compassion, and understanding to help one another. We do not forget our children, for in memory we will keep - their heart beat within our own.

--Connie Andrews, TCF, Harvey County, KS

We quickly find there are no words to describe the experience of losing a child.

For those who have not lost a child,
no explanation will do.

For those who have,
no explanation is necessary.

--Mary Lingle

Bread Crumbs Finding Our Way Back



Bread crumbs are all we have. They are what is left behind after the death of our child. They are our memories and our mementos. A bread crumb is the little answering machine cassette tape that says "Hi, it's just me. Leave a message at the beep." We may be the only people with a cassette tape in our safe deposit box. It's not much, a few quick words, but it's his voice—a small crumb from the original.

A bread crumb is his favorite shirt that I still can't part with, so I wear it for good luck on special days. A bread crumb is the last Father's Day card he wrote in his own hand before he went off to college. *Thanks for everything Dad, especially the \$. My years at home were better than words can say and I never took anything for granted. I've had the best childhood anyone could have. Thank you for the ideas and opportunities I grew up with. I love you. Mark.*

I call these things crumbs because they are a disappointing piece of the real thing, but treasured because they are all we have. I also think there is a second way of looking at this. Bread crumbs are a part of children's stories symbolizing signposts along the way to help lead us out of the forest—to find our way back to the land of the living, at least if the birds don't eat them.

I like to think that the return from grief is like finding our own way out of the forest. The way is marked by great changes or signposts if we will only follow the bread crumbs. I think of them as gifts left behind by our children. They change us and they lead us out of the forest—but at a very different place than we first went in.

Here are three I have found. Maybe you will find others.

Crumb One. We pick up a new sense of what is important and what is not. We suffer fools, superficial cocktail parties, and convenience friends poorly. We seem to develop an immediate impatience or the meaningless and the trivial. On the other hand, we pick up an incredible sensitivity to the world around us that we did not have before. We watch the news differently. We value people more than things. We live more in the moment and less in the future because we know that sometimes "tomorrow" doesn't come.

Crumb Two. We find our real self on the road back. After the loss of a child and a period of emptiness, we do eventually come back. But we

come back differently—and I believe better—than the person that entered that awful forest. With our new understanding of priorities, we listen again to "that still small voice" that we silenced in the race to climb the career ladder, or have the "perfect life", or do what our parents or teachers thought we "should" do. We find new courage to be the person we really are.

We begin living from the inside out instead of the other way around—from a sense of what is important, not what is expected. From a life of "what's in it for me?" to "how can I help you?" We discover new and compassionate friends, and sometimes drift away from old ones. We go from a thousand name Rolodex of contacts to a handful of people we love.

We often also find our spiritual center and an inner peace. We become unafraid to die at the same time we are beginning to live again.

Crumb Three. We pick up one more gift that I have noticed. We seem to get anointed with an ability to help someone else. You know what I mean. We didn't want it. We didn't ask for it, but, we got it, anyway. It's almost like a giant invisible radar screen gets mounted on our head, and we now pick up vibrations from other people in need. Also, we find that we really can help. People seek us out. People who don't know what to say when a child dies, calls us and asks: "Could you please go over?" We know we can and will, if only to listen. I am reminded of the story of a little boy who arrived home late from school. "Where have you been?" his mother asked. "I was helping Timmy who broke his bike," the child answered. "But, Honey," the mother said, "You don't even know how to fix a bike." "I know Mom," came the reply, "But I was just helping him cry."

Sometimes we can just help someone else cry, and that is enough. Unlike most other people, we can walk directly up to a bereaved parent or sibling, look them in the eye, and say, "I know how you feel." That is what TCF is all about. In helping another person, we help ourselves heal, too. So what do we do with these new gifts or bread crumbs left along the way for us? New priorities. A new sense of self. And the ability to help someone else. These are definitely good things. They did not come from the death of our child. Nothing good comes from the death of a child. As Rabbi Harold Kushner said in Seattle: "There is no silver lining." But there is change. These changes come after the death, when we recognize that we can't change what happened, but we can change

what we do about it.

One day our surviving son, Rick, put his arms around us in a family hug and said: "Okay, Mom and Dad, now that we are a family of three instead of four, we each have to live our lives one-third better." That, more than any other moment in our grief, marked our turning point.

My wife has a recurring dream. She is in Heaven many years from now, and she greets our son. "Okay, Mom," Mark says. "So tell me everything you did after I died?" On that day she will be proud to answer: "I lived the rest of my life one-third better in your name."

I suspect most bereaved parents divide their lives into those two distinct stages of time: before and after the death. What we do in Stage Two we do in our child's name. And because we do it, the world after our child died in some small way is changed forever. And when the world in some small way is changed forever, then our child's life continues to make a difference. And when our child's life continues to make a difference, he or she is never entirely gone.

--Richard Edler, TCF South Bay/L.A.. CA

February

The month of February arrives with Valentines posted all over the store fronts, reminding us of the ones we love, and sometimes, of the ones we lost.

As we send our wishes of love to our favorite Valentines, we want to also remember our sons and daughters, grandchildren, and brothers and sisters who have died.

They are the Valentines who will remain forever in our hearts. We send our wishes of love to them every day, in our thoughts and in our hearts.

Happy Valentine's Day ... to the ones we hold most dear in our minds and hearts!

--Cathy Heider TCF, Algona, IA

If There Was A Way

If there was a way I could come back and tell you,
I am sorry for all your grief and pain,
If there was a way I could change what I did, to stop
your tears from falling like rain,
If there was a way I could undo the hurt
I've caused you to suffer through,
I would do it in an instant...
Because I really do love you.
But I can't...I took my life because, at the time, I was

unable to cope,

I felt empty...void of all emotions. No anger...no
fear...no hope.

Depression was the killer, not you or what you did
or didn't do, it wasn't anyone's fault except my
own.

You need to believe that part is true.

You were loving...you were stern,

You were just... at times unjust as well.

You were right...you were wrong... That's human
nature... I was victimized by Depression sent from
hell.

You couldn't see the signs, if you could, the choice
wouldn't have been mine. So I had to keep my
feelings from you. That's how suicide is designed.

I had faith and trusted in you,

I only wish I had trusted more in God.

Then maybe I wouldn't have felt so hopeless.

Maybe I would have beaten the odds.

Still...I want you to know our Father above, is far
more forgiving than I had hoped,

because He took me into His home,
where I finally learned how to cope.

It's beautiful here with Him,

so much peace and tranquility,

it's a life I look forward to sharing with you FOR

ALL ETERNITY!

--Carolann V. Jerkovic, in memory of Steven E.J.
Schultz.

Our Baby

They say her birth defects were a surprise
after an "uneventful" pregnancy. Was it
uneventful the day we knew she was there inside
- growing? How about the day we saw her little
body on the ultrasound screen and fell in love with
her? Was it uneventful the first time I felt her
kick? Or the second? What about the day we
chose her name - Meg? All those days we
dreamed and hoped and loved her? These were
the happiest days of our life with her. Don't tell
me it was uneventful... Please.

--Felise Freeley-O'Brien TCF Hingham

Newly Bereaved...

The Mask

I feel as if I am buried alive. Yet I smile and
respond with "Fine, thank you." I have been
appropriately conditioned, like fine leather. No one



wants to hear the painful truth. An essential part of me, a limb a constituent of my earthly being has been violently amputated. Yet I laugh at the mediocre conversations. A verbal splash in a shallow puddle. Pretending to be a player of the words that no longer have meaning. My heart has been ripped from my bosom. No benevolence granted. No explanation. No apologies. Only cataclysmic pain. Only agony. No anesthesia remains, just the bitter pain.

Yet I wear the mask day to day. Pretending I fit in. But really I'm a foreigner to this new land. An alien language they speak. And as I attempt to translate the words, still, they mean nothing to me. Sequestered in the mask. They hear not the music I dance to. Nor the words I speak. Nor the pain I echo. Nor the native language of my eyes. They will never really know me, behind the mask.

--Dear Cheyenne © 1998



Friends and Family...

For Friends and Family... My Wish List

* I wish you would not be afraid to speak my loved one's name. They lived and were important and I need to hear their name.

* If I cry and get emotional if we talk about my loved one, I wish you knew that it isn't because you hurt me: the fact that they died causes my tears. You have allowed me to cry and I thank you. Crying and emotional outbursts are healing.

* I will have emotional highs and lows, ups and downs. I wish you wouldn't think that if I have a good cry my grief is all over, or that if I have a bad day I need psychiatric counseling.

* Being bereaved is not contagious, so I wish you wouldn't stay away from me.

* I wish you knew all the crazy grief reactions that I am having are in fact very normal. Depression, anger, fear, hopelessness and questioning of values and beliefs are to be expected following a death.

* I wish you wouldn't expect my grief to be over in 6 months. The first few years are going to be exceedingly traumatic for me. As with alcoholics, I will never be cured or a formerly bereaved, but forevermore be recovering from my bereavement. Another year is approaching... and I will carry you with me into it...your story never ends.

-- Alice Wisler, Daniel's mom

Welcome ...



The First Meeting

My only child, Joe, 21, was killed in a truck/auto accident (from the police report). He was coming back to work from lunch. A rock truck made a sudden right turn and my son, my best friend, was dead.

I arrived at the meeting. I sat in my car, asking myself what I was doing here. Talking about Joe's death was so painful, even with friends who loved me. How could I talk about his death to strangers? And why should I? I stood by my car for two minutes and took a deep breath. I walked to an open door and announced to a dance class I was here for The Compassionate Friends' meeting. Four couples turned around, the music stopped, and so did I.

I finally found the right door, walked in, and introduced myself to the woman by the guest book. She said the meeting was beginning and showed me into the room. Darlene Johnson was there talking about the cards we were to fill out, with our names, the name of our child and/or children who had died, and when they died. I looked at the blank card and lines erased themselves with my tears. My hand shook, and I felt the familiar anxiety attack symptoms. I glanced across the table, and my eyes were met with another pair of tear filled eyes. In that second-long time span, pain recognized pain, and I felt a kinship with him and my attack drifted away, not to claim me that night again.

I relaxed a little and listened to women and men communicating the loss and agony-and the fearful topsy-turvy roller coaster ride of emotions that battered us day and night. We shared our losses, if we chose to do so. When it was my turn though, I said, "Pass." And it was fine-no questions, no pushing. Then we talked, cried, admitted to anger, confusion, outrage, sadness, depression, and sobbing in public. I talked, and I listened. I hugged, and I let people give me a hug. The agony was real within us, but together we told it to step back a little that night. The meeting ended with our standing in a circle, and holding each other's hands. It became a circle of courage, relief, and strength.

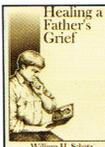
I walked to my car and thought what a difference those few hours made. I found solace and relief. The Compassionate Friends' meeting

won't make the pain go away, but it is a place where you can honestly and truly believe it when someone says, "I know how you feel," they mean it, and their eyes prove it.

--Janice Lopez Sacramento Valley, CA

Editor's note: Coming to a meeting for the first time is the hardest, but when you take that first step, you will find other parents who understand the emotions you are feeling. We invite you to join us at our meetings. We can offer support and suggest ways to deal with your grief in a constructive and healing way.

Book Review...



Healing A Father's Grief. Covers Role Problems including: Macho Man, Competitor, Protector, Provider, Problem Solver, Controller, and then Overcoming Role Problems. In our chapter's library.



Helpful Hint...

The experience of grief is powerful. So, too, is your ability to help yourself heal. In doing the work of grief, you are moving toward a renewed sense of meaning and purpose in life.

--Alan Wolfelt

They've Got Each Other

Quiet comes the dawn through curtained windows,
 Quiet as their breathing, pretending sleep.
 Carefully not touching, for fear stray
 Spasms betray silent sadness and sobbing,
 Or, even worse, be misconstrued as a
 Prelude to intimacy and rejected.
 Finally, stirring with elaborate
 Stretching and yawning, they confront the day.
 "How did you sleep?" "Fine, and you?" "Okay."
 Quickly completing the morning ritual,
 Newly self-conscious they dress. At breakfast
 They speak in simple questions and answers,
 Avoiding sharing, lest control be lost.
 With an automatic, chaste peck on the cheek
 They part with a secret sigh of relief.

"How was your day?" "Fine, and yours?" "Okay."
 Stiffly the afternoon ritual is done.
 After another question and answer meal
 And an awkward, near workless evening
 Of vacantly reading and watching TV,

With reluctance they rise and retire to rest.
 "Help me," she silently screams at him.
 "Hold and console me," his soundless reply.
 Suppressing the love they're desperate to keep,
 They motionless lie and mutely weep.
 Quiet comes the night through curtained windows,
 Quiet as their breathing pretending sleep.
 --Richard A. Dew, M.D. From Rachel's Cry—A
 Journey Through Grief

Valentine's Day (Sealed with a Kiss)



Remember how we used to write to those we
 loved the best?
 Our letters we would fill with hopes and dreams
 and seal them with a kiss.
 To you our child, we write today - and wish we
 could impart,
 The hopes and dreams that once we had, now
 crush our breaking hearts.
 The thoughts of what we had planned for you
 float through our wishful minds,
 Then burst like bubbles in the air, while dreams
 explode with time.
 And yet we still have hope and still dream on,
 and think of all we'll miss,
 And wish with all our hearts we could write to
 you, and seal it with a kiss.
 The grief we have for you is like a weight upon
 our chests,
 There's no way we can ignore it - it never gives
 us rest.
 And no words could ever tell of our longings to
 express,
 to write a love letter to you, our child, and to
 seal it with a kiss.
 And if we had but one chance more to write to
 you today,
 The words would come with no regrets and we'd
 like for them to say
 "To love and to be loved by you, our child ... an
 honor and so blest,
 Our time on earth cut short, it's true ... But We
 Sealed it With a Kiss."
 -Faye Mctord, TCF/ Jackson, MS Chapter

Good Memories
 Are the perennials that bloom again
 After the hard winter of grief
 begins to yield hope.
 --Sascha Wagner, Des Moines, IA



Ron Acker
Born: 10/65 Died: 5/95
Mother: Ursula Spey-Acker
Father: Heinz H. Acker

Jonathan Adams
Born: 1/81 Died: 2/08
Parent: Siv & Eddie Adams

Ramon Alvarez
Born: 10/84 - Died: 2/07
Mother: Terrie Alvarez

Sumer Nicole Alvarez
Born: 5/85 Died: 7/005
Parents: Dave Alvarez & Sandy Murphy

Noah William Aragon
Born: 1/05 Died: 3/06
Parents: Rich & Michele Aragon

Brandon Armstrong
Miscarried: July 1995
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Joshua Arevalo
Born: 7/93 Died: 8/11
Mother: Vilma Alfaro

Joseph David Artino
Born: 11/51 Died: 11/07
Mother: Nancy Graybill &
Step-father: Art Graybill

Jason M. Bakos
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07
Father: James Bakos

Alexandra Renee Balesh
Born: 9/73 Died: 3/95
Parents: Ron & Stella Balesh

Kimberly Barcnas
Born: 2/88 Died: 10/06
Mother: Maria Guadalupe Ixta

Christopher Barnhart
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07
Parents: Ron & Susan Mother
Sister: Stacy Pierce

Christopher Michael Barta
Born: 2/72 Died: 9/04
Mother: Mary Barta

Stephen Barrington Baxter
Born: 7/61 Died: 4/99
Parents: Cash & Betty Baxter

Vincent Beagle
Born: 11/82 Died: 5/10
Mother: Angela Beagle

Tristina Ann Beale
Born: 12/80 Died: 9/08
Mother: Kathy Beale

Frank Becker
Born: 11/61 Died: 8/07
Parents: Al & Louise Becker

Kimberly Belluomini
Born: 10/62 Died: 10/00
Parents: Joyce Anderson &
Ronald Assmann

Sammy Bloom
Born: 2/59 Died: 12/82
Parents: Lois & Sam Bloom

Kurt Boettcher
Born: 12/71 Died: 06/95
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Todd Boettcher
Born: 2/79 Died: 10/79
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Robert Bolde
Born: 7/94 Died: 9/12
Parents: Diane & Paul Bolde

Alan Bolton
Born: 11/63 Died: 3/06
Mother: Helen Eddens

Kevin Border
Born: 11/88 Died: 11/09
Mother: Kelly Border

Antoinette Botley
Born: 12/67 Died: 7/10
Mother: Fredia McGrew

Renee Bouchard
Born: 3/75 Died: 5/06
Mother: Susan Bouchard

Michael Bowen
Born: 5/95 Died: 8/14
Mother: Tomasa Richmond

Tamara Lynette Boyd
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/00
Parents: Gloria & Gayle Jones

Jazzelyn Braga
Born: 11/08 Died: 5/09
Father: Leonard Braga

Lawrence Tom Brennan
Born: 11/86 Died: 12/10
Parents: Manuel & Lisa Jo
Hernandez

William Joseph Britton
Born: 3/62 Died: 7/85
Mother: Jean Anne Britton

Sayumi Claire Brower
Born: 9/08 Died: 9/08
Parents: Scott & Maiko Brower

Devon Leigh Brown
Born: 5/90 Died: 3/92
Mother: Heidi Brown

Eric Michael Brown
Born: 11/65 Died: 9/00
Mother: Beverly Young

Benjamin Matthew Bryan
Born: 10/84 Died: 6/96
Mother: Karen Merickel &
Robert Bryan

Robert L. Buckner
Born: 2/92 Died: 3/03
Parents: Brad & Cindy Buckner

Scott Buehler
Born: 3/80 Died: 2/08
Mother: Elizabeth Buehler
Miller

Brittany Nicole Cail
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/08
Mother: Raquel Cail

Albert Caldera
Born: 3/78 Died: 2/10
Parents: Refugio & Maria
Caldera

Christina Califano
Born: 10/90 Died: 11/06
Father: John Califano

Cesar Isaac Cancino
Born: 01/05 Died: 01/05
Parents: Claudia & Cesar
Cancino

Kenneth Capparelli
Born: 1/77 Died: 1/04
Mother: Sandy Capparelli

Kevin Castaneda
Born: 4/94 Died: 4/13
Parents: Fernando & Aleda
Hockenberry

Frank Christopher Castania
Born: 8/94 Died: 7/05
Parents: Frank & Debbie
Castania Grandparents: Richard
& Ann Leach

Vanessa Roseann Castania
Born: 2/97 Died: 7/05
Parents: Frank & Debbie
Castania Grandparents: Richard
& Ann Leach

Ryan Cavanaugh
Born: 6/83 Died: 11/06
Mother: Kimberly Cavanaugh

Zackary Kenneth Charlton
Born: 11/81 Died: 3/10
Parents: Christine & Kerr
Sister: Allie Bentley

Nathaniel Choate
Born: 7/80 Died: 5/08
Mother: Vicki Blain

Andrew Alexander Chou
Born: 12/03 Died: 12/03
Parents: Lu-Sieng Siau &
Wibawa Chou

Michelle Christian
Born: 10/67 Died: 04/13
Parents: Paul & Toni Saben

Ophelra Grace Clark
Born: 10/82 Died: 9/10
Sister: Rebecca Clark

John Francis Cleary
Born: 12/74 Died: 8/93
Mother: Pauline Cleary Basil

Kelly Swan Cleary
Born: 3/59 Died: 3/95
Parents: Dick & Bev Swan

Sarah Elizabeth Cooper
Born: 10/95 Died: 8/00
Parents: Mark & Sandra Cooper

Hugo Ignacio Corbalan
Born: 4/84 Died: 5/08
Mother: Isabel Acosta

Tiffany Corkins
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/05
Mother: Nancy Lamb

Hannah Elizabeth Cortez
Born: 9/92 Died: 7/13
Parents: Rafael & Shari Cortez

Marika Critelli
Born: 3/78 Died: 11/09
Father: Michael Critelli

Joseph Francesco Michael
Curreri
Born: 9/80 Died: 10/07
Mother: Karen Curreri

Scott Curry
Born: 8/59 Died: 7/08
Mother: Marilyn Nemeth

Justin Dalton
Born: 9/74 Died: 8/09
Mother: Janis Farran

Rodney D. Day, Jr.
Born: 4/96 Died: 6/01
Parents: Jersuha Day

Danielle Ann Davis
Born: 10/78 Died: 3/10
Mother: Jackie Davis

Michael David Deboe
Born: 12/75 Died: 5/09
Parents: Dave & Judy Deboe

Phillip Dennis Delurgio
Born: 11/64 Died: 7/10
Mother: Denise Nolan Delurgio

Anthony Joseph Demasio
Born: 6/52 Died: 7/00
Vivian Demasio

Lee Denmon, III
Born: 7/79 Died: 3/03
Parents: Frances & Lee
Denmon, Jr.

Cori Daye Desmond
Born: 3/80 Died: 2/09
Parents: Mark & Monica
Desmond

Douglas Thorn Dethlefsen
Born: 11/64 Died: 11/09
Father: Douglas G. Dethlefsen

Cori Daye Desmond
Born: 3/80 Died: 12/09
Parents: Mark & Monica
Desmond

Luke Edward Devlin
Born: 12/07 Died: 12/07
Parents: Jacqueline & Tom
Devlin

Allison Jeanine Kirkbride
Dewart
Born: 10/87 Died: 1/06
Parents: Z & Michael Dewart



Our Children Remembered



Gary A. Dicey, II
Born: 4/82 Died: 6/98
Father: Gary A. Dicey, Sr.

Michael A. DiMaggio
Born: 10/54 Died: 7/01
Parents: Neno & Helen Di
Maggio

Amy Elizabeth Dodd
Born: 1/74 Died: 7/02
Mother: Kathleen Dodd

Asa James Dolak
Born: 2/94 Dfied: 12/13
Mother: Andrea Dolak

Heidi Dominguez
Born: 8/68 Died: 06/13
Grandmother: Rita Menendez

Wayne Douglas
Born: 9/71 Died: 1/10
Mother: Marie Galli

Sierra Dove
Born: Died:
Parents: Michelle & Mathew
Dove

Ramsay Downie, II
Born: 2/64 Died: 10/99
Ramsay & Sally Downie

Joel Draper
Born: 1/84 Died: 5/04
Mother: Tracy Solis

Rachel Sheridan Dunlap
Born: 9/69 Died: 3/09
Mother: Janell Dunlap

Myaka Kaitana Durham
Born: 1/04/06 Died: 1/06
Parents: Jahman & Ampy
Durham

Scott Michael Dykstra
Born: 7/72 Died: 10/01
Parents: Mike & Rita Dykstra

Gary Edholm
Born: 5/56 Died: 9/95
Parents: Patti & Bob White

Mark Edler
Born: 11/73 Died: 1/92
Parents: Kitty & Rich Edler

Timothy Charles Egnatoff
Born: 11/92 Died: 9/08
Parents: Rick & Cathy Reny

Lorian Tamara Elbert
Born: 5/66 Died: 10/07
Mother: Dorota Starr Elbert

Luke Emery
Born: 7/89 Died: 12/99
Parents: Karen & Glenn Emery

Jeffery Mark Engleman
Born: 6/61 Died: 2/10
Parents: Janette & Laszlo
Engelman

Richard Paul Engelman
Born: 02/66 Died: 03/95
Parents: Janette & Laszlo
Engelman

Henry Espinoza
Born: 12/63 Died: 9/98
Mother: Virginia Espinoza

Kurt Faerber
Born: 8/63 Died: 3/87
Mother: Trudy Faerber

Jarod Ryan Faulk
Born: 8/86 Died: 12/08
Father: Joe Faulk

Chase Feldkamp
Born: 5/05 Died: 3/06
Parents: Buddy & Jessica
Feldkamp

David Joseph Ferralez
Born: 2/74 Died: 12/02
Parents: John & Rebecca
Ferralez

Michella Leanne Matasso
Fincannon
Born: 8/86 Died: 1/06
Parents: Bill & Cheryl Matasso

Emma Nicole Fisher
Born: 11/99 Died: 7/06
Parents: Nancy & Elliott Fisher

Casey Owen Flint
Born: 5/75 Died: 7/09
Mother: Catherine Flint

April Lou Flynn
Born: 4/61 Died: 1/05
Mother: Peggy Flynn

Mark Frazee
Born: 5/79 Died: 7/07
Mother: Kathy Cammarano

Hunter Rebecca Bloem Freese
Born: 1/02 Died: 4/12
Parents: Brian & Michelle
Freese

Peter J. Fuentes
Born: 2/68 Died: 3/98
Mother: Pat Fuentes

Donald A. Funk
Born: 12/41 Died: 9/00
Parents: William & Norma Jean
Funk

Mark Scott Galper
Born: 2/62 Died: 5/97
Mother: Sheri Schrier

Melinda "Peeper" Gardner-
Collins
Born: 6/56 Died: 8/07
Mother: Pat Gardner

Justin Brian Gartland
Born: 10/81 Died: 4/05
Parents: Brian & Paulette
Gartland

Richard Lamar Gibbs
Born: 3/84 Died: 5/05
Mother: Ann Wasecha

Steven Paul Giuliano
Born: 4/55 Died: 4/95
Mother: Eleanor Giuliano

Jacob Seth Goar
Born: 1/79 Died: 5/01
Parents: Michael & Venus
Nunan

Morgan Leeann Gomez
Born: 1/08 Died: 1/08
Parents: Amanda & Louie
Gomez

Nicholas Gonzalez
Born: 2/63 Died: 10/01
Parents: Nick & Gloria
Gonzalez

Evan Leonard Grau
Born: 8/82 Died: 5/04
Parents: Maria & Wayne Grau

Christopher Dudley Gray
Born: 5/83 Died: 2/04
Parents: Dudley & Laurie Gray

Matthew Ryan Gregory
Born: 3/80 Died: 1/11
Parents: Carol & Fred Gregory

Adam Francois Guymon
Born: 4/89 Died: 4/06
Mother: Eileen Guymon

Anthony Joel Guzman
Born: 5/87 Died: 1/08
Mother: Teresa Guzman

Andrew John Gvist
Born: 7/88 Died: 5/05
Father: Mark Gvist

Justin Todd Gwizdala
Born: 10/75 Died: 6/96
Parents: Kathy & Gary
Gwizdala

James Burman Hahn
Born: 11/68 Died: 12/05
Mother: Berna Hahn &
J. Thomas Hahn

Dakota Max Haight
Born: 9/27 Died: 9/12
Parents: Gail Cochran & Bill
Scar

Josephine Olivia Haman
Born: 6/98 Died: 2/10
Aunt: Caroline Ozimok

Grant Henry Hampton
Born: 3/79 Died: 7/05
Parents: Jeri & George Medak

Brandon Allen Hanson
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/10
Mother: Yolanda Alepe

Robert Belmares Harris
Born: 12/66 Died: 12/95
Parents: Bea & Larry Harris

Leslie Geraci Hart
Born: 6/66 Died: 7/11
Father: John Geraci

Rachel Anne Hartman
Born: 2/91 Died: 7/04
Parents: David & Paula
Hartman

Caleb Haskell
Born: 6/78 Died: 9/06
Parents: Karen & Kim Haskell

Daniel Hassley
Born: 2/71 Died: 2/90
Parents: Eila & Richard Hassley

Alicia M. Hayes
Born: 1/81 Died: 5/96
Parents: Becky & Dave Jordan

Jason Patrick Healey
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/09
Mother: Sharon Sykes Healey

Emma Joy Heath
Born: 5/98 Died: 6/07
Parents: DJ & Phil Heath

Maddison Grace Herrera
Born: 5/14 Died: 5/14
Parents: Gabriela Partida &
Jesse Herrera

Kent Hisamune
Born: 6/00 Died: 6/00
Parents: Toshi & Hideko
Hisamune

Jesse Hoffman
Born: 1/86 Died: 8/10
Mother: Gina Hoffman

Hope Ann Honeycutt
Born: 12/62 Died: 6/00
Mother: Donna Honeycutt

Adria Horning
Born: 12/91 Died: 3/07
Parents: Gary Horning & Linda
Cipriani

Jeremy Honsinger
Born: 12/70 Died: 10/06
Mother: Sunny Honsinger

Jeremy Michael Howard
Born: 7/83 Died: 6/94
Mother: Donna Howard-
Scruggs
Grandmother: Charlotte Crager

Jennifer Nicole Hower
Born: 6/75 Died: 12/04
Brother: Jeff Hower

Miranda Howells
Born: 8/91 Died: 11/09
Father: Walter Howells III

Rachel Suzanne Hoyt
Born: 2/70 Died: 1/95
Sister: Laura Hoyt D'anna

Tara Hudson
Born: 1/86 Died: 1/07
Mother: Mari Hudson

Chad Michael Huisinga
Born: 10/74 Died: 12/95
Parents: Alan & Melinda
Huisinga



Hannah Nichea Hupke
Born: 9/87 Died: 6/05
Parents: Bruce & Joni Hupke

Zane Austin Hutchins
Born: 9/03 Died: 2/04
Parents: Mae Rivera & Jon Hutchins

Casie Leean Hyde
Born: 3/89 Died: 12/05
Mother: Kelli Rigby-Hyde

John Joseph Iacono
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/04
Parents: Nancy & Anthony Iacono

Ben Francisco Inez de la Cruz
Born: 1/71 Died: 11/91
Parents: Francesca Inez & Emmanuel de la Cruz

John E. James
Born: 6/62 Died: 9/93
Parents: Marilyn & Lupe Arvizo

Kalaea Jennings
Born: 4/07 Died: 9/07
Parents: Nacio & Maria Jennings

Melissa Gale Jetton
Born: 5/58 Died: 7/84
Parents: James & Cathie Jetton

William Jimenez
Born: 3/94 Died: 5/04
Sister: Adrianna Jimenz

Daniel A. Jones V.
Born: 5/92 Died: 10/09
Father: Daniel A. Jones IV.

David B. Jones
Born: 3/50 Died: 3/01
Mother: Lucille Jones

Thomas Sean Jordahl
Born: 7/67 Died: 4/03
Mother: Lynda Orr

Jeff Joyce
Born: 2/68 Died: 4/01
Mother: Wadene Duffy

Lance John Juracka
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/06
Parents: Frank & Nancy Juracka

Heather Mary Kain
Born: 6/83 Died: 2/10
Mother: Maura Kain

Edwin J. Kaslowski
Born: 11/67 Died: 7/96
Mother: Carolyn Kaslowski

Emily Matilda Kass
Born: 6/95 Died: 3/06
Mother: Susan Kass

Scott Ira Kaufman
Born: 4/68 Died: 7/95
Mother: Renee Kaufman

Douglas Drennen Kay
Born: 3/72 Died: 9/06
Parents: Steve & Diane Kay

Kalin Marie Keech
Born: 10/90 Died: 6/09
Richard & Kris Keech

Kathryn Anne Kelly
Born: 12/72 Died: 1/91
Parents: Dick & Timmy Kelly

Timothy Michael Kerrigan
Born: 4/68 Died: 8/02
Mother: JoAnna Kerrigan

Sean A. King
Born: 7/63 Died: 12/07
Parents: Catherine & Michael King

Kay Dee Kinney-Palser
Born: 6/87 Died: 6/99
Grandmothers: Diana Palser & Kay Kinney

Colby Joshua Koenig
Born: 6/84 Died: 1/10
Parents: Cindy Tobis & John Koenig

Keith Konopasek
Born: 1/63 Died: 7/95
Parents: Ken & Mary Konopasek

Michael Kroppman
Born: 12/88 Died: 3/12
Parents: Brenda & Greg Kroppmann

Susan Ann Kruger
Born: 9/64 Died: 6/08
Mother: Gloria Swensson

Kyle Kubachka
Born: 1/89 Died: 11/08
Parents: Keith & April Kubachka

Natalie Samantha Large
Born: 6/05 Died: 6/05
Parents: Burke & Maya Large

Dolores LaRue
Born: 8/57 Died: 11/08
Mother: Maggie Ramirez

Cherese Mari Lauthere
Born: 9/74 Died: 3/96
Parents: Larry & Chris Lauthere

Bernard Lawrence
Born: 2/63 Died: 11/06
Mother: Jackie Bowens

Bryan Yutaka Lee
Born: 12/70 Died: 9/07
Mother: Kathee Lee

Steven J. Lee
Born: 1/63 Died: 10/06
Mother: Donna Lee

Jessica Leffew
Born: 9/96 Died: 4/14
Parents: Jarrad & Omica Jelsma

Avery James Lent
Born: 12/03 Died: 7/06
Parents: Crystal Henning & Dan Holly

Katie Leslie
Born: 12/12 Died: 9/14
Mother: Quinn Frances Leslie

Brian Lopez
Born: 9/93 Died: 4/14
Parents: Jarrad & Omica Jelsma

Kevin Le Nguyen
Born: 5/88 Died: 6/14
Mother: Tracy Le Nguyen

Wendy Levine
Born: 10/65 Died: 11/95
Parents: Paul & Sharon Levine

Michael Lococo
Born: 2/55 Died: 1/10
Mother: Patrina Lococo

Richard Lee Luthe
Born: 11/76 Died: 1/98
Parents: Jeff & Lorraine Luthe

Shauna Jean Malone
Born: 8/70 Died: 1/13
Parents: Tom & Mary Malone

Michelle Marie Mandich
Born: 5/89 Died: 2/05
Parents: Michael & Lori Mandich

Daniel Edward Manella
Born: 9/67 Died: 10/98
Sister: Kathleen Manella

Elizabeth Mann
Born: 7/60 Died: 5/05
Parents: David & Olivia Mann

Janet Sue Mann
Born: 10/61 Died: 9/10
Mother: Nancy Mann

Gabriella Mantini
Born: 5/85 Died: 8/06
Mother: Martha Mantini

Alex J. Mantyla
Born: 3/89 Died: 8/08
Parents: Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla

Kyle Jeffrey Martin
Born: 11/80 Died: 7/04
Parents: David & Joanne Martin

Jason Lee Martineau
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07
Father: James Bakos

Audrey Sinclair Marshall
Born: 2/00 Died: 3/00
Parents: Don & Kimberly Marshall

Paul Martinez
Born: 1/86 Died: 3/08
Mother: Lorraine Martinez

Daniel George Mateik III
Born: 12/84 Died: 6/09
Mother: Stefanie Hudak

Daniel McClerman
Born: 7/53 Died: 2/07
Mother: Lee McClerman

Kirk McMulty
Born: 7/84 Died: 2/14
Mother: Elaine Mc Multy
Sister: Reme Mc Multy

Robert Andrew Mead
Born: 5/65 Died: 4/11
Mother: Carol Mead

Nicole Marie Megaloudis
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/04
Mother: Gail Megaloudis-Rongen

Alexis Melgoza
Born: 3/90 Died: 6/11
Mother: Gina Melgoza

Shawn Mellen
Born: 05/81 Died: 8/99
Godmother: Rose Sarukian

Damion Mendoza
Born: 7/76 Died: 6/92
Parents: Carlene & Paul Mendoza

Shannon R. Middleton
Born: 2/77 Died: 5/94
Mother: Candy Middleton

Steven Douglas Millar
Born: 2/70 Died: 10/00
Parents: David & Suzanne Millar

Patricia Acha Miller
Born: 1/62 Died: 11/10
Mother: Christina Acha

Jamie Susan Mintz
Born: 11/52 Died: 12/04
Sister: Jessica Mintz

Angel Flores Misa, Jr
Born: 10/69 Died: 7/06
Parents: Roland & Luscita Dilley

David F. Mobilio
Born: 7/71 Died: 11/02
Parents: Richard & Laurie Mobilio

Danielle Ann Mosher
Born: 8/78 Died: 6/97
Parents: Paul & Rose Mary Mosher

Benjamin A. Moutes
Born: 3/07 Died: 5/10
Parents: Kevin & Claudia Moutes

Peter Anthony Murillo
Born: 11/72 Died: 10/04
Mother: Stella Murillo

Christopher Myers
Born: 10/86 Died: 5/06
Parents: Janet & Larry Myers

Edward W. Myricks II
Born: 4/72 Died: 10/11
Parents: Edward & Sandra Myricks



Our Children Remembered



Annamay Rebecca Celine Naef
Born: 4/95 Died: 10/11
Parents: Heinz & Ursina Naef

Christian Paul Nagy
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/02
Parents: Paul & Teresa Nagy
Born: 12/93 Died: 10/14
Mother: Grace Nakamaru

Richard Paul Negrete
Born: 6/43 Died: 2/04
Mother: Sally Negrete

Joy Ellen Nelson
Born: 1/97 Died: 1/97
Parents: Mary Desmond & David Nelson

Eric M. Neuan
Born: 1/79 Died: 3/09
Parents: Eric & Lynn Neuman

William Nicassio
Born: 1/88 Died: 1/14
Mother: Pearl Nicassio

Danielle Nice
Born: 7/81 Died: 8/04
Parents: Daniel & Debbie Nice

Monique Nicholson
Born: 7/71 Died: 1/08
Sister: April Nicholson

Denise Northbrook
Born: 2/67 Died: 8/31
Parents: Mike & Barbie Schafer

Geoff James Nowak
Born: 11/97 Died: 2/98
Parents: Christen Murphey & Geoff Nowak

Logan Kay Nunez
Born: 1/95 Died: 4/05
Parents: Mike & Laura Nunez

Michaela Grace Nunez
Born: 2/05 Died: 7/05
Parents: Roger & Jennifer Nunez

Sally Anne O'Connor
Born: 12/62 Died: 2/11
Mother: Grace "Darline" Dye

Thomas Jinkwang Oh
Born: 2/72 Died: 6/03
Sister: Barbara Oh

Tyiri Ojose
Born: 9/10 Died: 7/12
Mother: Maureen Ojose

Dominique Oliver
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/02
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Elliott Shawn Oliver
Born: 8/75 - 2/13
Parents: Elliott Joseph Oliver Jr. & Linda Barcela

Henry Ortega
Born: 5/97 Died: 7/08
Parents: Henry & Wendy Ortega

Caitlin Nalani Oto
Born: 10/88 Died: 2/05
Father: Carl Oto

Sally O' Toole
Born: 10/53 Died: 03/85
Mother: Kay Arndt

Masahiro Ozaki
Born: 5/78 Died: 8/09
Sister: Etsuko Moromi

Crystal Pagan
Born: 6/74 Died: 3/14
Mother: Sunny Honsinger

Lucas Hunter Palar
Born: 11/89 Died: 5/06
Parents: Hugh Palar & DeAnna Williams

Armon Parker
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/04
Mother: Sabrina Parker

Maddison Grace Partida
Born: Died:
Mother: Gabriela Partida

Annemarie Pellerito
Born: 9/73 Died: 8/03
Parents: Vicki & Pete Pellerito

Joseph Ryan Persh
Born: 1/03 Died: 2/03
Parents: Gary & Jane Persh

Daniel Andrew Peterson
Born: 1/78 Died: 5/85
Mother: Gay Kennedy

Richard Phillips
Born: 9/81 Died: 3/11
Mother: Lisa Grant

Jennifer Pizer
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/91
Parents: Janis & Bud Pizer

Chris Pierce
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07
Sister: Stacy Pierce

Steven Randall Prather
Born: 9/62 Died: 8/10
Parents: Stu & Evalyn Prather

D'Juan Marcel Pratt
Born: 12/79 Died: 11/06
Mother: Gwendolyn Elaine Maiden

Steven Quesada
Born: 8/77 Died: 7/14
Mother: Esther Quesada

Shannon Quigly
Born: 11/26/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen Shortridge

Daniel Paul Rains
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/91
Mother: Janet Ferjo

Jeffrey Alan Rakus
Born: 10/86 Died: 7/06
Parents: Tony & Donna Rakus

Julius Ramirez JR.
Born: 8/10 Died: 8/10
Parents: Bridle & Jules Ramirez

Leo Joshua Rank II
Born: 3/11 Died: 4/12
Parents: Roberta Redner & Leo Rank

Cindy Ranftl
Born: 8/68 Died: 7/97
Parents: Pat & Bob Ranftl

Tejal Pati Reddy
Born: 6/86 Died: 12/08
Parents: Praniitha & Krupa Reddy

Richard R. Reyes
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/08
Mother: Terry Reyes

Aaron Rico
Born: 12/89 Died: 12/10
Parents: Cameron & Annette Rico

Keith Patrick Riley
Born: 3/69 Died: 10/99
Parents: Kevin & Debby Riley

Christopher Rivera
Born: 10/67 Died: 1/06
Mother: Katherine Wagner

Ryanne Robles
Born: 10/12 Died: 10/12
Mother: Glenda Osborne

Ruth "Vanny" Rodriguez
Born: 10/73 Died: 5/01
Parents: George & Ruby Rodriguez

Christine E. Rojas
Born: 6/64 Died: 12/94
Parents: Ray & Esther Rojas

Jamie (James) Lloyd Roman
Born: 4/78 Died: 2/97
Mother: Carolyn Roman

Frankie Romero
Born: 10/81 Died: 9/93
Mother: Magdalena Hilda Salas & Francisco L. Romero

Dominic Niall Pennington Roque
Born: 8/02 Died: 9/09
Parents: Kerrie & Ren Roque

James Garrett Ross
Born: 12/74 Died: 10/05
Parents: Jim & Sharon Ross

Michael William Roth
Born: 6/71 Died: 12/08
Parents: Karen & William Roth

John Patrick Rouse
Born: 1/78 Died: 7/02
Mother: Sharon Rouse

Giovani Rubalcava
Born: 4/95 Died: 8/14
Parents: Gina & Dennis Diviak

Michael B. Ruggera, Jr.
Born: 4/51 Died: 4/96
Parents: Michael & Frances Ruggera

Shannon Quigley Runningbear
Born: 12/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen Crowley Shortridge

Joseph Sahu
Born: 6/89 Died: 4/12
Parents: Ron & Cathy

Armando Sainz
Born: 6/76 Died: 2/02
Mother: Jennie Hernandez

Andrew Patrick Sakura
Born: 3/90 Died: 3/08
Parents: Bruce & Karen Sakura

Jeffrey Alan Sampson
Born: 3/86 Died: 5/05
Parents: Claude & Paula Sampson

Lisa Sandoval
Born: 9/76 Died: 12/92
Parents: Susan & Ruben Sandoval

F. Marlow Santos
Born: 10/84 Died: 7/93
Parents: Fred & Julie Gillette

Michael William Schlarb
Born: 4/61 Died: 7/14
Parents: Bill & Sharon Schlarb

Karen Ailegra Scholl
Born: 8/64 Died: 4/99
Mother: Kay Scholl

Matt Scholl
Born: 2/73 Died: 4/08
Parents: Bill & Kay Scholl

Candace Arond Schonberg
Born: 3/98 Died: 11/00
Parents: Andrene & Arond Schonberg

Jonathan "Jamie" Schubert
Born: 7/65 Died: 12/06
Parents: Lynn & Roy Schubert

Melissa Lauren Schweisberger
Born: 10/84 Died: 11/99
Parents: John & Margarita Schweisberger

Patrick C. Shillings Jr
Born: 1/88 - Died: 10/09
Parents: Patrick & Rena Shillings

Dylan Elwood Sievers
Born: 8/08 Died: 8/08
Parents Daren & Marne Sievers

Tyson Donald Sievers
Born: 8/08 Died: 9/08
Parents: Darren & Marne Sievers

Spencer Simpson
Born: 1/80 Died: 6/13
Parents: Rich & Shelly Simpson

**OUR CHILDREN**

Gerald Slater
Born: 2/71 Died: 8/94
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Larry A. Stauffer
Born: 1/67 Died: 5/08
Mother: Shirley Finnin
Miamor

Jennine Steen
Born: 7/05 Died: 9/10
Father: Donya Steen

Nancy Sterger
Born: 8/57 Dird: 6/12
Mother: Ann Leer

Daniel John Swiggum
Born: 6/88 Died: 7/08
Parents: Stewart & Marian
Swiggum

Elizabeth D. Szucs
Born: 4/72 Died: 6/11
Parents: Dolores & Frank Szucs

Anthony Tanori
Born: 8/82 Died: 8/12
Parents: Chuck & Sylvia Tanori

Joseph Tauaefa
Born: 2/85 Died: 7/10
Parents: Loi & Sioka Tauaefa

Kristi Nicole Taylor
Born: 5/80 Died: 9/94
Parents: Kathy & Cory Taylor

John Teresinski
Born: 12/67 Died: 1/00
Parents: Beverly & Victor
Teresinski

Ryan William Thomas
Born: 2/82 Died: 4/04
Mother: Linda Thomas

Laura C. Toomey
Born: 1/69 Died: 12/78
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth
Toomey

Michael D. Toomey
Born: 4/62 Died: 2/05
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth
Toomey

Nathan Torbert
Born: 1/78 Died: 12/05
Mother: Rebecca Williams

David Torres
Born: 6/66 Died: 3/06
Mother: Joyce Whirry

Marcelo Torres
Born: 8/81 Died: 9/03
Parents: Jaime & Carmen
Torres

Brian Gregory Trotter
Born: 10/78 Died: 8/94
Mother: Abby Trotter-Herft

Ubong Jabari Uko
Born: 2/81 Died: 5/09
Mother: Denise Dues

Vance C. Valdez
Born: 10/90 Died: 3/12
Parents: Carlos & Maria
Valdez

Lexi Noelle Valladares
Born: 4/04 Died: 7/10
Parents: Fausto & Erica
Valladares

Mark T. Vasquez
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/11
Parents: Manuel & Blanca
Vasquez

Gregory Earl Veal
Born: 2/90 Died: 7/00
Mother: Virginia Veal

Tommy Villanueva
Born: 10/68 Died: 5/02
Parents: Jennie & Edgar
Villanueva

Justin Alexander Velasquez
Born: 7/12 Died: 7/12
Parents: Ricardo & Marcie
Velasquez

Eric Douglas Vines
Born: 7/77 Died: 7/91
Parents: Doug & Lynn
Vines

Mark Daniel Vinson
Born: 11/78 Died: 7/10
Mother: Virginia Vinson

Serena Yasmeen C. Viveros
Born: 11/05 Died: 11/05
Mother: Brenda Viveros

Chris Henry Vogeler
Born: 9/66 Died: 12/04
Parents: Frank & Lois
Fisher

Marisa Ann Vuoso
Born: 7/83 Died: 3/93
Parents: Debbie & Marco
Vuoso

Kristopher Wadman
Born: 11/82 Died: 10/00
Parents: Michael & Melodie
Wadman

Carl Alan Wagenknecht
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/04
Parents: Tom & Janis
Wagenknecht

Susan Wagniere
Born: 7/75 Died: 7/13
Mother: Georgia Wagniere

Jeffrey Sinclair Wagstaff
Born: 9/80 Died: 4/99
Parents: Johnny & Barbara
Walker
Sister: Sheimekia Wagstaff

REMEMBERED

Cory Dylan Walker
Born: 8/76 Died: 3/01
Parents: Jim and Susan Walker

Eric Webb
Born: 6/85 Died: 10/07
Parents: Jim & Vickie Webb

Dennis William Webber
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/05
Parent: Blaine & Sin Young
Webber

Sharon Ann Wendt
Born: 6/54 Died: 4/99
Parents: Mr. & Mrs. Carmel
Doucet

Brian Scott West
Born: 8/70 Died: 4/08
Parents: David & Connie
Schlottman

Andreas Wickstrom
Born: 12/83 Died: 12/01
Parents: John & Inge Wickstrom

Victoria Winchester
Born: 2/57 Died: 2/84
Mother: Erin Adams

Jennifer Winkelspecht
Born: 7/75 Died: 8/95
Parents: Brian & Lisa
Winkelspecht

Jordan Michael Witte
Born: 1/87 Died: 11/08
Parents: Licha & Mike Witte

Bob Woodyard
Born: 7/55 Died: 10/08
Bill & Barb Woodyard

Amy Woolington
Born: 10/85 Died: 1/07
Parents: Pam Weiss & John
Woolington

Christopher Wootton
Born: 11/86 Died: 5/08
Father: Jim Wootton

Cristofur Daye Wroten-Kennedy
Born: 2/75 Died: 9/01
Mother: Dusty Wroten
Father: Joe Kennedy

Brett Yodice
Born: 11/89 Died: 5/13
Parents: Sam & Susan Yodice

Steve R. Young
Born: 7/57 Died: 2/90
Mother: Marjorie Young

Whitney Marie Young
Born: 8/87 Died: 11/06
Parents: Marlene & Steve Young

Thomas Zachary
Born: 12/85 Died: 7/11
Father: Bob McGaha

Kevin Zelik
Born: 11/85 Died: 6/10
Parents: Joe & Linda Zelik

Birthday Tributes...

In honor of your child's birthday, we welcome you to submit a birthday tribute. Though your child is no longer here to buy a present for, think of this as a birthday present about your child. This tribute is an opportunity to share your child with us all. (We thank you for any birthday donations that help offset chapter expenses.) * Please remember we are always working a month in advance and need your tributes by the first of the month preceding the actual birthday.

Sorry, No Birthday Tributes were submitted this month.

For Siblings...**Playing in the Shadows**

We grew up together, big sister, little brother. I took care of you until you were old enough to care for yourself. Though you didn't say it, I knew you loved me. We played in the sunlight, you and I; Remember the games of "Mother-May-I" and "Hide-and-Seek"? Sure we had our fights as all siblings do, But through it all we never lost our love for each other. Now you're gone, I'll never see you again except in the memories of those sunny days. You will forever be sixteen-- Far too young to die. You had your whole life to live. I'll always grieve, but I must go on. Still, without you, I play alone in the shadows. --Cheryl Larson, TCF Pikes Peak, CO

When I Was Only Six

On Christmas Day 1987, Adam was diagnosed with a brain tumor. I woke up that morning and only my grandma was in the house. Everybody else was at the hospital. I was very confused and felt alone. At age six I didn't really understand what death was but I could sense something was wrong. At that point in time I had no idea what was to come during the next two years.

I don't remember everything that happened but my friends and family filled in the gaps for me. Since I was Adam's big sister, I tried to help him out as much as possible. At times I was the only one that could get him to laugh and smile. It made me feel good to see him smiling and having fun, since he was in so much pain. Some main things I remember about him and our relationship is that I could always make him laugh, we had a trusting relationship, and he was very, very brave. On his tomb-stone it says, "Our brave little hero."

Alone and Waiting

Some people enjoy being alone but it can be a very sad and upsetting experience. Loneliness can be a good or bad experience depending on the situation. I felt alone a lot when my brother was sick.

During the time that my brother was sick, I also became extremely good at waiting. I'd have to wait to get out my brother's wheel chair, wait so he could take his medication, wait for him to eat. I also had to wait for Adam to get out of his treatments and had to wait to be heard.

One time I remember waiting for my brother to come out of one of his treatments. It was the first and last one I'd ever been to. I was usually at school when he went. I think his treatments were some form of radiation. While I sat outside the room, he had to get into a large tube-like tunnel that was very dark inside. I could see him on a small TV screen. He was crying and yelling for my mom to help him but she couldn't. She looked so helpless. She kept talking to him, telling him it would be okay. I was very scared and sat against the wall under a window that looked into the room where my brother was. I felt so alone and I cried for help. It felt like a night-mare, knowing my brother felt trapped in the tube. As I was crying I felt invisible. All of the nurses walked by and none of them even looked down. I almost tripped a couple of them on "accident". My mom was just around the corner, you'd think she would have

heard me. Eventually, she came out pushing my brother in his wheel chair. Nobody ever noticed my tears.

At times everyone was too busy for me and naturally I didn't understand. During all of my confusion, I'd created an imaginary friend named Sarah. Between 1987 and 1989, she was my hero.

Wondering Why

Because of the brain tumor, my brother wasn't able to walk or talk properly. I was only six, but I knew some people had something against kids in wheel chairs. Mom would take us for walks to the park and we'd have a great time. We'd get weird looks and you could tell people were talking about us. Sometimes people would point at us or make comments about my brother. I know that all of those people weren't talking about or pointing to me but I still hurt. Even though I was only six, I still felt pain.

I hated watching people make fun of him. It is wrong and I don't think you should have a grudge against people who are different than you. You should get to know people instead of labeling them. What counts is what's on the inside. Why can't others see that? I'm glad Adam didn't have time to understand that people didn't like him just because he was disabled.

A Day in June

On June 10, my mom stayed home with Adam while my dad and I went to my dance recital. Before I left, my parents made sure I said goodbye to my brother and gave him a goodbye kiss. When the recital was over, my dad told me since he was so proud of me he'd take me to get a sundae. We were driving through the town square when our neighbors pulled up next to us and told us we must get home because Adam had died. As soon as they told my dad I saw a tear trickle down his face. That was the first time I'd actually seen my dad cry. I was very confused. All I cared about was the fact that I wasn't getting my sundae. When we pulled into the driveway my mom came running out of the house in tears.

My imaginary friend, Sara, also died that night. I never really understood the full meaning of death until I started to grieve in the sixth grade. I felt a different kind of loneliness then. I still felt alone but also had an empty feeling inside, like a piece of me was missing. I'm still grieving over Adam's death. I've been to different grief groups and I've seen a counselor who specializes in grief. I don't know

how my family and I would have ever made it this far without the support we have gotten from many people and organizations. I've been through a lot so far in my life. I've dealt with happiness and sorrow. I have learned how to accept drastic changes in my life and also to respect myself for who I am. I have worked hard to become my own hero.

Jennilee Border wrote these reflections on her brother's death when she was fourteen and fifteen years old. She has spoken to child psychology classes and grief groups on the subject of child-hood grief. She is the daughter of Debbie and Steve Bonner. Adam Wagner Border died in 1989. Lovingly lifted from We Need Not Walk Alone, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends, Copyright 2001-2013.

For Grandparents...



Grief... Revisited

I recently learned of the tragic death of my dear friend Kay's 16 year old grandson due to a horrific car accident. Taylor was very close to his grandparents and by all accounts a fine young man who was loved by family and friends. He was also an only child. My heart is broken for the parents of this young man. My 22 year old daughter, Brandy, died in a car accident too, and Kay had been a key member of my support group during the first year afterwards. I immediately was transported back to that difficult time seven years ago when my daughter died.

I offered to speak to Kay's daughter and son-in-law when and if they are ready. I do not pretend to have figured things out regarding this sad journey bereaved parents experience; but if I could share my "wisdom" with them, these are some of my thoughts:

In a heartbeat, your lives have just changed forever. There will always be a line of demarcation between the "before" times you shared with your son and the "after" times when you hold him in your memory.

Although you do not ever get over the loss of a beloved child, there is a blurring of the lines around your grief that happens over a period of time.

Somehow you will find a way to go on with your lives, but they will be very different lives than you expected. There always will be a "Taylor hole" in your hearts.

There is help out there. I encourage you to do two things as soon as you can: join a

Compassionate Friends group and, if you are so inclined, seek out a bereavement group through your religious tradition. I recommend Compassionate Friends since my cohorts in this group are the only people who truly "get it" about the depth and intensity of your loss. Other people in your life, such as friends and family, will try to get it, but it is impossible to truly relate to this type of grief if you have not experienced it. Actively participating in a bereavement group such as GriefShare, which is offered by a large number of churches of all denominations, also has helped me on my journey.

Finally, for married couples, I advise you to be kind to yourselves and each other during this difficult time. I believe Moms and Dads tend to grieve very differently and often cannot understand the other person's perspective. You need each other but you also need other people to share your profound grief. The Compassionate Friends may just be the place that you will find these other people!

Despite all of the mental confusion you are experiencing, one thing I am certain of: love doesn't die and the love you had for your child and he for you is still out there somewhere. It may be difficult to see now in the early days of your grief, but I hope it will become apparent as time goes on.
-- Mary Summers TCF Eastside WA TCF

From Our Members...



Why do certain places have meaning?

Is it because once we sat on a bench and had a good laugh, or sat on a chair and shared an ice cream,

or laid on the lawn and looked up the night sky and counted the stars.

All of the places and all of the memories bring you back to me if only for a moment.

Thank you for walking with me,
it seemed such a short time,

though you have left me with a lifetime of memories, brought back, by certain places.

—Nancy Fisher, TCF South Bay, L.A., CA

We welcome and encourage you to submit contributions you found meaningful to you in your grief. We prefer your original poems and thoughts, but we can also print other material if proper credit is given to the author. Please take the time to submit a poem or article you found helpful.

News from the National Office... The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Dallas, Texas, will be the site of the 38th TCF National Conference on July 10-12, 2015. "Hope Shines Bright ... Deep in the Heart" is the theme of next year's event, which promises more of this year's great national Conference experience. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas. For

TCF Is On Facebook Please visit and help promote The Compassionate Friends National Organization's new Facebook page by becoming a fan. You can get there by clicking on the link from TCF's national website home page at www.compassionatefriends.org. Or, you can log into Facebook and search for The Compassionate Friends/USA. In addition to the social support aspect, The Compassionate Friends/USA Facebook page will have information about upcoming events.

Our Website... We are now creating a new website for our chapter. Joe Zelik will be hosting the website and updating it with the current newsletter and chapter information. Due to the rising costs of printing and postage, we are asking everyone to get the newsletter online if possible. We will be sending out an update form soon asking for your e-mail address so we can send reminders that the newest issue of the newsletter is online.

The National Office of TCF has an ongoing support group for parents and siblings online. For a complete schedule and to register for Online Support, visit <http://compassionatefriends.org> and follow the directions to register.

Healing the Grieving Heart... Featuring experts who discuss the many aspects of grief, with a main focus on the death of a child and its effects on the family. "Healing the Grieving Heart" can be heard on the Web live at www.health.voiceamerica.com.

Welcome New Members ... We welcome our new members to our chapter of TCF. We're sorry you have a need to be with us, but we hope you feel you have found a safe place to share your grief and will return. It often takes a few meetings to feel at ease in a group setting. Please try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is for you. Each meeting is different, and the next one might be the one that really helps.

We encourage you to take advantage of our resources. We have a well stocked library of grief materials, a phone friend committee that welcomes

calls at any time, and a members' directory to call another parent you have met at the meetings.

Thank You ... Thank you to all those who donate to our meeting basket or send donations to our chapter. Since there are no fees or dues to belong to TCF, your donations keep us functioning, and we appreciate your help.



Birthday Tributes... During your child's birthday month, you may place a picture and either a short personal message, poem, or story about your child in the newsletter. (Less than 200 words, please.) Do not cut your picture. We will block off unused areas. If it is a group photo, identify the person to be cropped. This tribute is an opportunity to tell a short story about your child, so we will be able to know them better. Photos must have identification on the back. Enclose a SASE in order for photos to be returned by mail. (Please do not send your only picture.)

Tributes must be in by the 1st of the month preceding your child's birthday month or at the prior meeting. (Example: Feb. 1 for March birthdays). Otherwise they will appear if space permits or in the following month's issue.



Phone Friends ... Sometimes you want or need to talk about the life and death of your child with someone that understands and can share your pain. The following friends are on the telephone committee, and are available to talk when ever you need someone who understands.

- Cheryl Stephens.....(323) 855-2630
- Kitty Edler.....(310) 541-8221
- Karen Merickel.....(310) 375-2498
- Richard Leach (grandchild).....(310) 833-5213

SIBLING PHONE FRIENDS

- Kristy Mueller..... (310) 373-9977

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

- Olivia Garcia.....(818) 212-3506

Memory Book... Our chapter has an ongoing Memory Book. Each child is given a page in the book. Pictures, poems, or a tribute you choose that will help us to remember your child can be included. Feel free to add your picture to the Memory Book at any of our meetings. This is one way we can meet and remember the new member's children.

Library Information... At each meeting we have a library table. It is on the honor system. You may borrow a book and can bring it back at the next meeting. Many of you have books you got when you were newly bereaved and may no longer need.

Perhaps you would like to donate books on grief that you found helpful. If you wish to donate a book to our library, please let the librarian know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

Newsletter... For those of you who are receiving the newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us that you might find it helpful. We warmly invite you to attend one of our meetings. Please let us know if you know of someone who could benefit from our newsletter which is sent free to bereaved parents. We do ask that professionals, friends, and family members contribute a donation to help offset the costs involved. If any information needs to be changed, or if you would like your child included in the "Our Children Remembered" section, please contact the editor at (310) 530-3214.

We are asking everyone to convert to the online newsletter in order to cut printing and postage costs. Please return the updated renewal form that you will be receiving in the mail next week ASAP.

Thanks, TCF So. Bay/LA



Additional Grief Support

Bereavement Organizations and Resources:

TCF National Newsletter: For all bereaved parents and siblings. Published quarterly; subscription fee. Contact TCF Inc., P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696 (630) 990-0010

FAMILY & FRIENDS OF MURDER VICTIMS: Rose Madsen, (909) 798-4803 Newsletter and support group, e-mail Roseydoll@aol.com

ALIVE ALONE: For parents who have lost their only child, or all their children. 1112 Champaign Dr., Van Wert, OH 45891 Newsletter available.

www.Alivealone.org

SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE: Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Sam & Lois Bloom (310) 377-8857

OUR HOUSE/BEREAVEMENT HOUSE: 1950 Sawtelle Blvd., Suite 255, L.A., CA (310) 475-0299

PATHWAYS HOSPICE: Bereavement support and sibling group. Bill Hoy (562) 531-3031

NEW HOPE GRIEF SUPPORT COMMUNITY: Grief support and education groups for adults and children. Susan K. Beeney, P.O. Box 8057, Long Beach, CA 90808, (562) 429-0075

PROVIDENCE TRINITY CARE HOSPICE AND THE GATHERING PLACE: Various bereavement support groups including support for loss of a child, support group for children 5-8, 9-12, and teens. Call Patty Ellis (310) 546-6407—new number

Torrance Memorial Bereavement Services:

(310) 325-9110 Weekly grief support.

THE LAZARUS CIRCLE: Monthly grief support. Meets third Thurs of each month, 6-7:15 at First Lutheran Church, 2900 W. Carson St. Torrance

SHARE Pregnancy & Infant Loss: Contact: Megan Heddlesten (800) 821-6819

Walk With Sally: Cancer loss bereavement & art therapy for children- Monica Fyfe (310) 378-5843

Other Grief Support Websites...

agast.org (for grandparents)	groww.com
goodgriefresources.com	childloss.com
beyondindogp.com	griefwatch.dom
angelmoms.com	babysteps.com
healingafterloss.org	webhealing.com
survivorsofsuicide.com	opentohope.com
taps.org (military death)	alivealone.org
bereavedparentsusa.org	save.org
pomc.com (families of murder victims)	
grasphelp.org (substance abuse deaths)	

LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS

Los Angeles: (310) 474-3407 1st Thurs.

Orange Coast/Irvine: (949) 552-2800 1st Wed.

Orange Co./Anaheim: (562) 943-2269

Pomona/San Gabriel: (626) 919-7206

Redlands: (800) 717-0373 3rd Tues.

Riverside-Inland Empire: (909) 683-4160

South Los Angeles: (323) 546-9755 last Tue

Ventura Co. TCF: (805)981-1573 1&3 Thurs.

Verdugo Hills: (818) 957-0254 4th Thurs.

San Fernando Valley: (818) 788-9701 2nd Mon.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Staples for their help in printing our newsletters each month and to

The Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

CHAPTER OFFICERS:

CHAPTER LEADERS: Linda Zelik
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines
PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks
TREASURER: Ken Konopasek
CARDS: Crystal Henning
WEBSITE: Joe Zelik



STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Kristy Mueller	Linda Zelik
Lori & Dudley Gray	Cheryl Stephens
Cheryl & Bill Matasso	Lynn Vines
Nancy & Elliott Fisher	Ken Konopasek
Kitty Edler	Crystal Henning
Susan Kass	

DONATIONS TO THE SOUTH BAY/L.A. CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

My year-end donation is made in loving memory of Vance C. Valdez, 10/1990 - 3/2012 and his father Carlos Valdez, 1/1961 - 1/2012.

Forever in our hearts, Maria & Sarah Valdez

In loving memory of my son Mark Edler, 11/1973 - 1/1992 and my husband, Rich Edler, 11/1943 - 2/2002.

From Kitty Edler

In loving memory of Chad Michael Husinga, 10/1974 - 12/1995. Our year-end donation is made in loving memory of our son, Chad Michael Husinga.

Alan & Melinda Husinga

In loving memory of our son, Kevin R. Zelik, 11/1985 - 6/2010.

Joe & Linda Zelik

In loving memory of Brandon Armstrong, July 1995 - July 1995 and Dominique Oliver, May 1985 - March 2002. Not a day goes by where I don't think of you or miss you. You two are the guiding force that makes me want to live, not just exist...

Love, Mom

Thanks to everyone for a beautiful candle lighting ceremony.

Love, Marlene & Steve Young

With sincere gratitude and deep appreciation, we acknowledge the generosity of the previous individuals and companies. Your tax deductible donation, given, in memory of your loved one enables us to reach bereaved parents with telephone calls and information, and they also help defray newsletter and mailing costs. Please help us reach out to others in this difficult time. Indicate any special tribute you wish printed in our newsletter.

When making a donation, please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. Chpt.

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends So Bay/ L.A. Chapter
P.O. Box 11171
Torrance, CA 90510-1171

In loving memory of _____

Birth date _____ Death date _____ Sent From _____

Tribute _____

To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month or it will appear in the following issue.

The Compassionate Friends
South Bay/L.A., CA Chapter
P.O. Box 11171
Torrance, CA 90510-1171

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February

Let this cool and gentle
month of the heart
remind you not only
of lost treasures,
but also of riches (past and present)
In your life.
-Sascha

February 2015

Time Sensitive Material, Please Deliver Promptly



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain,
just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.
We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.
We are young, and we are old.

Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh
and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength,
while some of us are struggling to find answers.

Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression,
while others radiate an inner peace.

But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,
it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other
our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love
to share the pain as well as the joy,
share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts,
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.
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