



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

MAY 2015 ISSUE

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OUR NEXT MEETING

**will be May 6th, first Wednesday
of the month at 7:00 P.M.**

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

LOCATION:

**The Neighborhood Church
415 Paseo Del Mar
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274
(South of Torrance Beach)**

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.

The May 6th meeting will start with "Handling Special Days".

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

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The May 6th topic will start with "Handeling Special Days." This month we will be discussing the ways we handle "Special Days" after the death of a child. Mother's Day and Father's Day are just around the corner. Birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, graduations ... they all can trigger unexpectedly strong reactions, or leave you feeling so empty inside, that you wonder if you will ever enjoy anything again. By thinking about your reactions ahead of time, and planning for these special days, you can take some of the sting away. Join us as we explore ways other parents have managed to get through these painful "firsts".

Perhaps you are a few years down the road in your grief, and you have found new ways to celebrate and let some joy back into your life. We welcome your input. By sharing ideas or just by listening, we gain an understanding that we can find ways to handle special days.

Suggestions for Coping with Your Child's Days

The date is getting closer, your nerves are on edge. You become more apprehensive as the day gets closer. You wonder ... The anniversary of your child's death and your child's birthday, how will you deal with them? I repeatedly hear parents ask, "How do you get through these painful days?" Here are some practical suggestions gathered from reading and listening to other bereaved parents:

You won't forget, but distractions can help from focusing on it. Sometimes the anticipation of how awful the day will be adds to the torture. Plan something away from home, volunteer, go on an outing, or plan a visit to the cemetery. Knowing **how** you will spend the day helps.

Seek out special friends who will let you share your memories and distress, who will permit you to cry without making you feel guilty (often they will join you).

Give or do something in your child's memory. Your physical act of kindness will lift your spirits. Plant a tree or special garden in memory of your child.

Devoting part of the day to reminiscing over family pictures is one way to let the family have time to remember together.

Balloon liftoffs are a way to write a message to your child. Young siblings often appreciate sending a message to their brother or sister.

One family chose to visit special places their

daughter had been to. From the hospital their child was born in, to the churches, schools, and organizations she attended, they toured them all. The day was devoted to the wonderful memories their daughter left them with.

Talk to your child. Saying aloud how much you love your child and that you always will, reinforces the tie that will never be broken.

If you refuse to let the joyous day of your child's birth become tarnished with the pain of losing him, you will have one less day to dread.

If you need the safety of your own home, take the day and set it aside for grieving. Cry, scream, hit a pillow; just get the helplessness out.

Planned grieving seems to be shorter and easier to deal with. Don't let the anticipation haunt you. You have already dealt with the initial loss. Try not to dwell with the painful memory of when or how your child died, when you can focus on the many wonderful memories of your child's worth.

--Lynn Vines, TCF South Bay/L.A., CA



What Does May Bring?

First May brings MOTHER'S DAY- another painful holiday. Commercials are everywhere. I can't check my e-mail without being bombarded with ads for gifts and cards for Mother's Day.

Some churches honor the oldest mother, the youngest mother, and the mother with the most children present. Then there are the flowers - wear a red flower if your mother is living and a white one if your mother has died (I keep hearing carnations, but it was always roses when I was a child). Some years ago some bereaved mothers started wearing a yellow flower, either alone or with the traditional color honoring their mother.

It helped me to know the origin of Mother's Day. After Anna Jarvis' mother died, May 9, 1905, Anna decided a Sunday in May should be set aside to *honor her* mother and all *mothers*. Anna felt her mother deserved recognition because, although her life was filled with sorrow, she lived selflessly and showed kindness and generosity towards others.

Anna was one of four surviving siblings; seven others died in early childhood and Anna's mother mourned those seven children throughout her life.

Anna never married (and never had a child of her own). Her work to establish a day to honor her mother persuaded President Woodrow Wilson to proclaim the second Sunday in May as a national holiday honoring all mothers.

Finally, newly bereaved mothers commonly have some questions that are acute on this day. For those who have no surviving children, so far as I am concerned, you are still a mother. For the rest of you, each one has to decide how to answer the question of "How many children do you have?" I am still the mother of three children, although one is no longer on earth with me.

I hope each of you find some peace on this Mother's Day and that knowing it specifically honored a bereaved mother will make each succeeding one a little easier.

May 28th is MEMORIAL DAY, established to honor those who died in the military defending our nation, but has become a time of general remembrance. I pass one small cemetery in southwest Arkansas fairly frequently and always see that fresh white stones have been spread before Memorial Day. Every grave appears to have a new flower arrangement. As a child, my parents would take me with them but I had never known any of the relatives whose graves we visited. Perhaps as we get older, we think that someday we will do this for our parents or grandparents, but never our children.

My son was cremated and I don't have a grave to visit, but this holiday has far more impact on me now.

May also brings GRADUATIONS. Whether from kindergarten, grade school, high school or college, this is a rite of passage that some of our children never reached. If your child was close to the graduation, the school may recognize him or her in some way. Or another child (sibling, cousin, friend) may be graduating, and receiving their announcement may bring a special ache.

We hope you all plan ahead and discuss what you're feeling with family members and caring friends so that you can get through these events with a minimum of pain.

--Tracy Rhein, Bereaved Parents of the USA, North Little Rock, AR

Anticipating Mother's Day



Before we lost our children to death, Mother's Day was a happy time. We each reflect back on Mother's Days past.....gifts, cards, special memories and one day set aside to acknowledge the best in our relationship with our treasured children. With the death of our child, this dynamic was forever transfigured. Now, instead of looking forward to this day, we grasp at anything that will keep our minds away from it. Yet the anxiety still

creeps into our minds and hearts; our stomachs churn and tears fill our eyes at the most inopportune moments.

The dreadful countdown begins in late April and lasts for nearly three weeks. This is the eighth Mother's Day I have endured since the death of my son. Each year I have the same, desperate anxiety, yet each year the day is a bit easier to handle. Each year the anticipation is far worse than the day itself.... "borrowing trouble" as my dad would say. Since my son is my only child, I do not have the comfort of other children nor do I have the need to put on a happy face. Instead, I am able to choose what I will do without feeling the burden of guilt. While my first Mother's Day was filled with tears, subsequent Mother's Days have been more subdued.

The choice to embrace or ignore Mother's Day is yours alone. Many bereaved mothers adopt a new perspective which honors their child and still gives normalcy to their family. Mother's Day is bittersweet for us. The pain is part of the love that we will feel for our children for eternity. We wouldn't trade one treasured moment for a cosmic reduction of our pain.

Some of us plan the day carefully. Some of us just "go with the flow." Some of us weep; some of us work. Some of us read, some of us revel in this special moment set aside just for mothers. Each of us makes a choice that is based on our own truth.

The day itself is not nearly as overwhelming as the buildup of anxiety and sadness which precedes it. I have found this to be true of all holidays, birthdays, death anniversaries and special occasions. I am trying to live in the moment. When the moment of Mother's Day happens, I will decide what I should do. I refuse to let others pressure me. I refuse to become maudlin over greeting card commercials and heart-grabbing point-of-purchase marketing efforts. I will not be manipulated by the agenda of others.

But on Mother's Day, as on each day of the year, I will think of my son, remembering the child he was and the man he became. I will honor his life by doing the best I can with what is left of my life. I will remain in the moment and treasure my memories. And for this mother, that is enough.
--Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF/Katy, TX, in memory of her son, Todd Mennen

The Wake-up Call: Her Best Friend's Wedding



The bride (my daughter's best friend) was radiant; the groom nervous but excited; the flower girl and ring bearer adorable; the parents' shedding joyful tears; the weather near perfect...by all appearances, it looked like the ideal wedding; all was progressing smoothly, things were coming together as planned.

Not a thing looked out of place...to most everyone present; that is, to everyone but me, the mother of a forever 15-year-old brunette with a dazzling, braces-laden smile. I tried desperately to hide my quivering lip, ignore the lump in my throat and knot in my stomach, yet lost that battle to choking sobs and a flood of tears that streamed down my face relentlessly. I watched the bridesmaids as they proceeded down the aisle, longing to see the face of my daughter, Nina, who should have been physically present, if her life were not cut short by a drunk driver. Instead, she was relegated to a small mention at the back of the program along with the couple's grandparents: "Here with us in spirit..."

I weathered the reception until it came time for the wedding party to take to the dance floor. They all had a particular dance and a song that apparently was their group of friend's "special thing". They participated in this dance and song with obvious delight. As I watched, I realized that this was something Nina, who had died eight years earlier, had never been a part of – it was as if a hand had reached down and plucked her out of the loop. At that very moment I have never felt so profoundly Nina's nonexistence in the lives of her high school friends.

The few years following Nina's death, her friends (while they were still high-school students) were still closely connected to her. However, since then they have graduated from college, now many have married or are on the career track. Some even have children of their own. A lot of time and distance and events had taken place in that time frame. And all of it without Nina's physical presence; to them now a distant memory. After a night of insomnia and much self-analysis, I came to some conclusions that I hope will help those of you who may find yourself in a similar situation someday.

The wedding really became a wake-up call for me; a lot of realizations became clear. Though other bereaved parents seemed to understand that this

would be the outcome and had forewarned me, I was blind to it. They seemed to grasp the inevitable; that though Nina was paramount in my thoughts, no one else could possibly be able to think of her with the same magnitude as I did. In my desperation that she not be forgotten, I seemed to delude myself into believing that should be the case for everyone.

For bereaved parents, one of our greatest fears is that our children will be forgotten. But after this wedding and the opinions voiced by others who know, I think this needs to be amended. That though we, as their parents, remember our children in much more visible and personal ways, (such as memorial gardens, scholarships, remembrance services, balloon releases, photo buttons and pictures here, there and everywhere, and speak of them freely, with laughter and tears), that others may do their remembering in much more subtle and private ways. That though we do not always see it outwardly, as we might prefer, they remember internally, by carrying our loved ones' memory more quietly in their hearts.

Life marches on. We are glad (and maybe even a little envious) that our children's friends are happy in love or successful and would want nothing else for them. But when all is said and done, even with our most valiant efforts at managing the milestones that our children may not have been able to experience, like graduations, marriages, grandchildren, and more--all of those major happenings we will never experience with our children--no matter the amount of time that goes by, their absence hurts. We love them and always will. How could it not be painful?

I don't write this to sadden anyone; I tell you of my experience so that if this happens to you somewhere in your grief journey you might be able to see it in a different light. I know that I will try to remember this when I don't hear from her friends for a long time (or maybe not at all).

But when I go to her grave site and see a bouquet of her favorite flowers (daisies) I know were left by her best friend, or a note written in the journal I leave there written by a classmate that I never even met, that they haven't forgotten; that Nina had an impact on their lives and that they continue to and always will remember...but in their own way.

With gentle thoughts, Cathy Seehuetter
TCF St. Paul, MN

Suggestions from the St. Paul editor on
Attending Weddings (Or Not) When You Are

Bereaved

- Plan an "escape route". Sit where you can get out of the church or reception without too much fuss. If you can, sit in the back row close to the exit of the sanctuary. Do this so that if you find that you just can't sit there for even one more minute without fleeing and/or screaming, you have a way to leave as easily as you can.

- Use the "5 Minute Rule". Tell yourself that you will not make a decision about whether to go to the event or not until 5 minutes before it is time to leave. That however you feel at that specified time frame will determine if you feel you are able to or not handle being at the wedding or reception. You can even put that on the RSVP. Hopefully, they will be okay with that but, if not, please be good to yourself and stick with what you feel will be best for you. A true friend will understand. And only you know what is best for you.

****The above suggestions can be used for more than just weddings, but for other happenings like graduations, holiday celebrations, or any event that may be difficult to be present at since your child, grandchild, or sibling died.*



It's Happening Again

It's happening again. Right outside my front door, under an inch of leftover snow, a daffodil is pushing its way into the sunlight. The bare places in my lawn are thawed and messy, and the steady drip from the roof lulls us to sleep. Yesterday, I strolled the thirty feet to my mailbox without a jacket. Spring has reappeared.

Spring is a time for optimism. Suddenly living seems easier, happier, and less stressful. Depression lifts and a feeling of hope fills the air. We shed our winter blues and replace our frowns and cantankerous attitudes with smiles and loving kindness. We visit with our neighbors over fences, clean up the barbecues, and start leafing through seed catalogues. Life is good... but not invariably and not for everyone.

I remember a spring that bore no resemblance to what I have just described. It was the spring of 1997, the first spring after my son's death. By the time the first warm day arrived that year, the numbness of Jason's death had disappeared and I had entered what I call the "pit of grief." Simply typing this paragraph takes me back in time and once again, I am there...

...and it is cold and dark. I am alone, curled up in a corner of this make-believe place where only my

pain exists. The sorrow is my only link to him, my only awareness, the only thing that matters. If I allow myself to move away from it, I may lose him again. I cannot do that. I cannot take that chance. And so I hold it. I cradle the pain in my arms, shielding it from those who want to take it from me, and I weep...

However, spring arrives without invitations and it calls on everyone. It skips in like a long awaited guest and expects to be welcomed with open arms. I recall what seemed like the entire world growing jovial and lighthearted, which merely pushed me to tunnel further into my corner and the sanctuary of my grief. I longed for the reappearance of winter because it had kept the "ones who do not know" away from my door. I remember feeling betrayed. How could the earth suddenly wake up and come alive when my son had no opportunity to do so?

It's happening again. Spring is once again knocking on our doors. Each of you know, love, or can befriend someone who is precisely where I was. Someone who is hurting and building walls around his or her heart to keep you, and the entire world, out. You are unfamiliar with the grief process and are most likely very uncomfortable with just winging it when it comes to the subject of death. Therefore, I am going to give you a few suggestions to ease your apprehension. If you can coax just one bereaved person out of the pit for a few hours this spring, you will have accomplished more than many people do in a lifetime.

GET HIS ATTENTION. Take some fresh doughnuts and flowering plants to his house. When he wearily opens the door a couple of inches and peers out, quickly stick your foot in the door. Tell him, "I really need coffee to go with these goodies, and will you show me a good place to plant these flowers for Jim?"

SAY HER NAME. While you're digging and planting those flowers, talk about something you remember about the deceased. If you didn't know him, ask questions. Get to know him. Use his name, as often as you can until both of you feel comfortable.

GIVE HIM THINGS. Take him inspiring books, candles for when he needs a connection, photo albums for his loved one's pictures, and journals he can write in at 3:00 a.m.

INVITE HER TO BREAKFAST. It may be her only reason to get out of bed. The bereaved use sleep as a shelter from the world.

TAKE HIM TO A DOCTOR IF HE IS A DANGER TO HIMSELF OR OTHERS. Grief is depression. If it is severe enough, medication may alleviate some of the pain until he is strong enough to face it head on. Offer to go to a counseling session or a grief support group with him.

CALL HER OFTEN. Don't just call once a month, call once a day. Always ask how she is feeling, what can you do, & LISTEN.

SEND A CARD ON SPECIAL DAYS. Special days are the deceased's birthday, death date, all holidays, anniversaries, and special family events such as weddings, confirmations, etc. Always write something like "Thinking of you and know you must be missing John."

ENCOURAGE LAUGHTER AND REMEMBER THE POWER OF TOUCH. It is healing.

ALLOW HIM TO SHARE HIS SPIRITUAL BELIEFS OR LACK THEREOF. Be open and willing to listen to anything he may be experiencing, feeling, or searching for. Your job is not to judge, but to support.

HAVE NO EXPECTATIONS for the time she spends grieving. It is individual, nothing is "normal," and if she doesn't feel it now, grief waits. Just go with the flow. Stay with her and walk at her pace.

Once again, spring is fast approaching. You are feeling optimistic and excited about the upcoming season and all of the things you can accomplish as everything comes alive again. The winter has been long and hard; you are ready for a new beginning. I understand. I now share your anticipation. My corner of the pit has been occupied by many since my stay there, and I have no intention of revisiting it. But there are many who have just descended and are burrowing in, seeking solitude. Although I firmly believe being there is a necessary task in getting to the other side of grief, I also believe we must come out occasionally for fresh air and sunshine. It is up to you, and to me, to go into his world and reach out for his hand. Once he's taken hold, his chance of successfully climbing out is greatly increased. So go on, go buy those doughnuts - someone is waiting just for you.

--Sandy Goodman is the author of *Love Never Dies: A Mother's Journey from Loss to Love* (Jodere Group, 2002).

*You gave them the gift of life
and they gave you the gift of love in return.
Nothing can deny that gift exchange.
TCF, Portland, OR by Sascha*



Howard, "My Teacher"

My son Howard became my teacher as soon as I found out I was to be a mother. He taught me to change my life in order to take care of myself both mentally and physically so that we both were in the best of health when we first met.

On that day, February 10, 1962, he started teaching me how to become a responsible parent. Through Howard I learned how to take care of a human that was totally dependent on me. He taught me to love unconditionally, to put his needs before mine, and to thank God for this child everyday he was in my life. He taught me patience and understanding. Howard taught me how to be proud of his every accomplishments, to accept him as he was and respect him as a man. He taught me to be strong when I needed strength at the hardest time of my life. That day was August 11, 1997, the day he was called home to a place where there was no more fear or pain. Aids had lost. My son won his last battle. He left this virus in a body that would not tolerate it any longer.

My child was free and taught me one last thing. My love for him was so great that I allowed him the freedom he needed to let us go and have the peace he longed for. What a great teacher Howard was. I learned so much from this soul on earth.

Good-bye my love, I miss you so much and always will.

--Marie Mercer, Conyers, GA

Suicide

What is the state of mind of someone thinking of suicide?

A small number of suicides are psychotic (out of touch with reality), whose thinking may be deluded. The majority of people who kill themselves are not psychotic, but are so focused on their terrible emotional pain that their minds see in a kind of "tunnel vision." They feel absolutely hopeless and are unable to think of alternatives or how their families may feel. Many think their families will be better off without them.

Will loving and understanding someone prevent them from killing themselves?

No. Being loved and understood does not prevent people from dying from cancer or heart

attacks, and love and understanding by themselves cannot save anyone from suicide. A suicidal state of mind causes thinking to be very narrow. Suicidal people are so focused on their emotional pain that they are unable to think of their loved ones, nor can they appreciate all the good things in their lives.

--These excerpts are from the book *Suicide: Questions and Answers* by Adina Wrobelksi



For Collin

In her book, *Coming Back-Rebuilding Lives After Crisis and Loss*, Ann Kaiser Steam tells many stories we can all relate to. One such story concerns Naomi Shelton, the mother of two children, one of whom was stillborn. On the day after the stillbirth of her son, she wrote a poem entitled "For Collin".

For Collin

This Mother's Day I have two children.
One I have never heard cry, nor bathed, nor nursed,
nor rocked to sleep.

I have never comforted him, nor sung to him.
The most I could do was carry him inside me,
warm and protected.

'Till his need for even that was gone.
And I could give birth to his still little body
In the bed where he was conceived,
Into the arms of those who love him.

Later on, a beautiful healthy baby girl was born to Naomi. That time, she felt compelled to write about Collin again:

The family portrait will always be incomplete.

There's a little ghost child who
walks among our hearts.

He never came to live with us,
but claims our love the same as if he had.

We hear his baby laughter faintly and wonder who
he would have been.

We have a blurred and hazy image of his face, and
wonder how he would have looked.

We have brief records of his presence in our lives,
but no picture of the way
it should have been.

Sometime later, Naomi and her husband visited the cemetery with their older daughter and their toddler. It was the first time their youngest child had seen Collin's grave. After this incident, Naomi wrote another poem:

Jessica, you are here with us because he is not
How can I make sense of that fact?
Because I want you both!

To have to give you up to have him back
would be impossible.

Because I want you both!

I want you both here with me.

To hold and care for, to comfort and caress.

Jessica, I watch you run through the grass.

You pat his stone and babble in delight,
not understanding how much I want you both.

--Naomi Shelton

Newly Bereaved ...

A Mother's Hope

When our son died, I hoped it was a mistake. It was not. I hoped it was a dream. It was not. Before my son died, I hoped for enough time in that day to clean my house, provide my family with clean laundry, taxi service and healthy meals. I loved dinner time with my family. After my son died, I did not know what day it was. Cleaning our home or doing laundry were things I no longer thought of. I did not cook, I did not shop for food, I did not eat.

I hoped he would come back. He did not. I hoped I would gain understanding. I did not. I could not understand how I could wake up on a perfectly normal morning and my son was gone from his room, gone from our home and gone from our lives. I hoped for acceptance. I found none. I hoped those around me would understand me. They did not. How could my beautiful, vibrant, healthy son be gone?

I hoped for peace. I had none. I hoped for sleep. I had none. I hoped for courage to resume my daily life. My life was out of my control. The only thing I was sure of in the early days of my grief was that I knew our life would never be the same again. I hoped this empty feeling would go away. It did not. I hoped that some day my family would be normal again. We were not. I hoped I could stop looking for our son in every young man I saw that was tall, slim and had sandy colored curly hair. I could not. I hoped I could become the parent to my surviving children that I knew they deserved. I could not. I knew how much they were hurting but I could not help myself and I could not help my children. My younger son needed my comfort. My daughter, expecting her own child, needed my comfort. I was their mother but there was no comfort in me to give. I hoped I could be a wife to my husband. I could not.

I never hoped for laughter. How could I laugh when my son was dead. I hoped the feelings that consumed my every waking moment would somehow change so I did not feel as though I could never again be in a public place without crying. At 6 months after my son died, I hoped for a reprieve. I no longer could stand the pain and I saw my doctor. I knew he must have an answer to my question, "How long will I feel like this?" He did not.

I had begun attending Bereaved Parents meetings and hardly spoke a word at the first meeting. I could not stop talking at my second meeting. I had found the glimmer of hope that I had been searching for. I hoped this all consuming grief would never again happen to my family. But it did! When my daughter-in-law was six months pregnant, my son told me their baby had died. How I grieved for my son. I knew what he was feeling. I hoped to be able to help him and his wife. I could not.

I then realized that all of the things I had hoped for had begun to come about but had taken a lot of time. I hoped my son and his wife could hold on long enough for time to help and heal. They have. When my son died, I never hoped for joy. I could not imagine joy as part of our lives ever again. But there is joy. When my son was a baby, a toddler, a young child, a teenager and young man, I watched over him. I thought I would watch over him for my entire life. But I was wrong. I hope with all my heart that he is watching over me.

I now have the understanding I hoped for. I have peace. I finally sleep. I find joy every time I see a tall, slim young man with sandy colored curly hair. I do not cry as often. So there is hope. We all have a future; we have memories. No matter how long our children were part of our lives, we have memories. The first time I realized that joy would one day be part of my life was the day I remembered a trick my son played on his little brother. He gave him a glass of buttermilk instead of regular milk and pretended it was a mistake. We have laughed so many times about this little story. I can still see the twinkle in his eye. I can hear my son and daughter as he made up names for her to tease her. Oh, how he loved to laugh. I remember the look on his face when I discovered the snake he put in my garden terrarium. I know the joy I feel every time I think of my son, share a memory with someone, or look at pictures of him will never change.

My hope as a Mother is that we all will find peace and cherish the joy our children have brought to our lives.

--Betty Lineberger BPUSA of Marion County FL

For Friends and Family...



The following was taken from Ann Lander's column in the Daily News February 12, 2000 *Keep Memories Alive by Talking About Loved One*

Dear Ann Landers: A while back, my 18-year-old son was killed in a car accident. I was devastated, and desperately needed to talk about it. Several women in our social group used the occasion of my son's death to tell me about THEIR tragic losses when they visited me. I did not want to hear about their losses. I wanted comfort for my own. When I tried to talk about my precious son, I was met by embarrassed silence. I never felt so alone in my life.

Ann, when someone loses a loved one, it is important to keep that person's memory alive. Talking about him or her is one way to do that. It does not hurt me to have someone mention my son or talk about the adventures he had with his friends, the pranks he pulled in school, or the cute things he did as a child. What hurts is NOT hearing his name. I do not want him to be forgotten.

A few days ago, I came across this 1993 column of yours. I saved it, because it tells my story so perfectly. Please run it again, Ann.

--Olive in Rio Vista, Calif

Dear Olive: Thank you for letting me know that column had special meaning for you. I'm sure you are not alone. Here it is, reprinted with permission of Bereavement Publishing Colorado Springs, CO.

The Elephant in the Room

There's an elephant in the room
It is large and squatting,
so it is hard to get around it.
Yet, we squeeze by with,
"How are you?" and "I'm fine."



And a thousand other forms of trivial chatter.

We talk about the weather.

We talk about work.

We talk about everything else - except the elephant in the room.

We all know it is there.

We are thinking about the elephant as we talk.

It is constantly on our minds

For you see, it is a very big elephant.

But we do not talk about the elephant in the room.

Oh, please, say her name.

Oh, please, say "Barbara" again.

Oh, please let's talk about the elephant in the room.
 For if we talk about her death,
 Perhaps we can talk about her life.
 Can I say "Barbara" and not have you look away?
 For if I cannot, you are leaving me
 Alone - in a room - With an elephant.
 -- Terry Kettering.

Welcome...



You Said

You said, "I can never live without him."
 I said, "You will find a way."
 You said, "This pain will break me."
 I said, "Allow it, it will lessen."
 You said, "No one knows how I feel."
 I said, "You are very right."
 You said, "I will never heal."
 I said, "You will."
 You said, "Tell me how."
 I said, "I don't know your way, but I will come with you."
 You said, "Tell me when."
 I said, "I don't know, but I'll be there."
 You said, "Why did this happen?"
 I said, "Some questions have no answers."
 You said, "I want to die."
 I said, "I understand."
 You said, "I have to live."
 I said, "I know."

--By Sandra B. Fink, Towson, Maryland

Editor's note: So many of these same comments are mentioned at our meetings. While it's true no one can completely understand what you are going through, other bereaved parents at the meetings come pretty close. Having experienced many of the same feelings, we can offer advice and give you the encouragement and support you need while you come to terms with the loss of your child. Each meeting is different and membership changes from meeting to meeting. Therefore, we encourage you to try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is right for you.

Helpful Hint...



Missing and Valuing on Mother's Day

Mother's Day is a special day, and special days are hard after the death of a child. It is a normal and natural thing for either parent for the first few years after the death to zero in on who is missing, rather than who is left ... and I was no different. Fortunately, for me, not long after the Atlanta

Chapter formed, a local psychiatrist, Dr. Victor Gonzales, spoke one evening shortly before Mother's Day. He told of his parents' loss of their first two children. His story of how his life has been influenced and molded by his mother's reaction touched me. He spoke of how he and his siblings who came later were forever denied his mother's happiness and joy. She was unable to value what she had left as much as what she had lost.

Dr. Gonzales said he spent a great deal of his childhood trying to make his mother happy, always failing, and always feeling there must be something lacking in him that caused him to fail. The picture in my mind of him, and his siblings, always trying and always failing, though no fault of their own, made a great impact on me. I determined from that day forward that my daughter would not have to lament later in life that she had been denied my happiness and joy because her brother had died.

On Mother's Day now I make room for both missing and valuing, for they are not, I have discovered, mutually exclusive. Now when I go to the cemetery with my rosebud on my day, my daughter has no part in my needs while I am there. When I come home, my son doesn't interfere with my acceptance and appreciation of my daughter's expression of love. She gives me a gift on my day, and I give her one in return. It's probably the best gift I could possibly give her - my happiness and joy for life. She is as important as what I have lost, and I know her worth. If you are fortunate enough to have surviving children, I hope you, too, are able to value as well as miss. There's room for both, you know.

--Mary Cleckley TCF, Atlanta, GA

Book in Review ...



Into The Valley and Out Again by Richard Edler.

This is an honest, direct, and deeply moving narrative of a father's journey from the depth of grief to a reaffirmation of life, following the loss of his 18 year old son. It is a story of sorrow, acceptance, faith, and a renewal; helpful to the bereaved and also to those seeking to understand the grief journey. This book includes a separate chapter written by Richard's surviving son, Rick, providing a sibling perspective. [In our chapter library.]

God Bless the Grieving Mother

God bless the grieving mother...
 In January as the snow flakes fall...
 And as a new year dawns...
 For her memories will comfort her...
 Through winter, spring, summer, and fall.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 In February during the month of love...
 She sends her hugs...on the wings of a dove...
 And her kisses are blown to the moon above.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 In March and on St. Patrick's Day...
 A beautiful rainbow...a symbol of hope...
 Which colors her world...in a magical way.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 On Easter In April as she stops to pray...
 Thanking God for the gift of everlasting life...
 Knowing she will be reunited someday.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 On Mothers Day and thru the month of May...
 Whose memories are like threads of gold...
 For they will never tarnish...or go way.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 In June as her tears fall like the rain...
 Please comfort her...and give her strength
 and peaceful days to help ease the pain.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 In July as the fireworks light up the sky afar...
 Just like her memories light up her heart...
 And she wishes upon an evening star.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 In August...as the sun shines through...
 Who's life moves on...thru ups and downs..
 Whose heart is so tender and true.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 In September as the leaves turn and fall...
 Her child's life forever etched in her heart..
 Her child's name entered on the memorial wall.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 In October...with the harvest colors all around...
 Please guide her on her journey of grief...
 and keep her safe and sound.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 In December as Christmas nears...
 Please bless her with the gift of peace...
 And many great friends to help dry her tears.
 God bless the grieving mother...
 Each day throughout the year...
 As seasons come and go...
 And time unfolds...
 Day by day...

Month by month...

Year by year...

And especially today...on this Mother's Day.

Copyright April 2001 Written by:

Laura/Heavenly Lights Children's Memorial. The
 Compassionate Friends, Kirkland, WA

Her Mother

Despite her death,
 I'm still her mother.
 Through all my days
 This will be.
 Now in my life
 Where there are shadows,
 Her love shines down...
 And so I see.



My Friend

You were my friend,
 Not my child only.
 Your life cut short,
 Mine doubly lonely.
 You'd share with me
 Both tears and laughter;
 No more such talks
 From here-on-after.
 There are great holes
 Where you have been,
 Just memories now,
 of you and then.
 --Genesse Boudreau Gentry

Surrender

The rational mind is not capable of truly
 understanding this loss; only the heart has
 a chance to accept and transform this suffering.

For it is not the mind that has been dealt this blow,
 it is the heart, and it is only there that healing is
 possible.

The heart, where the entirety of my experience
 resides in the memory and imagination, in the
 deepest recesses of my soul. It is there I will look
 for a way out of this hell.

--from the book "Safe Passage" by Molly Fumia



Our Children Remembered



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

Troy Akasaka
Born: 1/911 Died: 2/15
Parents: Jay & Sharon Akasaka

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

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 Barcenas
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

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

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

Vincent Begole
Born: 11/82 Died: 5/10
Parents: Angela & Vincent Begole

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 Brytan
Born: 10/84 Died: 6/96
Mother: Karen Merickel & Robert Brytan

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: 01/90 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

Michael David Curtis
Born: 2/64 Died: 3/15
Mother: Shirley Curtis

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

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

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

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 DiMaggio



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

Asa James Dolak
Born: 2/94 Died: 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

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

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 Gvst
Born: 7/88 Died: 5/05
Father: Mark Gvst

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 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 Husinga
Born: 10/74 Died: 12/95
Parents: Alan & Melinda
Husinga

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 Leeann 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



Our Children Remembered



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

Angela Johnson
Born: 4/92 - Died: 3/15
Parents: Dennis Y Maria Johnson

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

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 Laulhere
Born: 9/74 Died: 3/96
Parents: Larry & Chris Laulhere

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

Quinn Frances Leslie Born:
12/12 Died: 9/14
Parents: Ian & Katie 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 Luthé
Born: 11/76 Died: 1/98
Parents: Jeff & Lorraine Luthé

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 McClernan
Born: 7/53 Died: 2/07
Mother: Lee McClernan

Joseph McCoy
Born: 9/11 Died: 11/14
Mother: Amy McCoy

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

Jeremy Stewert Mead
Born: 10/61 Died: 11/14
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

Anthony Moreno
Born: 2/91 Died: 11/13
Mother: Ivette Romero

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

Marily Murney
Born: 6/53 Died: 1/14
Parents: Herb & Pat Gardner

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

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



Lisa Nakamara
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 Samuel 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

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: 112/68 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: Pranitha & 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

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

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

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

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



Our Children

Nancy Sterger
Born: 8/57 Dief 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

Jacqueline Taylor
Born: 1/83 Died: 7/11
Mother: Jennifer Flynn

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

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

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

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

Remembered

Michelle Whitaker
Born: 6/72 Died: 4/06
Mother-in-law: Karen Scott

Taylor Whitaker
Born: 4/00 Died: 4/06
Mother: Karen Scott

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.

**A Birthday Tribute to:
Kevin LeNguyen
May 1988 - June 2014**



Dear Kevin,
Happy birthday to you, my son. You would have turned 27 on May 18, 2015. It's been almost a year since you decided to leave this earth on June 2nd, 2014, you had just turned 26. Not a day goes by that I don't think of you. I think of you since the day you were born, you were always strong and healthy, mentally and physically. You were happy and full of life. Your goal in life was to finish college and join the military. You completed both for which we are so proud of you. You wanted to serve your country, and become a soldier since you were a little boy. You sacrificed your life to protect others but at the end you couldn't save yourself.

We miss you and love you dearly, my first and only son.
Mom (Tracy Le)

From Siblings...

Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

Yesterday
You were here and I took it for

granted that you would always be here. Telling you I loved you, and was proud of you seemed unimportant. There would be time for that when we were older - when we fought less and talked more.

Today

I know that time will never come, and I will never have the chance to say these things face-to-face. So I write them and think them and hope you know I mean them now and have always felt them.

Tomorrow

Each day the pain and regrets of things left unsaid get easier to deal with. I have begun to realize that you knew how I felt because you felt the same way. And as more tomorrows turn into yesterdays, I will find peace in that knowledge. Someday, somewhere, we will meet again, and I will have my chance then.

--Shannon Odessa Stiener TCF, Lowell, IN

Thoughts of My Brother

Another holiday without you
 Another wedding without you
 Another birthday without you
 Another graduation without you
 Another day without you.
 I miss your goofy laugh
 I miss your temper tantrums
 I miss your bugging me for money
 I miss your punches in the arm
 But most of all I miss you.
 So I will remember
 Our good and bad times
 And share them with others
 So that I can keep you
 Alive in my heart.

-- DeAnn Kouse Louisville, KY

From Grandparents...



What I Wanted

I wanted to hold your sticky little hand
 as we walk through the park
 to hear you squeal as I push you high on the
 swing
 and to hear you say "One more time Grammy"
 as I caught you at the bottom of the slide
 I wanted to watch you splash
 in the wading pool in my back yard

and to lay on our backs in the cool summer grass
 and talk about the shapes that clouds make
 I wanted to lift you from the tub
 and wrap you in a towel
 holding you close as I pat you dry
 and hear you beg for one more bedtime story
 before I turn off the light
 I wanted to sing to you
 songs of joy in the morning
 action songs during the day
 soft lullabies full of love as darkness falls
 and of course Alice's Restaurant at Thanksgiving
 I wanted to watch you grow
 from baby to little girl to young lady
 to see you dressed up for your first prom
 to comfort you after your first heartbreak
 to cry with joy on your wedding day
 I wanted you so much
 --Nina Bennett - Grandmother From A.G.A.S.T.
 (Alliance of Grandparents A Support in Tragedy)
 online newsletter. www.agast.org

From Our Members...



If my heart was not open,
 I would not feel you,
 If I did not listen,
 I would not hear you,
 If I did not feel,
 I would not sense you,
 If I did not love you so,
 I would be no more.

--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 this event, which promises to be another great national Conference experience. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas. For registration or more information visit www.compassionatefriendsl.org.

TCF Is On Facebook Please visit and help promote The Compassionate Friends National

Organization's 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 have created a new website for our chapter. Joe Zelik is 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. To be able to send a reminder each month to let you know when the latest issue of the newsletter is available, we need your e-mail address. To update our files, please call Lynn at (310) 530-3214 to update by phone. You can also log onto our website at www.tcfsbla.org if you want to do it electronically.

Thank-you for your understanding and help.
TCF South Bay/LA

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: May 1st for June 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 Linda 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.



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

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STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

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Lori & Dudley Gray

Cheryl & Bill Matasso

Nancy & Elliott Fisher

Kitty Edler

Susan Kass

Linda Zelik

Cheryl Stephens

Lynn Vines

Ken Konopasek

Crystal Henning



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

In loving memory of Janet Mann, October, 1961 - September, 2010
Love, Mom (Nancy Mann)

In loving memory of Marilyn Ivano Gardner, June 1953 - January 2014. To my beautiful gifted daughter- She was taken from us too soon. Marilyn is sadly missed and loved.
From her mother, Pat Gardner - Sisters Susan Gardner & Michelle Gardner, & Brother Michael Gardner. We Love & Miss you dearly. Memorials are golden

In support of your services of comfort and support for so many. Thanks to Lynn and staff.
Ruth Singleton

In loving memory of my beloved husband, S. Roy Schubert, October 1936 - October 2014.
Your brave spirit is not silent.
Love, Lynn Schubert

In loving memory of Lynn Vines' son, Eric and brother, Mike.
From Kitty Edler

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 _____

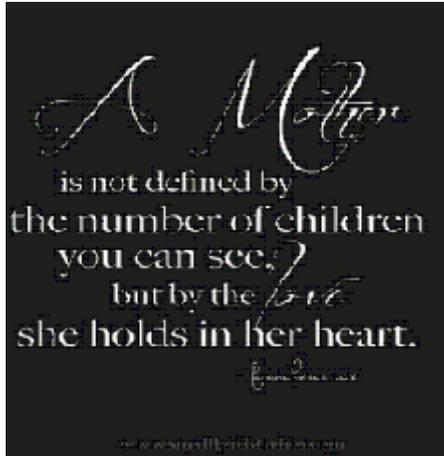
Birth date _____ Death date _____ Sent From _____

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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May 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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