



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



South Bay/L.A. Chapter



A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND FAMILIES

JAN. 2009 ISSUE

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

OUR REGULAR MEETING
will be Jan. 6th, the first Wednesday
of the month at 7:00 P.M.

2 LOCATIONS IN DECEMBER:
Dec. 2nd: Hess Park 29301 Hawthorn Blvd. R.P.V.
Dec. 13th: Malaga Cove Shopping Center
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.--

WHO ARE WE...

The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.

We gather to listen, to share, and to support each other in the resolution of our grief. You need not walk alone, we are The Compassionate Friends.

COMING IN JANUARY...

This month our topic will be How To Do More Than Survive in The New Year.

New Chapter leaders are needed. Can you Help? Please call Kitty at (310) 541-8221.

TCF Lunch Group meets for lunch at Mimi's Café every Friday at 1:00. (Crenshaw and PCH). All members are invited. **We need HELP folding newsletters there on the second Friday of each month.**

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Chapter Leaders:
Needed

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Jan 6th Topic ... How To Do More Than Just Survive

How we will survive the new year without our child here with us? There are many things we do as we start each new year. Resolutions, plans, preparing for something in the future. But what do we do when we are so consumed with grief that we could care less what the future holds? How do we go on with our precious child not here? How do we regain a sense of balance in our life?

These are some of the things we will be covering in our January meeting. Please join us as we explore ways to continue our grief work and find some kind of future we can again look forward to in 2010.

What Kind Of "New" Year Will It Be?



Well, since you are reading this, you must have survived those dreaded holidays. Some of you may be holding onto your sanity by the skin of your teeth, but you're here. For now, that's enough. If this is your first or second new year without your child, consider that an emotional victory. I'm sure you wondered several times how you could possibly survive all that family warmth and frivolity without your child. Well, you did.

Now it is a brand new year. It's up to you what you make of it. Do you want to spend the year bitter, angry, withdrawn, and tormented? Or do you want to begin to enjoy life again and start healing? Believe it or not, it IS up to you. I'm going to assume that you want to begin healing. There are a few things that you must know. It absolutely is NOT disloyal to your child's memory to smile again or enjoy yourself. Would your child wish everlasting pain on you? Would he/she want you to cry every day for the rest of your life?

One of the key elements to softening the pain is to try to think about all the good things that you have instead of what you've lost. I know that seems impossible, but force yourself to try. If you've got family, friends, health, whatever, count your blessings.

Another important element to healing is to be grateful that you had your child at all. I know

that seems ludicrous when you feel you've been robbed because you "should" have been able to watch your child grow old. The fact is that you aren't going to do that. Whatever memories you have of your child, or whatever joy you get from having loved him/her, no matter how briefly you had them, is worth hanging on to.

You also need to trust. Look around your next TCF meeting. Do you see the veterans laughing and sharing joyful stories with each other? Do you hear about new babies, weddings, hope, and love? Trust that these parents love their children as much as you love yours. Trust that life can go on again. Even though it sounds impossible, trust us when we say you will find happiness again. No one will try to tell you that you eventually heal to the point where it doesn't hurt at all. No one will tell you that you'll be your old self soon. We realize you have been changed forever by the death of your child. For now, you'll just have to take our word that it does get better and the pain does dull itself a little with time.

It's a brand new year, so why not try to make it one of healing and health, occasional smiles, reaching out to others, and remembering the good times? Maybe you can even start looking forward to the future.

As radical as all these concepts may seem to you now, guess what? When you do finally feel that you've made some progress, these will be what you did to get there. Take it easy on yourself. We're with you.

--Kathy Hahn TCF Lower Bucks, PA

For the New Year

Where there is pain,
Let there be softening
Where there is bitterness,
Let there be acceptance
Where there is silence,
Let there be communication
Where there is loneliness,
Let there be friendships
Where there is despair,
Let there be hope.

--Ruth Eiseman TC F, Louisville, KY

This Can Be a Constructive If Not A Happy New Year



HAPPY NEW YEAR? "How can it ever be again?" "How will I ever make it through another year of this torment?" When we are hurting and so terribly depressed, it is hard to see any good in our new year, but we must try. First, we must hold on tightly to the idea that we will not always be this miserable, that we will some day feel good again. This is almost impossible to believe, but even if we don't believe it, we must tell ourselves over and over again that it is true—because it is! Many parents whose children have died in the past will attest to this. Remember also, that no one can suffer indefinitely as you are suffering now.

Second, we must face the new year with the knowledge that this year offers us choices—whether we will be on our way to healing this time next year or still be in the pit of intense grief. We must remind ourselves that if we choose to be on our way to healing by the following year, we must work to get there and that work entails allowing ourselves to go through our grief; to cry, to be angry, to talk about our guilt, to do whatever is necessary to move towards healing.

Third, we must look for good in our lives and find reasons to go on and accept the fact that our continued suffering will not bring our child back. Many of us have other children and a spouse for whom we must go on. More importantly, we have our own lives that must be lived. Most of us know that our dead children would want us to go on living!

No, this coming year may not be a happy one, but it can be a constructive one. Through our grief we can grow and become more understanding, loving, compassionate, and aware of the real values in life. Let us not waste this new year.

--Margaret H. Gerner TCF, St. Louis, MO

Faces of Grief

For bereaved parents, a new year brings feelings of "unfinished business." For most of us time seemed temporarily to stop the moment we learned our child had died. The very order of our existence had been transposed - our child preceded us in death.

The dawning of a new year feels unnatural for a part of us is riveted to the last days of our child's life, in a year not of the current numerical value. Well-wishers who wish us health and happiness only emphasize our sense of loss and distancing. The calendar years will continue their numerical ascent and a new number propels us into a new chapter of our lives.

We cannot stop time, but we can use it. For time will allow us to remember the details of our child's life, to grieve our loss, and to adjust to our altered lives.

--Nancy Green

TCF, Livonia, MI

New Year's Goals

The holidays are over, and I bet you're glad about that. You did make it through and by now maybe some of the stress of that powerful time has left you. Next year you will find you learned from this year, no matter how many years it has been, and I hope it will be easier for you, too, in the years ahead. If you made any New Year's resolutions, I hope they include:

- ☺ To try to take it one day at a time.
- ☺ To forgive yourself for whatever it is you feel you did wrong.
- ☺ To figure out ways to resolve your anger so you can let go of it.
- ☺ To concentrate on and value what you have left as much as what you have lost.
- ☺ To let those you value know how important they are to you.

These goals are important steps forward that may enable you to look at the coming year differently and to approach your grief more constructively. Most of all, try to be good to yourself in the New Year.

--Mary Cleckley

TCF, Atlanta, GA



Looking For Joy

Do you know how long it took me to allow laughter and joy to return to my life? Do you know how far it has been from my side of this page to your side?

Do you know how difficult it is to sit at my typewriter and think of anything funny (humorous is a more dignified word) about death?

It was a ten-year journey. It took me ten years to get from my side of this page to yours. A whole decade. Actually, it seemed more like a whole lifetime.

I liked my other life. In fact, I loved it! Bereavement was not the kind of magazine I had in the bathroom or on the coffee table. I was more of a Family Circle or Humpty Dumpty person. I never intended to write a book about grief. But then a single moment changed everything - and here I am.

Fourteen years ago, our son, Austin Van Simms, slipped away from his mom and dad and big sister. At peace, after a lifelong battle with a malignant brain tumor, he took with him all the hopes and dreams we had of being "an average" American family. We had only two children so that no one would have to share the window or ride on the hump in the middle of the back seat. We had two children because I had hundreds of recipes that served four. We had two children because we couldn't figure out how to have 1.6 children, which was the national average.

But something happened along the way to that dream, and in the flicker of a moment not only were our dreams lost, but the sounds of joy and laughter left our lives as well - perhaps as they seem to have left yours

We now know the quietness that comes when we realize we are the only source of sound in our house. Like you, we know that loss - that emptiness that brings us here to these pages in search of something to ease the pain; in search of something to stop the tears; in search of something to dream about again.

Right now, I can't think of anything else I'd rather be doing than living. But that wasn't always true, especially right after Austin's death when there were some days all I could think

about was dying - either to join him or to relieve my pain. But I lived through that by grasping every day and claiming it as my own. One day, each of us will rediscover whatever we cherish about life. Each of us will find the laughter that echoed throughout our life with our loved one - if we will look for it.

I'm here, on this side of the page, not to tell you how to be happy, but to tell you that you deserve to be happy again. I'd like to share with you how I did it; how I got to my own, here and now. It took a lot of healing time and a commitment to rediscovering the joy of living. It's a different kind of joy, though. It's a happiness that's been robbed of its innocence and forged by a flame that has the power, if allowed, to destroy everything in its path.

But we don't have to dwell in the darkness forever. Instead, we can choose to understand that our loved one's death was but a moment - a split second of horror. When we can focus our remembrances on our loved one's life, it is possible that we can begin to understand that it can return and even be comfortable.

We cannot find words to soothe the hurt. There simply aren't any! We cannot shield ourselves from the twists and turns of living. We cannot protect ourselves from experiencing life.

We can, however, build support and safety nets. We can create cushions and pockets of comfort - places where we can rest momentarily, gathering strength to re-enter the crashing tides. We can learn to smile again, maybe even return laughter to our lives. Cry all you want, but remember to laugh when you can, too. Your life with your loved one was filled with moments of laughter. Remember them; enjoy them again and again. Between the tears, allow the joy to return.

Insist on joyfulness and a little silliness being part of each day. Sometimes we cannot wait for fun and joy to be presented to us. We must make it happen!

--Darcie D. Sims from *Why Are the Casseroles Always Tuna?*

And can it be that in a world so full and busy, the loss of one weak creature makes a void in any heart, so wide and deep that nothing but the width and depth of vast eternity can fill it up!? --Charles Dickens

Sixty Something



After the initial desperation of grieving begins to subside, we often do very well surviving. We do all the chores, we even laugh on occasion. We recover our memory functions (well, mostly), and we are mentally sharp, thank you. However gradually, we improve with time.

Yet sometimes, even years after the death of a person deeply connected to us, especially after the death of children, we notice and puzzle about how "emotional" we are, how easily we get tearful... Not just when we see or hear something sad. No, we get weepy when we are moved by happy things, too. Hearing familiar music, seeing a beautiful scene in nature, watching people at joyful events - these things seem to have a different and more emotional impact than anyone would expect. When we observe something "nice" on television for instance, we may sit all alone, "smiling through tears." How come?

The explanation is not too hard to find: From what we know about human experience, all intense feelings invade the inner sanctum which holds our emotional memory. For practical reasons (or whatever other reasons...) we may need to keep a door shut - the door into a danger zone of overwhelming reactions, the door into the possibility of falling apart, the door into losing control, maybe.

Even after a long, long time the pain of a child's death, fully recalled, can trigger new sorrow - either about the loss itself, or of that loss coupled with another hurt that life has dealt us since. We all try to protect our already vulnerable selves from emotional avalanches, as it were.

I'll try to use a personal example (this one is not so easy to tell). Being older - that is, being sixty-something, I seemed to feel the loss of my two children with something like a new emotion.

I felt their absence more keenly and more constantly than I had felt it for years. My mind touched with a special awareness on the solitude in which I found myself. A deep sadness drifted heavily into my days and nights: a feeling both old and new - hurt, and helplessly-bereaved all over again. Perhaps some of this

feeling had been "inside" all along, behind the door into the possibility of falling apart? And "sixty-something" was the force to break down that guarded door!

So here I am, and I didn't fall apart - after all. I am convinced that similar experiences happen to nearly everyone who has grieved deeply AND who is willing to be in touch with his/her feelings. Therefore, I am trying here to convince anyone who may by chance be in this kind of a "post traumatic phrase" not to be frightened: feelings of old grief restored in a new guise are not unnatural. Just as our feelings of approaching disintegration at the time of our very first grieving were neither unnatural nor abnormal. As painful as these emotions are, we can survive, and we can heal.

After a year of "quiet desperation", I found myself gradually recovering courage and strength. Though I remain noticeably "emotional", I have come to terms with my weepy self - it's not all bad, really. It may all be part of sixty-something, or it may be part of living and losing. And what else?
--Sascha Wagner

Forgive Until Forever

Grieving is a fierce and overwhelming expression of love thrust upon us by a deep and hurtful loss. Yet grieving is frequently such an entanglement of feelings that we often fail to recognize that ultimately forgiveness must be an integral part of our grief and our healing. For what is LOVE, if forgiveness is silent within us?

We learn to forgive our children for dying, and ourselves for not preventing it. We begin to forgive God or the fate we see ruling the universe. We start to forgive friends and relatives for abandoning us in their own bewilderment over the onslaught of emotions they sense in our words and behavior. I believe we must be open to the balm of forgiveness. Through its expression in our lives, be it through thought, word, or deed, we find small ways to seek life once more. Deep within us, forgiveness is capable of treading the wasteland of our souls to help us feel again the love that has not died.

It is the beginning of release from the

dominance of pain, not from the continual hurt of missing those we have lost, but from lacking the fullness of the love we shared with our child. That love lives with strength inside ourselves, and yet our beings are so entrapped in a whirling vortex of anger, despair, frustration, abandonment and depression that we often feel it only lightly.

Let us all heed the quiet message heard so softly in that maelstrom of the spirit. Forgive... Forgive ... Forgive until forever. Let love enfold our anguish, helping us to learn to grow and strive beyond this hour to a rich tomorrow.
--Don Hackett

From *SUICIDE OF A CHILD*

Always remember that if you could have prevented your child's death, you would have. There are a lot of reasons you weren't able to do so.

- * You may have been too frightened to know what to do.
- * You may have not known the difference between normal growing-up behavior and serious depression.
- * You may have been labeled "over-protective" if you did share your fears.
- * You hoped it would pass, get better, work itself out.
- * You wanted to give your child every benefit of the doubt and to trust your child.
- * You didn't want to be an alarmist when maybe nothing was really wrong.
- * You may have actually tried to get help and were ignored or turned away.
- * You may have done everything possible, and it still happened.

-- Joy and Marvin Johnson and Adina Wroblecki

A New Set of Alternatives

Most of the time I am "okay" with Lindsay's death. But there are still moments when I suddenly stop in the busyness of life and stunned, say aloud, "I just can't believe I had a baby who died?" Somehow, this fact still seems so unreal. You know ... that dreadful something that happens to someone else, but not to me,



not us.

As I share these thoughts with you now, I realize that we have probably made hundreds of choices in the last six years that we wouldn't have made, and many other choices we wouldn't have HAD to make, if Lindsay hadn't died. Please allow me to share some of those choices with you here (in no particular order):

The Choice of "Life"

In the beginning, my world seemed consumed with simply surviving. I met moments of sweet temptation (yet terror) while speeding in the car and coming face to face with a semi-truck. It would be SO easy to maneuver my car to the other lane. No pain could be any worse than what I was experiencing already. Too many times I flirted with death, and tempted it. My overwhelming desire was to be with our child in, HER place. Survival during those first few months, that first year, seemed unimaginable. The steps toward wanting to live again were tiny, gradual, taken almost without awareness. "Life" became a friend again when I made the choice to reconcile myself to living without her physical presence.

Shall we have another child?

I was ready to risk the pain of trying again soon after Lindsay died, and became obsessed with it. I fell in love with the baby when she was only an idea, and I say she because somehow I knew we were going to have another little girl. During the pregnancy I felt an inner peace about the baby's safe delivery. Katie Rose was born safe and healthy on December 28, 1990, exactly nineteen months after our Lindsay died.

The Adoption Option or

Choosing to have no more Children

This wasn't one of our decisions, but because of medical or personal reasons, these may be the only options available for some. Parents who have chosen this route have found it to be both rewarding and healing. Don't let anyone pressure you into having more children if this is not what you want to do.

Parenting Our Surviving Children

Parenting takes on a new meaning, doesn't it? Because we have experienced the death of one or more children, we sometimes go overboard in our protection of the others. Somehow, I now find myself both more tolerant

yet fiercely protective with my children. (Is that possible?) Pulling out all the pots and pans to play with is permissible. Making mud pies and castles are allowed. Even crying is handled with much more patience than I ever imagined. Because of our children who have died, we learn a new perspective to parenting our surviving children. We made the choice to shower them with love.

Mending Marriages

In her book *"For Better or Worse"* for couples whose child has died, Maribeth Doerr states: "Your marriage is grieving along with you. Your hearts are hurting, and each one of you has your own grief. If your relationship is valuable to you, now is the time to nurture it— just as you nurtured your child. Marriage, like a child, needs to be cuddled, loved, respected, and corrected now and then ..."



Relating to Society

Society in general has a difficult time dealing with our feelings and mixed-up emotions. They need a tremendous amount of understanding. (Sometimes more than we are willing to give!) I can get very hurt and angry when Lindsay is forgotten in the count of children, but I have chosen a certain kind of acceptance now. I can not change anyone's thinking, just as they cannot change mine. I am only sorry others cannot know and love our little girl as we do.

A New Faith in God

I grew up in a Christian home but, like many young people, went through a phase of rebellion. After Lindsay died, heaven became a very real place for me. I chose to accept the presence of an all-loving God into my life. Many find comfort in making peace with God.

Letting Go of Guilt and Anger

It literally took years for me to work through my guilt and anger. One of the best ways I found to work through these feelings is to admit them openly and honestly. I wrote about it, thought about it, cried about it, and eventually chose to let the negative feelings go. (It wasn't easy.)

Join A Support Group

The acceptance and understanding we found in a support group probably saved my sanity and our marriage. A TCF chapter was not formed in our area until sixteen months after

Lindsay died; I still found myself mourning the death of a child that does not come with a certain timetable or set of rules. Please never be afraid to seek help.

Learn to Reach Out to Others

When you think you have received everything a support group has to offer, commit yourself to more responsibility. Help with the newsletter, become a peer-support parent, write articles and poetry, lead a meeting, hold a hand, or give a hug. We receive as much as we give. Volunteer work may prove to be selfish— for some, true healing only begins when we choose to "give back".

I also learned a measure of dignity and grace concerning death. Three years ago, when my mom wanted to plan her funeral, I was able to crawl into her hospital bed with a pen, a yellow legal pad, and her bible to record her final wishes. I silently thanked Lindsay for giving me the bravery to do that.

Keeping the Memory Alive

We can choose to keep the memory of our children alive by doing special things in their memory: Light a candle, decorate the grave, share a poem, send balloons heaven-ward, or even take cookies to a sick neighbor. What are your ideas?

Accept our Children as they are Now, Where they are Now

Perhaps this is one of the hardest steps we may have to take— a seemingly impossible choice and expectation. I have come to understand that if I want to accept her into my life (and I do!), then I must accept her as she is now. As much as I want her and miss her, I cannot have her any other way. I understand that accepting the fact of Lindsay's death does not mean it is "okay". I will never feel that way! Nor will I ever forget her! But I have allowed her to enter my life in her own special way. She was, is, and always will be our second daughter. And we will love her into eternity.

I am now convinced that many of the decisions we will make throughout our futures are either directly or indirectly related to the fact that we have experienced the death of a much-loved child. We have learned many things we never expected to learn and never wanted to learn, but we are determined to move forward

with our lives, as our children would want us to do.

Think about this statement as it relates to your life; "Some dreams are shattered and some dreams are new, but where would I be now if it weren't for you!"

--Dana Gensler TCF South Central KY

Newly Bereaved ...

Grief Distractions?

Have you learned how to distract yourself from your grief? It's an art that can be learned. We can't cry all the time when we're grieving. It's too much. Besides, we have to work, do errands, do other things. In the beginning, grief is overwhelming. We sob uncontrollably much of the time. That's okay. Be gentle with yourself. You'll learn how to turn the faucet off and on. Sometimes doing something as simple as going into another room, going for a walk, watching a movie, calling someone on the phone, or even taking a shower can help us switch gears when we feel like we've been crying too much. Practice, find out what techniques work for you. Our souls and hearts are smart, intelligent. The deep part of us that's healing knows how much we can take, what we need to do, and when.

--From The Grief Club by Melody Beattie

Friends and Family...

Dear Friend

You say you'll be with me every step of the way,
But if you really want to help me,
then hear me, I pray

Walk along side me- help me keep the pace.

But remember, dear friend

I alone can run this race.

Let me speak of my loved one-

I have memories to share.

And if I'm too quiet, ask questions ...

let me know you're interested and that you really do care.

If on a bad day my tongue gets sharp,
don't let it put our friendship on the shelf.

Rather be patient with me... I'm not quite myself.

Don't try to stifle my tears, just gently wipe them away.

They can be cleansing and healing in a sad kind of way.

And finally, don't rush me - let me have my own space.

I must travel this lonely road,
but I need to do it at my own pace.

-- Wanda Devol Anderson, Indiana

Welcome ...



Question: Six months ago, our 19-year-old daughter, Susan, died unexpectedly. We learned that there were circumstances contributing to her death involving the use of cocaine. She was also pregnant at the time, and we had no knowledge of this situation. I know that my husband and I need to talk with other parents who have had to endure the pain of losing a child. Several friends have encouraged us to attend The Compassionate Friend's meetings, but we've been reluctant because we do not want to discuss the details surrounding her death. Susan was a beautiful person who made some very serious and costly mistakes. We don't want to risk having others form impressions based on her mistakes rather than on her many positive qualities. I hope you can appreciate our situation. Perhaps you may have some advice for us.

--Anonymous

Answer: Your concerns about not wanting to share details of your daughter's death are understandable. You know who she was as a person, and you are entitled to uphold and protect this positive image of her. What concerns me is that you apparently believe that attendance at Compassionate Friend's meetings means that you must share all pertinent details. This is not the case. The atmosphere at these meetings is one of permissiveness and support where meaningful sharing among bereaved parents can occur at whatever level is acceptable to you. The bottom line is that you and your husband have experienced the ultimate tragedy - the death of your child. You need the exposure to other bereaved parents who truly understand and appreciate that profound sense of loss, and that the

relationships you had with Susan are fundamental and enduring issues worthy of meaningful sharing.

I would imagine also, that as you and your husband continue to come to terms with the details surrounding Susan's death, your concerns about what others might think will lessen. My wish is that you will attend the next scheduled Compassionate Friend's meeting in your area - realizing that the level of personal sharing is entirely up to you.

--TCF Albany, NY newsletter

Editor's note: WE ARE HERE TO HELP ... NOT TO JUDGE: There are many parents in our group, and they all have a different story and various circumstances surrounding the death of their child. We are not here to judge you, or judge your child. We are here to help bereaved parents on the most difficult journey they will ever travel. No matter how your child died, the death you are being forced to live with is a pain we want to help you with. This is where the compassionate in our name comes from. You are always free to talk or just listen at our meetings. YOU decide what, when and how much to tell us about your child, about your fears and pain, and about your grief. Even if you are not ready to share, just listening will help you in your healing.

Helpful Hint...



When a child dies, it is natural to be afraid of any further pain. For awhile we may just want to crawl into a hole and lick our wounds. But then we need to have the courage to say to ourselves, "I'm still here— I can fulfill some of the dreams and give the love my child would have given— I can make that life count." And in that sense of purpose and the good we do, we remain forever in touch with the child we thought we had lost.

—Experts from *After a Child Dies* by Eda Le Shan, Long Island, NY

Book Review...



Kitchen Table Wisdom by Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D.- This is a wonderful book about

caring and healing. Its perspective is that we can learn from each other's stories. At one time families sat around a kitchen table and shared their stories with their younger generation. Now we go to therapists to learn the same lessons. It does not come from a strictly "losing a child perspective", but rather it comes from having had extreme difficulties in life and how we can use those lessons to live a better and more fulfilling life. I found this book to be so uplifting. It is the perfect bathroom book because it is made up of many small stories with a message at the end of each. This book reminds us there are many people who have also suffered in many different ways. This book is probably not for the newly bereaved who may only be able to see the pain of the death at this time. But for those of you further down the road of grieving, still trying to make some sense of it. You may also be touched by this wonderful book with its important message that there is healing, though it may not be in the form we thought it would be.

--Review by Donna Schweissing, Ventura County, CA, TCF

I Just Lost You

How can I put your dying into words? Are there words powerful enough to describe the death of you, and this lost, pain-filled me?

Where do all these tears come from? Endlessly, they flow, from my hurting eyes. I wish they could drown out the awfulness of being in a life I don't recognize anymore.

Who am I now, without you? I feel I've lost myself in a fog. A mother without her child—that's not supposed to be.

What will happen to me now? A mother can't stop being a mother. I know I shall go on loving you, because your life has not ended for me.

--Monica Eblen South Bend, Indiana

As long as we have memories,
yesterday remains;

As long as we have hope, tomorrow awaits.

As long as we have friendships
today is beautiful

--author unknown

It's Been A Year

A year has passed. I'm stronger now
But how I miss his golden smile
His happy laugh, his strong embrace
Those late night talks we used to have.

A year has passed, his things are gone
We sold his car, but that was all
Most of his things we gave away
I kept his books, his photographs.

A year has passed, new grass has grown
Around the stone that marks his grave
The trees have grown and give more shade
And I have grown. I'm stronger now.

A year has passed, my pain is less
But I still weep when I recall
That dreadful day a year ago
When all the world came to a stop.

A year has passed, his birthday passed
And Christmas came and soon the spring
And the summertime will be here
The world has turned— it's been a year.
--C. Bradford Johnson,
Research Triangle Park, NC

Empathy

You cannot say, "I empathize,"
Unless you too have agonized:
You cannot help the lonely heart
Unless with death you've had a part.
You cannot say, "Don't be afraid,"
Until with terror you have paid
The price that brings a calmness near,
Then you can help another's fear.
But if you've traveled the same road,
You're qualified to lift a load.
And any words that you can say,
Will surely comfort me today.
--M. Stull, Pocatello Chapter Newsletter

Memories

My mind's eye sees you near me.
My mind's ear hears your gentle "Hi, Ma,"

Is gladdened by your laughter
My spirit hugs yours and is comforted.
My physical being yearns to see and hear you,
Longs to talk with you,
to hug you one more time.
Reality strikes, my heart breaks anew, and
you're gone.
I despair, I retreat to the world of my spirit.
Most of me is often where you are.
I share my thoughts, my feelings, with a
companion on the lonely road to survival.
Your life, our caring, my memories are
acknowledged
My loneliness eases.
I go on to tomorrow.
--Ellen Bruno TCF, Valley Forge, PA

For the New Year ...

May the New Year bring healing.
May the New Year bring peace.
The warmth of cheerful memories,
and from pain, sweet release.
The light of your child's smile,
may it guide - you on your way,
With strength and consolation
throughout the year, each day.
Wherever you may travel
on this lonely road of grief,
May you find the way grow easier,
May the times of sorrow be brief.
Your child's life continues
In the life you choose to live.
In your hands and heart,
your child's love,
to yourself and others, give.
--Ruth Gregory TCF, Phoenix, AZ



**Our Chapter Thanks
the following for their
Year End Donations**



Marilyn Arvizo in memory of John E. James
Pauline Cleary Basil in memory of John Francis
Cleary



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

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

Benjamin Richard Anthony
Born: 5/78 Died: 2/05
Parents: Wayne & Carolyn
Anthony

Robert H. Apodaca
Born: 12/55 Died: 9/89
Mother: Margaret Hall
Father: Al Apodaca

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

Brandon Armstrong
Miscarried: June 1995
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

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: 4/2007
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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tony Burack
Born: 12/63 Died: 12/87
Parents: Rita & Herb Burack

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ann Beresford Cox
Born: 12/61 Died: 4/92
Mother: Barbara Cox

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

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

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

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: 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

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: 7/002
Mother: Kathleen Dodd

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

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

**Our Children Remembered**

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

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 Fraze
Born: 5/79 Died: 7/07
Mother: Kathy Cammarano

Peter Joseph 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

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

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

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

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

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

Robert Hashimoto Jr
Born: 5/66 Died: 5/92
Parents: Robert & Shirley Hashimoto

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

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

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

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

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

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



Our Children Remembered



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

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: 6/2009
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

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

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: 12/06
Mother: Jackie Bowers

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

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

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

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

Anthony "Tony" Low
Born: 1/46 Died: 3/99
Parents: Frances & Matthew Low

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Christian Paul Nagy
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/02
Parents: Paul & Teresa Nagy

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Our Children Remembered**

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

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

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

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: 1/4/78 Died: 5/13/85
Mother: Gay Kennedy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gerald Slater
Born: 2/71 Died: 894
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Jeff Eric Snowden
Born: 2/61 Died: 6/01
Parents: Daryle & Sandra Snowden

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

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

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

John Teresinski
Born: 12/67 Died: 1100
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

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

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

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

Serena Yasmeeen 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



Our Children 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

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

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

BIRTHDAY TRIBUTES...

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.

A Birthday Tribute to: Joseph Ryan Persh Born: January 2003 Died: February 2003



Dearest Joseph:

Mommy, Daddy, Samuel and Michael wish you a Happy 7th Birthday in Heaven this January 23rd. We miss you very much during this time of year as we never got to spend a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year or Happy Birthday with you.

This year Mommy has finally understood the meaning of the phrase, "If we had known better, we would have done better." Mommy has stopped trying to reinvent the past and stopped being angry at the hospital staff and herself for not realizing you had Group B Strep meningitis instead of what we were told was colic, a terribly common misdiagnosis.

Your twin brothers, Samuel and Michael, are now 2 ½ years old. We are so thankful for them and the joy they have added to our lives. We tell them and believe that it was your birth not your death that inspired us to keep trying to start our family again after your death, years of infertility and miscarriages. Your twin brothers are talking now and are starting to know your pictures on the walls, and say "That's Brother Joseph."

In your memory each year we give a donation to the Group Beta Strep (GBS) Society. We tell every pregnant woman we see about your life and tragic death by GBS to protect them and their unborn and newborn babies. We direct them to www.gbss.org.uk & www.cdc.gov/groupBstrep/
Love always, Mommy & Daddy



For Siblings...

It's The Music That Bonds The Soul

The room you once lived in
Doesn't look the same.
The people who used to call you
Never mention your name.

The car you used to drive,
They may not make any more.
All the things you once treasured
Are boxed behind closet doors.
The clothes you set the trends by
Are surely out of date.
The people you owed money to
Have wiped away the slate.

Things have changed and changed
Again since you went away.
But some things have remained the
Same each and every day.

Like this aching in my heart...
A scar that just won't heal,
Or the way a special song
Can change the way you feel.

Brother, you must know
that the "music" bonds us
And will always keep us close.
Because, secretly, I know in my heart,
It's the music you miss most.

So let the world keep on turning
And "time" can take its toll
For as long as the music keeps playing,
You'll be alive and dancing in my soul.
--Stacie Gilliam, TCF, Oklahoma City, OK

For Grandparents...



Grandparent's Remembrance Taking Stock

Happy New Year!!! "How can it ever be again?" "How will I ever make it through another year of this torment?" When we are hurting and so terribly depressed it is hard to see any good in our New Year, but we must try.

First, we must hold on tightly to the idea that we will not always be this miserable. That we will someday feel good again. This is almost impossible to believe but even when we don't believe it, we must tell ourselves over and over again that it is true, BECAUSE IT IS! Many parents whose children have died some years in the past will attest to this. Remember also, no one can suffer indefinitely as you are suffering right now.

Second, we must face the New Year with the knowledge that this year offers us a CHOICE. Whether we will be on our way to healing by this time next year, or still be in the pit of intense grief. We must remind ourselves that if we chose to be on the way to healing by the following year we must work to get there. And that work entails allowing ourselves to go through our grief, to cry, to be angry, to talk about our feelings of guilt, and do whatever is necessary to move toward healing.

Third, we must look for good in our lives and find reasons to go on, and accept the fact that our continued suffering will not bring our child back. Many of us have other children and a spouse for whom we must go on. More importantly, we have our own lives that must be lived. Most of us know that our dead children would want us to go on! No, this coming year may not be a happy one, but it can be a constructive one. Through our grief we can grow and become more understanding, loving, compassionate and aware of the real values in life. LET US NOT WASTE THIS NEW YEAR!

--Margaret Gerner, Bereaved Mother and
Bereaved Grandmother St. Louis, MO

From Our Members...



For me it is my sister , Emma.
She loved me no matter what,
I could be silly,
And she still loved me,
I could be serious,
And she still loved me,
I could be quiet,
And she still loved me,
I could be loud,
And she still loved me,
We played together all the time,
I played dollies with her when she asked me to,
I taught her how to ice skate,
And roller blade,
I made her laugh.
I miss my best friend,
But she is still with me,
In my heart forever,
My little sister, Emma.
--for the TCF candlelighting by Corey Fisher

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.

TCF Now 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 such as conferences, the Walk to Remember, and the Worldwide Candle Lighting. Please visit often and contribute to the conversation.

Our Website... We are now posting a tribute page for each of our children. Please visit the new site and add your child's information. You can also download the monthly newsletter which will help defray chapter expenses of the printing and mailing of your newsletter. (Please let us know if you can be removed from the regular mailing list.) Contact Crystal at: crystal@tcfsbla.org and she will help you with the steps to create your own tribute.

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 every Thursday at noon EST and are also archived on the TCF national website. Shows are also broadcast at 11 a.m. EST Sundays on a number of radio stations across the country and streamed online simultaneously at www.HealthRadioNetwork.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: Jan.1 for Feb. 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 or with someone that understands and can share your pain. The following friends are on the telephone committee.

Kitty Edler (National Board member)	(310) 541-8221
Karen Hlavaty (infant loss)	(310) 326-9701
Karen Merickel	(310) 375-2498
Richard Leach (grandchild)	(310) 833-5213

SIBLING PHONE FRIENDS

Kristy Mueller	(310) 373-9977
Joey Vines	(310) 534-4339
Sue Gardner (sibling leader)	(310) 316-3777

Regional Coordinator

Susan Hawkes	(818) 249-7786
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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 members' children.

Library Information ... At each meeting we have a library table. It is on the honor system. 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.

Additional Grief Support....Bereavement Organizations and Resources: 
The Compassionate Friends So. Bay/L.A.,CA:

(310) 368-6845 Parent support group & newsletter for bereaved parents and siblings.

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

TRINITY CARE HOSPICE: Bereavement Coordinator Gayle Kirma (310) 257-3567

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

BEREAVEMENT MAGAZINE: published 9 times a year. Articles for all types of grief. Subscription fee. Bereavement Publishing, Inc., 5125 Union Blvd., Suite #4, Colorado Springs, CO 80920

OUR HOUSE/BEREAVEMENT HOUSE: 1950 Sawtelle Blvd., Suite 255, L.A., CA General bereavement and bereavement for children. (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

THE GATHERING PLACE: Various support groups including support for loss of a child, support group for children 5-8, 9-12, and teens, (also Spanish). Call Claire Towle (310) 374-6323, Beach Cities Health Dist.



LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS

Brentwood/Santa Monica Chpt. TCF: (310) 889-7726 meets -2nd Thurs.

Central L.A.: 2nd Wed. at 7:00 P.M. meets in Inglewood, (323) 769-5537

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

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

Orange Co./Anaheim: (714) 993-6708

Pomona/San Gabriel: (626) 919-7206

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

Riverside-Inland Empire: (909) 683-4160

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:

Post Net Printing for their help in printing our newsletters each month and to Reverend Karl Johnson and the Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

STEERING COMMITTEE OFFICERS

CHAPTER LEADERS: NEEDED

SIBLING LEADER: Sue Gardner

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOF READER: Crystal Henning

TREASURER: Ken Konopasek

CARDS: Crystal Henning

WEBSITE: Crystal Henning

NEW MEMBER FOLLOW-UP: Laurie Gray

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

In loving memory of Eric Brown, 11/65 - 9/00. You are loved and missed more each day. I understand you're suffering.

All my love, Mom

In loving memory of Fred Kushner, Kitty Edler's father.

Pauline Cleary Basil

In loving memory of our beloved son, Jonathan "Jamie" Paul Schubert, 7/65 - 12/06, who dedicated his live to Justice, often becoming a warrior for the most vulnerable and needy.

Love, Mom & Dad.

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 So. 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
--Change of Service Requested--

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Rainbows and Butterflies

Rainbows and butterflies- in January?

Most definitely!
The New Year,
a time for the new beginning.
Life renewed, the butterfly.

The dreams and hopes
for the days to come, the rainbow.

What better way to start the
new year than with life and hope?
--Marilyn Murphy, TCF, Rockville, CT

January 2010

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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