



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



South Bay/L.A. Chapter



Supporting Families After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND FAMILIES

MAY 2013 ISSUE

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OUR NEXT MEETING

will be May 1st, the first Wednesday
of the month at 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:

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

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

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

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

The Compassionate Friends Mission Statement....

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

**May 1 st... This month's topic will start with
" The Difficult Holidays in May. "**

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

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

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Our May 1st meeting will start with... **The difficult Holidays coming in May.** If you are a bereaved, parent, Mother's Day, the upcoming Father's Day, and Memorial Day may bring an extra sting to your heart. The loss seems greater in May and June for many newly bereaved families. With these days fast approaching, reflection on our child's life is almost inevitable. This month we will be sharing how to avoid some of the pain that May can bring while still honoring these special days.

Mother's Day Brings Joy and Pain

Mother's Day used to mean special times, great moments, sweet gifts and acknowledgment of the deep bond that Mothers share with their children. I have many happy memories of Mother's Days past. Their value is incalculable.

But that was before ... everything now is measured in "before" and "after." When I lost my only child, Mother's Day changed. Now Mother's Day has a different meaning ... one that is not as happy as it once was, but one that still reinforces the many years I shared with my son on this earth.

I was considering this strange paradigm, this shift in my thinking over the past six plus years, and I have come to the conclusion that eventually bereaved parents begin to accept the death of their children on a subconscious level. But before that happens, our subconscious minds wage war on our conscious minds and we experience such terrible emotional lows. It's an internal fight for each of us. Along with the fight to survive, to acquire the will to continue living, we are battling internal forces that must resolve themselves. Once that internal war ends, our healing begins. We will always love and miss our children. We will always shed copious tears for no reason. But something inside of us has shifted, shaping our perspective from this point forward.

So, this Mother's Day I will acknowledge my beautiful son, the wonderful life that he lived, the joy I received in raising him and the wisdom I acquired through the gift of my child. We learn unconditional love when we become mothers. We learn foresight, gentleness, joys in the simple elements of life. I will remember past Mother's Days and think of the wonder that is my only child. I will remember him with much love, more than a few tears and a special sense of thankfulness that his life graced mine for

over 35 years.

I will honor the fact that I am a mother. Although my son does not share this earthly plane with me, he is forever my child and I am forever his mother. This is a bond that time, space and death do not alter. Quietly, with serenity and peace in my heart, I will mark this Mother's Day doing what I want to do. I will know what that will be when I get there. Live in the moment ... that's another element of life that I learned from my son.

We are each unique on our grief journey, and we will each mark this Mother's Day in a different way. Whatever your choice might be, make it your day ... your day to celebrate the eternal bond between mother and child. There is nothing more beautiful.

--Annette Mennen Baldwin TCF Katy, TX
In Memory of my son, Todd Mennen



A Day ... A Very Special Day

Our day ... a very special day. A day that is set aside especially to honor all mothers. Mother ... a beautiful word. What other word could you use to best describe giving birth to, nursing, loving and caring for a tiny, helpless human being, a gift of life to treasure? But weren't we taught that once you gave a gift to someone, you should never take it back? What went wrong?

Mine was taken away from me. Does that mean that I wasn't worthy to be a mother, that I was failing, that I didn't appreciate the gift? The gift was too precious to be given for keeps. It was only loaned to me for a short while. Even in my sorrow, I feel special for I know the true meaning of the word Mother. I have reached the ultimate, from the joy of birth to the sorrow of death. I belong to a special group who truly knows the meaning of the word Mother.

Would I have not accepted the gift if I had known the terrible loss I would feel by having it taken away from me? NO, I would still hold out my hands and accept such a precious gift, for to love and to cherish, even for a short while, is worth every tear.

This year on Mother's Day, I'll shed my tears but let them be as a soft summer's rain - a rain that nourishes the earth, tears that heal and cleanse my heart.

-- Vera Babb, TCF, St. Louis, MO

A BEREAVED MOTHER

A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who stands at a grave wondering how she is going to live the rest of her life without this child.

A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who thinks she will spend the rest of her life with this horrendous feeling inside.

A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who has to learn how to live all over again.

A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who wishes they would take Mother's Day out of the calendar.

A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who has to accept the loss of her beloved child and uses what she has learned to help others.

A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who can again learn to smile, to look forward to the future and get excited again because her

Compassionate Friends were there when she needed them.

--Zel Hester TCF, Atlanta GA

Reflections of a Mother Denied

On this, my first Mothers Day, I asked myself, "Do I have a right to celebrate Mother's Day?" Have I truly been a mother this past year? The answer is yes. Each day I have cared for my child as every mother does, except differently. In every way possible I have mothered him.

I have mothered him with every tear shed: through the agony of longing to hold him. I have rocked him in my heart if not in my arms. I have kissed his little cheeks in my mind if not with my lips. Smelled his sweetness with my hopes if not with my nose. Felt his softness with my memory if not with my hands. Tickled him with my wishes if not with my fingers.

Am I a mother? I truly am. My physical mothering has been limited to lovingly tending to his grave. But I am a mother all the same.

--Michelle M. Parrish Baltimore, MD

A Mother's Love

A mother's love for her child may begin with the very DREAM of becoming a mother...

A mother's love for her child may begin with the THOUGHT of maybe expecting the news...



A mother's love for her child may begin with the VERIFICATION of her expectations...

A mother's love for her child may begin with the AFFIRMATION that a child lives within her...

A mother's love for her child may begin with her GROWING as her child grows within her...

A mother's love for her child may begin with her FIRST SIGHT OF THE NEW LIFE that she has delivered into the world...

A mother's love for her child may begin... But it may never end.

Not even death can steal away a mother's love for child...

A mother's love for her child knows no end!

--Donna M. Rohrbaugh, TCF Anne Arundel County, MD

In Remembrance of John



One bright day he went off to war

My precious first-born son,

To battle in an alien land

In a war that would never be won.

As he said good-bye on that fateful day, My eyes were filled with tears.

He looked so young to be leaving home, Younger than his nineteen years.

The months passed slowly, week by week, The news was ever grim.

Despite my prayer, the fear was there At the thought of losing him.

Then one sad day, it came to pass The knock upon the door.

My dear, brave boy - the one I loved Would be with me no more.

He died heroically, I'm told A good soldier to the end.

He never lost his faith in God And to all he was a friend.

Now his name is engraved on that famous wall For any and all to see.

But, in my aching heart, I wish That he was here with me.

This Memorial Day we remember all the men and women in the armed services and, especially, those who died in the various wars. And we remember their bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings.

--Susan Herndon BP/USA Marion County, NY

Letter from Jimmy

She jumped up as she saw the surgeon come out of the operating room. "How is my little boy? Is he alright? When can I see him?"



The surgeon said, "I'm sorry. We did all we could, but your boy didn't make it." Sally said, "Why do little children get cancer? Doesn't God care any more? Where were you, God, when my son needed you?"

The surgeon asked, "Would you like some time alone with your son? One of the nurses will be out in a few minutes, before he's transported to the university."

Sally asked the nurse to stay with her while she said goodbye to her son. She ran her fingers lovingly through his thick red curly hair.

"Would you like a lock of his hair?," the nurse asked. Sally nodded yes. The nurse cut off a lock, put it in a plastic bag and handed it to Sally.

The mother said, "It was Jimmy's idea to donate his body to the university for study. He said it might help somebody else. I said no at first, but Jimmy said, "Mom, I won't be using it after I die. Maybe it will help some other little boy spend one more day with his Mom." My Jimmy had a heart of gold, always thinking of someone else. Always wanting to help others if he could.

Sally walked out of Children's Mercy Hospital for the last time, after spending most of the last six months there. She put the bag with Jimmy's belongings on the seat beside her in the car. The drive home was difficult. It was even harder to enter the empty house. She carried Jimmy's belongings and the plastic bag with the lock of his hair to her son's room.

She started placing the model cars and other personal things back exactly where he always kept them. She laid down across his bed, hugging his pillow, and cried herself to sleep.

It was around midnight when Sally awoke. Laying beside her on the bed was a folded letter. It said: "Dear Mom, I know you're going to miss me, but don't think that I will ever forget you, or stop loving you, just because I'm not around to say 'I love you.' I will always love you, Mom, even more with each day. Someday we will see each other again."

"Until then, if you want to adopt a little boy so you won't be so lonely, that's okay with me. He

can have my room and old stuff to play with. But, if you decide to get a girl instead, she probably wouldn't like the same things us boys do. You'll have to buy her dolls and stuff girls like, you know. Don't be sad thinking about me."

"This really is a neat place. Grandma and Grandpa met me as soon as I got here and showed me around some, but it will take a long time to see everything. The angels are so cool. I love to watch them fly. And, you know what? Jesus does not look like any of his pictures, but when I saw Him, I knew it was Him. Jesus himself took me to see GOD! And guess what, Mom? I got to sit on God's knee and talk to Him, like I was somebody important."

"That's when I told Him that I wanted to write you a letter, to tell you goodbye and everything. But I already knew that wasn't allowed. Well, you know what, Mom? God handed me some paper and His own personal pen to write you this letter. I think Gabriel is the name of the angel who is going to drop this letter off to you."

"God said for me to give you the answer to one of the questions you asked Him: 'Where was God when I needed him?' God said He was in the same place with me as when His son Jesus was on the cross. He was right there, as He always is with all His children."

"Oh, by the way, Mom, no one else can see what I've written except you. To everyone else this is just a blank piece of paper. Isn't that cool? I have to give God His pen back now. He needs it to write some more names in the Book of Life. Tonight I get to sit at the table with Jesus for supper. I'm sure the food will be great."

"Oh, I almost forgot to tell you. I don't hurt anymore. The cancer is all gone. I'm glad because I couldn't stand that pain anymore, and God couldn't stand to see me hurt so much, either. That's when He sent the Angel of Mercy to come get me. The angel said I was a Special Delivery! How about that?"

"With Love from God, Jesus & Me"
--Connie Haighi TCF, Independence MO

*Your heart will mend, but it will...
... be a different heart,
... wear a deep and lasting scar,
... be a more compassionate heart,
... know life in a new and different way,
... understand the Eternity of Love.*
--Nancy Green, TCF, Livonia, MI

Seeds To Grow

Spring is when we think of things growing. We see a rebirth of the barren trees and we watch the grass getting greener. Some of the perennial flowers start to bloom. It makes me wonder just what happens to life. This is also when many of us think of planting some form of garden.



May is the birth month of my first son. He loved flowers, but not gardening. It was a chore to get him to help with yard work, but he would often ask me the names of different flowers. Roses were his favorite.

Somehow this led me to thinking about our grief when a child dies. After my children died, I was aware that seeds had been planted and were growing within me. The first seed was anger. I was angry at my youngest son for being careless with his precious life and angry at God for not taking better care of him. I was bitter because I would not experience events in my life that others would have: graduations, weddings, Sunday dinners and Little League games for my grandchildren. Nor would I have anyone to whom I could pass down family heirlooms and traditions.

But, there were other kinds of seeds growing too. There were caring and kind friends who tried to help or say the right thing. Many were mere acquaintances who went out of their way to show caring and concern. Gradually, I became aware of compassion growing in me. It is the kind of compassion that comes from knowing the pain and sorrow that someone else is experiencing.

There are no words that can express this kind of compassion. I look at obituary columns and when the one listed is young, immediately my thoughts are of the parents. I know their soul racking pain and I spend a moment in prayer for them, hoping to help them through an awful time. This compassion takes the form of not expecting others whose children have died to be able to function well for a very long time. This compassion has grown out of my own pain, and out of the love I have for children.

Sometimes, I'm aware of the struggle these seedlings have within me. Which of them will become strong and survive? I try to fertilize the gentle, caring and compassionate seedlings, but sometimes, like weeds in a garden, the bitterness and anger creep in and all but choke the other seedlings. It seems I have to be vigilant in

nurturing the seedlings I want to represent the effect my children's lives have had on me.

In their memory, I will continue to weed out the anger, bitterness, impatience and intolerance. I will do this to show them my undying love.

--Bridie Tracy, North Branford, CT

The Burden of Guilt ...

Guilt evokes a sense of failure, remorse and shame. It often accompanies unexpected death. All opportunities to change the tenor of the relationship or erase a hotheaded moment seem to be swept away. Questions about what you might have done to avert the death gnaw at you. Guilt may also arise when a relationship was rocky or when the emotions you feel— numbness, anger, relief, or even surges of happiness, don't seem to be what other people think you should feel. When a death follows a long or difficult illness, care givers may feel guilty about feeling a sense of relief.

Getting Over Guilt ... These exercises may help you ease feelings of guilt following a death. Write a letter. Express your feelings to the person who died. Read it aloud in a favorite spot or perhaps in a place where you can feel his or her presence. Keep the letter with you so you can read it or add to it whenever you like. Consider good and bad. Write down the good things about the relationship or things you are glad to have shared. Then mark down what worked poorly in the relationship or things you wish you hadn't shared. Accept that people—including you—are imperfect. You can't always give or get love in the way you might wish to do so.

Talk to a friend. Discussing your feelings with an empathetic friend can help lighten the burden of guilt and may reveal other perspectives that you are overlooking.

--South Suburban Chapter Evergreen Park, IL

Words---perspective

I can't sleep. It is very early morning. The house is quiet, yet my brain is full of noise. My stomach is churning. What is all this anxiety, what is on my mind? Through my early morning brain fog I am aware; this feeling is all too familiar. Today is your _____. Go ahead say it, say the

words.

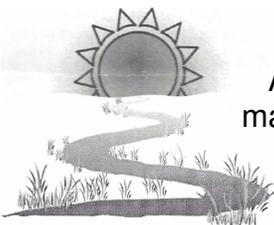
My brain fights to suppress the thought. The memory of the moment my life changed forever. Okay, okay I will say it, it is the day you _____. I still struggle with the words. It is the day of the year so many of us dread. It is the date on the right side of a brass plaque, or an expensive piece of marble. It is the date in the newspaper that represents THE END. It is the date after the dash. There is a now famous poem written about "The Dash", one key stroke that represents an entire life span. How can a month, day and year be so powerful? Ask any bereaved parent and they will tell you. Each will describe or say the words with great pain and difficulty for these three words describe the date our own lives were irrevocably changed forever.

Over the years since this happened to me, (see, I am not even saying what happened, but you know, you understand), I have heard any number of terms to describe an event that is indescribable in a parent's life. Passed on, expired, went home, left us, perished, ended it all, rested in peace, changed form, etc, etc. We have sun rises, sun sets, birth dates, death dates, anniversary dates, going home dates. Different cultures have different words. Some families have codes of silence where it is improper to ever speak of the event again. We usually choose the words that most palatably roll off of our tongue without choking on them. This takes repetitive practice and some will choke on them forever. Sometimes we just call the day "IT". "It happened". "It was". "It is", fill in the blank.

No matter how many years go by this is always a profound, poignant day in the calendar year. Is it the anticipation, or the brain's continued need to grapple with the heart and head to disconnect? Knowing, yet trying to make sense of the events culminating in 3 words.

My words to describe this date in my life have changed over the years. What feels comfortable rolling off my tongue today may change next year. This is an ongoing journey, and tomorrow my perspective and words may change.

--Linda Coughlin Brooks RN, griefandgrow.com



"Grief is like a long valley,
A winding valley where any bend
may reveal a totally new landscape."
From a Grief Observed
by C.S. Lewis

For James on Memorial Day

This Memorial Day,
We remember you,
Not as a soldier who fought a battle read about
between the pages of our history book,
Not as a soldier who fought for his country,
for values and a way of life worth preserving.

We remember you,
As a soldier on the battlefield of life,
Valiantly struggling through your own personal
war,
A war none of us were aware of,
And all of us would have taken up arms for,
in your cause.
We would have rallied, given muskets of courage,
Canons of patience, barrels of understanding,
Rifles loaded with love and compassion,
But you didn't let us know we needed to come to
your aid,
We didn't know you were on the battlefield all
alone.

The dragons of despair, the monsters of
melancholy,
The shadows of stress and the presence of
pressures,
We would have slain them, we would have
lessened their ability
To lead you astray from a life full of hope, promise
and love.
But now we remember you, this Memorial Day,
For you Valiantly fought a battle only this family is
vaguely aware of
You were our little soldier, our happy carefree,
confident companion.
We wish we could have helped you,
But this was one battle you had to selfishly fight by
yourself.
And you've helped us to be aware that we are all
here for each other,
Through life's joyous occasions as well as the
tragic events,
We treasure our memories of you and of our times
together,
We remember you with love,
But most of all, James,
We love you and remember you always.
-Meg Avery
TCF, Lawrenceville, GA



Stillbirth

What an unbelievable shock it is then, when a stillbirth occurs, especially if it follows an uneventful pregnancy. When our baby dies, our dreams die, too. When we arrived at the hospital, perhaps only a few hours earlier, we thought we would be going home with a healthy new baby. Now, we are left empty and shell shocked.

If we had been expecting our first child, we are destined to go home to the house that once seemed comfortable with only the two of us - to a house that now seems strangely empty and depressing.

We have seen tremendous anger accompanying a stillbirth. This anger may be directed at the doctors, the hospital, the spouse, and even God. And sometimes it is directed internally against ourselves.

Guilt feelings are common. "What did I do wrong? Was it my fault?" We need to find some explanation for what has happened. When there is none, we may look inward. We examine everything that transpired in the preceding nine months, seeking a clue. Perhaps it was a fall or medication. "Did I lift something that was too heavy?" Young parents are often unprepared when tragedy strikes. For many young parents, the death of their child is the first time they have had to confront mortality. Help and compassion are needed as they enter an unfamiliar, dark time. They need wide latitude in saying and experiencing the words and feelings that come naturally at such a sad time.

Many of us who lose a loved one are comforted by happy memories. We recall funny times, sad times, even angry times. We can look at pictures and belongings that remind us of our child. But we who lose a child through miscarriage or stillbirth have none of those memories. Instead we grieve for a different type of loss-the loss of hope, the loss of dreams for our child. There may be other children in the future, but we will never be able to relive the joyous days of our innocence.

- Excerpted from Facing the Ultimate Loss: Coping with the Death of a Child by Robert J. Marx and Susan Wengerhoff Davidson

Newly Bereaved...

Why Me?

One of the most difficult parts about grief is trying to find an answer to the question, "Why me?" Life can be brutally unfair, and grief is no respecter of persons. When we least expect it, loss can come knocking at our door only to leave us feeling totally exhausted, shocked, and alone in our pain. Nobody is ever prepared for the feelings of loss that accompany the death of someone we love.

Even though "why" is the one question that nags us day and night, I don't think there will ever be a way of finding the answer to that question. At least not an answer that is to our satisfaction. Life is very unfair, and because of that, bad things do happen to good people- people who deserve only the best in life!

When pain from loss enters our world that was once so innocent, it can knock us off our feet for a while. Our world as we once knew it no longer exists. We must now learn how to live in a place that is completely foreign to us. We must learn to speak a new language and adapt to new and different ways of doing things.

There is a tendency for us to long for life to be as it once was before death entered our world; yet the "normal" we once knew cannot ever be the same again. The life we now have has been transformed by loss. We heal by feeling what we need to feel when we need to feel it. We heal by allowing our broken hearts to be embraced by hope. We heal by believing that life is worth living- even when we don't have all of the answers. We heal because we believe that life will one day feel joy again!

--Clara Hinton TCF Atlanta online

For Friends and Family...



If a Dog Was Your Teacher

Funny how you can get an e-mail or read an article and a sentence will jump right out at you. It just happened to me. The title was, "If a Dog Was Your Teacher" you would learn things like: If someone is sad, sit quietly nearby and nuzzle gently once in a while. It reminded me so much of how things were in the beginning of this journey,

when I was in the worst pain ever imaginable. All I wanted was for someone to hug me, let me hold onto them. I needed desperately to sob, and I needed someone to hold me while I was in the throes of the pain that felt like it was ripping my heart out. I DID NOT need advice on how to go about my pain.

There were only four people in the last fourteen months who knew to do this. They said, "I don't know what to say," or "I am so sorry, can I give you a hug?" Or they just pulled me into their embrace.

We are like little children, or babies even, at that time. The pain is there and words won't fix it. What works with a baby (cuddle, rock, make soothing sounds until the baby can be calm again) works for an adult who has lost a loved one to suicide. Touch, human contact, warmth, all are Nature's healers, not words. When we are ready for words, we will ask questions.

I think of us as butterflies, but for now, we are trapped within a cocoon. God put that cocoon around us for our protection. We will emerge when it is time, when we can handle the light. In the meantime, someone else can't release us because it is our journey, our path to walk, and trying to pry us out before it is time will do more harm than good. We will be an example for others, yet we can't do it for them either. We will speak hope by example, hope that the pain will lessen, hope that tomorrows are worthwhile, and hope that life goes on.

So, please don't be surprised if I just walk up to you and hug you and hold you, but don't speak. I am giving to you what I so desperately needed. I have no words of wisdom that will make it better; I just want you to know that you don't have to walk it alone. We all want you to know that, and we are here, as you need us.

--Judi Hale, Andy's Mom (Reprinted from Survivors of Suicide Loss (SOSL) San Diego Newsletter, Summer 2006.)



Welcome...

Lesson from the Aspens

Many living things need each other to survive. If you have ever seen a Colorado aspen tree, you may have noticed that it does not grow alone. Aspens are found in clusters, or groves. The reason is that the aspen sends up

new shoots from the roots. In a small grove, all of the trees may actually be connected by their roots. Giant California redwood trees may tower 300 feet into the sky.

It would seem that they would require extremely deep roots to anchor them against strong winds. But we're told that their roots are actually quite shallow - in order to capture as much surface water as possible. And they spread in all directions, intertwining with other redwoods. Locked together in this way, all trees support each other in wind and storms. Like the aspen, they never stand alone. They need each other to survive.

People, too, are connected by a system of roots. We are born to family and learn early to make friends. We are not meant to survive long without others. And like the redwood, we need to hold one another up. When pounded by the sometimes vicious storms of life, we need others to support and sustain us.

Have you been going it alone? Maybe its time to let someone else help hold you up for awhile. Or perhaps someone needs to hang on to you.

--From the book, *RICHES OF THE HEART* by Steve Goodier. Special permission to reprint granted to The Compassionate Friends by the author.

Editor's Note: We encourage all bereaved parents to reach out to other bereaved parents you meet at the meetings. Get a phone number, connect on a one on one basis. These unique friendships develop and strengthen our resolve that we can manage to overcome our pain and loss.



Helpful Hint...

Let Go of Your Child, But Hang on to the Memories

There are so many bereaved parents in this world. There are just a few that will understand what I am about to say: The only way to hang on and live is to let your child go. You have to say good-bye, not for forever, just until you can be reunited in heaven. It's hard to let go. It's hard to say good-bye. You never really believe that your child could be better off someplace else. The pain and the heartache will grow dimmer in time and your memories will be a

great comfort.

My baby meant the world to me, but until I let go and I quit holding on to what I wanted but couldn't have, I couldn't find peace. No one will ever replace my daughter and no one will ever take away my memories. I said goodbye to my baby's flesh and blood and I let her spirit wrap around me and give me a quiet inner strength that I never thought I could have.

Somewhere up in the high heavens my baby's spirit watches over me and protects me. And when I feel content and happy, I know that Jami is smiling. It's a very special bond because we both know that we will be together again.

--Jerri Roppel TCF So. Central, KY

Book in Review ...



WHEN MEN GRIEVE Why Men Grieve Differently & How You Can Help, by Elizabeth Levang, Ph.D. This new title helps to explain what we have always suspected but never quite understood: men do grieve. Readers will discover that men have no language for grief and think rather than feel their way through the grieving process. Filled with sound, caring advice for women, the book encourages spouses, partners, friends and family to honor their own feelings while striving to understand and empathize with the grieving male in their life. (paper) Available from the Centering Corp. Call (402) 533-1200 for a current catalog. (Remember to tell them you are a member of TCF for free shipping.)

"For years I never knew whether the twilight was the ending of the day or the beginning of the night and then; Suddenly one day, I understood this did not matter at all for time is but a circle and so there is no beginning and no ending and this is how I came to know that birth and death are one and it is neither the coming or going that is of consequence. What is of consequence is the beauty that one gathers in this interlude called life."

--Winston Abbott -Come Walk Among The Stars

The Role Model

I watch with wonderment as you go about your daily tasks.

I see the determination, the quiet confidence,
And wonder if you were always like that
Or did your child's death touch you deep inside
And soften your soul?

Did your priorities change?

Did your pace slow?

Am I seeing the new you or the old?

I see you laughing and talking with friends and wonder

If you still cry

When you're alone

And remember your child

With death memories

Too bitter to own?

Or have you traveled to a higher plane,
Another phase

Beyond the tears and grief

And fears and untold sorrows

That trap me in their maze?

I don't know.

I know only that I look to you

And hold on tightly

With hope in my heart

That someday I, too,

Can gather strength. .

And find my new start.

--TCF, Montgomery, AL

I'm afraid, you might say,

Of other children's voices

As they come out to play.

I'm afraid of the feelings

Deep down in my heart;

With all the pain and the hurt

I may fall apart.

Shall I shut all the windows

So I don't hear a thing?

Shall I shut my eyes

So I can't see the Spring?

Shall I let winter live

The whole year through?

And feel safer inside

And a lot colder too.

--Penny Lenehan, TCF, Brookside, NJ



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

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

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

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

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

Brandon Armstrong
Miscarried: July 1995
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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: David Brennan &
Lisa Jo Brennan Bright

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ophelia 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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Our Children Remembered



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Dakota Max Haight
Born: 11/88 Died: 9/12
Parents: Gail Cochran & Bill
Scarr
Brother: Arizona Cochran

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Joel Draper
Born: 1/84 Died: 5/08
Mother: Tracy Solis

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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
Cramer

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bernard Lawrence
Born: 2/63 Died: 12/06
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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Our Children Remembered



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Dominic Roque
Born: 8/02 Died: 1/09
Parents: Kerrie & Ren Roque

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

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

Shannon Quigly
Born: 11/2/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen Shortridge

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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: 8/94
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Joel Paulson Draper
Born: 1/84 Died: 3/04
Mother: Tracy Solis

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

Larry A. Stauffer
Born: 1/67 Died: 5/08
Mother: Shirley Finnin
Miaamor Jennine Steeh
Born: 7/05 Died: 9/10
Father: Donya Steen

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ubong Jabari Uko
Born: 2/81 Died: 5/09
Mother: Denise DuesVance
C. Valdez
Born: 10/90 Died: 3/12
Mother: Maria R. Valdez

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

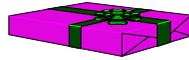
Our Children Remembered

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.)

A Birthday Tribute to: Robert Andrew Mead 5/65 - 4/11



Bob -

You would have celebrated your 48th birthday this year. I can't/don't want to believe you've been gone 2 years. How I long to hear that marvelous laugh of yours - it started at your toes and bubbled up through your entire body.

Your bravery and courage, when your doctors told you there was nothing else they could do, inspires me to be brave during lonely hours. It inspires your brother, who learned in the week after your death, that his cancer had returned and metastasized, to fight on.

I held you in my arms for your first breath and your last. I'll hold you in my heart for eternity.

Love, Mom

A Birthday Tribute to: Edward W. Myricks II April 1972 - October 2011



Son,

Here comes your second birthday without you. Your Dad and I didn't think we'd make it this far. We all love and miss you very much. You'll be forever

in our hearts and always, always on our minds.
Love, Mom, Dad, Daughter Alyssa,
and Sister Audrey



For Siblings...

What Are We Waiting For?

My brother-in-law opened the bottom drawer of my sister's bureau and lifted out a tissue-wrapped package. "This", he said, "is not a slip. This is lingerie." He discarded the tissue and handed me the slip. It was exquisite; silk, handmade, and trimmed with a cobweb of lace. The price tag with an astronomical figure was still attached. "Jan bought it the first time we went to New York eight or nine years ago. She never wore it. She was saving it for a special occasion. Well, I guess this is the special occasion."

He took the slip from me and put it on the bed with the other clothes we were taking to the funeral home. His hands lingered on the soft material and turned to me. "Don't ever save anything for a special occasion, every day you're alive is a special occasion."

I remember those words through the funeral and the days that followed when I helped him attend to all the sad chores that follow an unexpected death. I thought about them on the plane returning home. I thought about all the things she hadn't seen or heard or done. I thought about the things that she had done without realizing that they were special. I still think about his words and how they've changed my life. I read more and dust less. I sit on the deck and admire the view without fussing about the weeds in the garden. I spend more time with my family and friends and less time in committee meetings.

Whenever possible, life should be a pattern of experience to savor, not endure. I try to recognize those moments now and cherish them. I don't save anything. We use our good china for every special event-such as losing a pound, getting the sink unstopped, or discovering the first camellia blossom. I wear my good blazer to the market if I feel like it. I don't save my good perfume for special parties. "Someday" and "one of these days" are losing their grip on my vocabulary. If it's worth seeing, hearing, or doing, I want to see, hear

and do it now.

I am not sure what my sister would have done had she known that she wouldn't be here for the tomorrows we all take for granted. I think she would have called family members and a few close friends. She might have called a few former friends to apologize and mend faces for past squabbles. It's these little things left undone that would make me angry if I knew my hours were limited— angry because I put off seeing good friends, angry because I hadn't written certain letters that intend to write, angry and sorry that I didn't tell my husband and daughter often enough how much I truly love them. I am trying not to put off, hold back, or save anything that would add laughter and luster to our lives.

Every morning, when I open my eyes, I tell myself that it's a special day,
--Ann Wells Laguna Niquel, CA

A Mother's Tear

I hear the wailing cry of a mother as she is told her child is gone.

I see the pain each and every hour since, as she tries to keep herself together to make the necessary arrangements.

I hear her sob all night long as she begs God to "please bring her child back to her".

I hear her cry out, "Why my child, why not me?" "Why does this have to happen to me?"

"What did I ever do to have to go through the rest of my life without my child?"

I heard her say that she "never fathomed that the depth of pain could ever be so deep".

She says "it hurts too much to even breathe."

She asked God, "how can I keep going on when I no longer exist inside?"

I hear her say to herself, "I can't go on, the pain is too strong."

I see her die a little more every day since then.

I know inside me that she is but a shell of herself. And she will never be whole again.

I hear her say "I cannot go on, please God, please take me too".

Her love is so strong, she longs to be joined with her child.

She loves this child enough to want to go away.

But I beg you, dear Mother, "PLEASE, LOVE ME ENOUGH TO STAY."

-- Rev. Tina Marie Thompson In memory of

Troy Michael Franklin, and friend, Johnny Ristic-Likes

A Special Note To All Siblings:

An emotional and sentimental day is Mother's Day. It can be a very lonely day for moms, even if there are other children in the family. Lonely because that one child is not here to wish her "Happy Mother's Day".

So if your Mom is not responding as you would like her to on that day, give her a big hug and tell her you love her. Be gentle with her. Together both of you can remember the good times, and make this Mother's Day one you both will remember for a long time.

-- TCF, Marysville, WA

For Grandparents...



Remembering Grandmothers

Grandmothers are often the forgotten grievers. We turn to our mother (our child's grandmother) for comfort and support during our grief, not realizing that she is suffering not only the grief of losing a beloved grandchild, but the pain of watching her child suffer.

We acknowledge your strength and your love and your love and your wisdom, and we thank God for your existence.

With love always, from your child
--Coeur d'Laene, ID TCF newsletter

From Our Members...



Newly Bereaved

They call me newly bereaved,
It seems like time has stood still.

They come with their stories,
Their ideas, their gifts of hope,

And we listen, and we cry,
and we listen and we cry.

I go home and think,
I think about what was said at that special place.

With those special people, and it helps.
It helps put salve on my open wound,

It helps to heal a heart that will never heal,
But maybe one day it will not hurt so much.

I am newly bereaved, but NOT alone.
--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 contact our editor.

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.

Our Website... We are now posting a tribute page for each of our children. Please visit the 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 TCF National Conference with its many talks and workshops aimed at making the grief journey easier will be held in Boston, MA, on July 5-7 this year. Early registration is recommended. If you are interested, you will find more information on the National website, www.compassionatefriends.org.

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.

TCF Webinar... About once a month The Compassionate Friends offers a free webinar. Please go to: www.compassionatefriends.org and on the right hand side of the homepage, you will see "Webinars." Click on that - you can review the webinars that have already taken place as well as sign up for the next one. These seminars have been great!!

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
 - Joey Vines..... (310) 658-4339
 - Sue Gardner..... (310) 316-3777

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

Library Information... At each meeting we have a library table. It is on the honor system. You may borrow a book and can bring it back at the next meeting. Many of you have books you got when you were newly bereaved and may no longer need. Perhaps you would like to donate books on grief that you found helpful. If you wish to donate a book to our library, please let the librarian know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

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

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. Also Spanish. Call Claire Towle or Patty Ellis (310) 374-6323

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
beyondindogp.com griefwatch.dom
angelmoms.com babysteps.com
webhealing.com healingafterloss.org
survivorsof suicide.com opentohope.com
taps.org (military death) alivealone.org
bereavedparentsusa.org childloss.com
goodgriefresources.com save.org
pomc.com (families of murder victims)

LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS

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

STEERING COMMITTEE OFFICERS:

CHAPTER LEADERS: Cheryl Stephens & Linda Zelik

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks

TREASURER: Ken Konopasek

CARDS & WEBSITE: Crystal Henning

NEW MEMBER FOLLOW-UP: Cheryl Stephens



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

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

Elizabeth Mann, July 1960 - May, 2005. In loving memory of our dear Liza. You are in our thoughts and we miss you so much.
Your sad Mum and Vicki

In loving memory of Victoria Winchester, Feb. 1957 - Feb. 1984. To an "angel of a child."
From, her Mother

In loving memory of Emily Matilda, June 1995 - March 2006. Miss you forever Sweetie Pie.
All Our Love, Mom & Jessica

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 _____

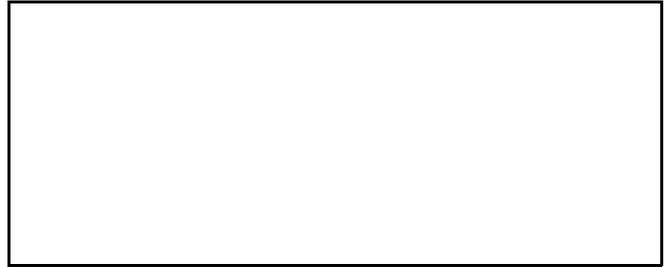
To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month or it will appear in the following issue.

Compassionate Friends
South Bay/L.A., CA Chapter
P.O. Box 11171
Torrance, CA 90510-1171
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*How beautiful
the world would be
if all loved one another
as a mother loves her own.
-- John Gray*



May 2013

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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