



# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *South Bay/LA Chapter*

### **Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

JANUARY 2018 ISSUE

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

**OUR NEXT MEETING**  
will be Jan. 3rd, 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)

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

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

The Compassionate Friends  
Mission Statement...

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

The Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>. meeting will start with "Facing the New Year and Our Changing Grief."

Don't forget to send in your updated information for our data base.

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

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

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**The Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting will start with “Facing the New Year and our Changing Grief.”** The start of a new year comes with mixed feelings for the bereaved family. Some think of it as moving further away from you child. Some think of it as a challenge to rebuild a more productive life and still others don't have a clue as what to expect in 2018. All we know is we want the pain to end! We will go through many feelings in our grief, sometimes not noticing how far we have come since our child's death. As the new year starts, perhaps it is time to take stock of how far we have come and what is helping us. No matter how long it has been, the bottom line is we have to re-learn how to live a normal, happy, and productive life without our child present. Come join us as we attempt to find ways we can turn our pain into something bearable and begin to look forward to the new year.

### The New Year: A Time of Hope



Another New Year has slipped into our lives, radically changing some things and leaving other things to evolve naturally. For bereaved parents a new year marks another year on the calendar without their precious children. It is a new year, but not much has changed since the old year. Why is that?

We act as the catalysts of change for ourselves. We choose to help ourselves; we choose to stay in a specific place in our grief. We choose to reach out for hope or we choose to withdraw into the familiar and postpone facing life and hope another day. There are no set rules or specific timetables in bereavement. We are each unique in our grief.

Eventually we all find hope. We find it in different ways and in different times. There will be no one moment of epiphany for bereaved parents. Instead, there are a series of minutes, hours, weeks, months and often years until we realize that we can truly say we feel the power of hope coming alive from deep within us. This moment will come for each of us. It will come in its own time and its own way.

Even those of us who have found hope and who shine its light on the paths of newly bereaved parents, still regress and withdraw into the dark sadness of our loss. And that is as it should be. For we have lost the most precious gift of our lives...our children's presence with us and their

future in this life. Our children live in our hearts and our memories and our dreams. They do not share this plane with us. It is normal and it is good to think of our children often and to shed some tears for all that has been lost. These aren't setbacks as much as sweet memories that bring cathartic tears.

The element we find in these memories is a closeness to our child and our child's life. This, too, is healthy. An often-expressed fear is that our children will be forgotten. Worry not, gentle parent, your child will be remembered for all of your days and for many days thereafter.

You will never forget your child. Others who knew your child will never forget. The proof of this is in our memories...sweet memories that take us back to another time when our child was with us. So this New Year's, whether you are a few months, a few years or many years in your grief, think about hope. You have not forsaken your child when you reach for hope. Your hope brings your child back in a positive way that will warm your heart. Reach for that hope. As you move forward in your grief in the New Year, reach for hope. Your child will still be with you. And one day you will find that your child's presence is sweeter when hope is within you.

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

### Grief Fatigue

Do you ever feel like me? Right now, I am utterly tired of grief. I don't want to hurt, cry or feel empty. I want to scream. I am sick of it. I can't get away from the always-aching pit in my heart and soul. I search for understanding. I do all I can in the memory of my child who is gone and the others like her. I try to move into life again. I smile, I laugh, but inside I ache, my soul literally burns inside my body. This ache in my heart grows worse and harsher each day.

Some say it gets better – WHEN??? That is what I want to know. When in this life am I going to feel better? I learn to live like this. It has not eased or vanished...I just cope better. Inside me I desire my child, outside I act fine and dandy! I want to feel whole, confident, full, happy, all the things that are so long gone I can't remember them. Oh, what I wouldn't give for the bliss of ignorance once more.

--A Bereaved Mom, TCF Greater New Orleans newsletter



## Grieving Heart

There are three major points for you to keep in mind as you go through your "work of mourning": You will have your own unique way of expressing and experiencing grief. As long as it is changing, and moving, and "fluid", it is normal grieving. You are in for the roller coaster ride of your life. It is the nature of the beast. Grief is not orderly and predictable. It will wax and wane. You may reach a period of relative calm, and a break from the tears.

"What a relief" you'll think, "Maybe I'm finally reaching the stage of acceptance". And then, WHAMO! Brought to your knees again by intense grief. And you'll wonder if you are making any progress at all. You are. The passage of time assures this. It really will come to an end. In its' own time. You will come back to life with loving remembrance in your heart, ready to embrace life again without your beloved at your side. You will gradually feel stronger and more in charge of your life. It really does end.

Am I going crazy? No, you're not going crazy. And you are also not alone in feeling like you are "losing it". When you think about the overwhelming loss you've experienced, it is indeed a miracle that you don't lose your sanity! But there's a safety net built into the wondrous grief cycle that somehow keeps you safe in the storm. You will survive this, sanity intact, and eventually go on to reclaim your life and some degree of joy, despite your loss.

There are many ways in which grief can touch you-- physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. It's an all encompassing thing, you know? You need to understand that there are a wide range of "grief symptoms", and you may wonder what is "normal" and what is not. Rest assured that almost ANY symptom you might have, although it would be considered alarming otherwise, is perfectly normal during grieving.  
--www.recover-fromgrief.com

## Thinking, Getting Through

I'm sometimes told that I think too much. That's not wholly true, but I do set off on some strange thought journeys. I read a statement once that said something like this, 'The older we get, we just become more and more of what we already are.' That was the scariest thing I'd ever read. I thought a lot about those character traits that have hung on

over the years. What was once deemed to be odd little quirks, now had the potential to grow to huge proportions and ensure me of a lonely old age, avoided by all my relations! It's good I think, once in awhile, to get on the road to self examination. To paraphrase someone else, 'the unexamined life isn't really worth much.'

Where was I going with all of this? Oh yes, in terms of bereavement, I think we come to it and through it as we already are. Bereavement doesn't confer sainthood on us even though some observing from the outside might think we must automatically have some marvelous insights hidden from the rest of society. Losing a child or sibling does give us an opportunity though to examine what it is we are really about and how we would like to conduct ourselves from here forward.

So, if there is a gift in bereavement I think it has to be the gift of self examination. A pause to reflect. We can learn profoundly from the lessons of compassion, tolerance, patience and honesty. We can learn to examine our motives and not waste our precious time indulging in behaviors or actions that make us less than we can be. If we miss the opportunity to grow through adversity and grief, we miss out on the last gift we can give our loved ones, living or dead; the chance to leave the world a little better than we found it.

We bereaved parents seem to use that phrase a lot...getting through. Getting through Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, birthdays, anniversaries. At some point we stop just getting through and begin again to enjoy the special days and all those who share them with us. That doesn't mean we have forgotten our absent children or put aside precious memories. We carry those loved ones together with all our past joys into the present; telling our stories of good times and shared joy and let them sweeten today's special times. Tears and laughter will revive us, when we are ready, in all the special days to come.  
--Stephen Levine

## Other Children

I know it is inevitable. One day (hopefully) all the younger siblings will surpass their angel brother...but with that comes a whole new adjustment.

Having other children is not always the 'logical blessing' non-grieving people think they are. No one can prepare you for the grief work that shows

up when your other children 'pass' your angel child in earth years. It is hard. It is draining. I find myself once again struggling with motivation each day to continue experiencing life.

Logically I feel the emotions as one by one they experience the 'last things' their brother did and move past them. I want to sit in the corner and kick and scream how unfair it all is. But that is rather illogical, and few people would understand what my problem really was.

The next option is be brave and face the moment with a smile on my face and tears in my eyes. But someone always notices and comments "How sweet! You are so proud you are crying...." Secretly I want to tell that person to shut-up...in not so kind terms of course. Just go away. Leave me alone. I do not want to talk about my tears, my pride in my earth children, or my regret over my angel child. I am a jumbled emotional mess inside and no amount of "tell me about it" will help. I can barely find the words to explain myself to myself.

Logically my behavior is quite illogical. Spock from Star Trek would be perplexed by me. How do you explain looking forward to incredible things this coming year but dreading each and every day? Stuck in another inevitable countdown to another 'anniversary date' - the day my earth children become older than my angel child - I am overwhelmed just thinking about thinking about it. Thankfully the actual day will be numb, courtesy of the emotional exhaustion of the countdown process.

Of course, I am not the only one in this place. If this time is hard for me, what it is like for my earth children? I have a hard time understanding the view from my own shoes I am walking in; what is the view from their shoes like? How do I help them through this?

The functional side of me says forget the "Put on your oxygen mask first" bit - Spock where are you, I need some logical advice for this illogical time, please.

-- Chelle editor Eastside WA newsletter

## A Candle for My Child



Each night as darkness settles over our home, a little candle begins flickering in the east window of our stair case landing. The tiny light burns until dawn and then silently is quenched with the rising sun. This is my son's light. About a year after Todd died, the leader of our chapter suggested a

candle in the window for the holidays, as I had no inclination to decorate. I placed a candle there, and I have now replaced that candle with yet another candle. This is Todd's candle...this is Todd's light.

Todd's candle has a Victorian appearance and will burn steady or flicker. When the darkness comes forth, Todd's candle begins its nightly vigil...a vigil that will not end until I am dead. Although this is a small gesture, it has deep meaning for me. Sometimes I awaken in the middle of the night and walk into the atrium at the foot of the steps by the light of Todd's candle. I'll grab a glass of water and watch the candle flicker. Other times in the early evening, when only a reading lamp is lit in the living room, I will look into the atrium. Todd's light shines. I feel as if he is with me somehow, in the light of this little candle. I think about him, his life, his joys, his sorrows, his immense capacity to love and to laugh. I feel a deep closeness to my son that cannot be explained to anyone but those who have lost a child. I understand that there is much peace and solace in keeping my child in my heart and life and in establishing my own private rituals of remembrance.

Leaving a candle in the window has been an American tradition since the Colonial Era. The candle symbolizes the warmth and security of the family home and its message is loyalty to a family member who is not present. So, it is fitting that Todd's candle shines each night...reminding all that he is absent from our home, but not our hearts.

Each of us has a ritual of remembrance of our child. Some of us have consciously established this. Others have unconsciously done so. But there is a ritual that brings our child close to us, only to us. Our rituals are a very personal choice.

I chose not to share my ritual for 2 ½ years. Then one day a child who lives across the street asked me about the candle. I told her that it is my son's candle. She asked if he was in Iraq. "No, I said, he's in heaven." A momentary look of fright passed over her face, and then she smiled. "I thought you had kids. You act like a mom."

Her innocent comment about me "acting like a mom" once again reinforced the fact that we will always be parents. Those of us who have children who have died will always be parents to those children. That role has shaped who we are, and intensified it more with the death of our precious child.

This is one element of losing a child that

escapes the general population. If you have not lost a child, you don't understand, you can't understand the feelings and emotions that run so deeply in our psyches and our souls. Our Compassionate Friends understand those emotions and our need to speak of our children, to deal with our overwhelming loss. Whether for a season or the rest of our lives, we have been good friends for each other. When I see Todd's candle, I think of my child, other parents, their children, their loss, my loss, the totality of the sorrow that enters our meeting room every month, and yet, I also think of the joy. There is a peaceful joy, a sense of serenity in knowing you are not alone and isolated in your unique grief. Others are walking with you on the road of life after the death of their children.

So now, when I gaze at Todd's candle, I remember his life, the security he felt within these walls, the growing up years, the love, loyalty and emotional stability he experienced as a child which enabled him to become a man of courage, self confidence and gentleness in the face of life's worst and best. I think of the other children and the parents left behind...the sons and daughters of my Compassionate Friends. These children are missed, they are loved and they, too, are kept forever in a parent's heart. Their parents share a common bond with me that will follow each of us to our last day. We have lost our precious, beautiful children. We know what pure and overwhelming grief really is. We walk this road together as Compassionate Friends. And we remember, each of us in our own way. Todd's candle is one way to tell him that I love him as only a mother can love...unconditionally and forever. And I will always remember. I will always be Todd's mom. I have found that being a parent is a lifetime journey...even when our children are not with us on life's road. As parents, we define ourselves as interwoven with the fabric of our children's lives. We always remember. There is comfort in that.

--Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF Katy, TX

### **A Sibling Dies: For Don**



It is January first. My heart twinkles once again because the holidays are over. How can a season of light bring so much dark? Thirty years ago, on Christmas morning, my brother died in our home by suicide in a very violent manner. He was 23; my other brother was 24; and I was 19 years old. Our family of five was irretrievably shattered. Don, my

brother who died, was so much a part of us.

He brought so much joy in his living and then so much pain in his dying. Who am I to grieve him still? The memories well up every December like a deep dark night unbidden. Anger, sadness, rejection, guilt become my Christmas ornaments. "Give me back my family – give me back my Christmas, you creep. Give me back your laughter," I want to shout at him. Who am I to miss him? Who am I to rage when he was the one in the grips of a pain so untenable that he could not speak of it, but only act upon it? Who am I to cry? Well, I'm entitled. I'm a survivor after all. One doesn't get there on a water slide, if you know what I mean.

When Christmas rolls around, I do my dance with grief once again. Some years, it's a waltz; other years a tango. It doesn't seem to matter if it's two, 20 or 30 years since my brother died; I get out my dancing shoes. I don't go looking for pain like some wacky masochist. It finds me.

Some years I announce – around November 25th, "I'm over this." I act accordingly. I shop for Christmas cards and don't go near my dancing shoes. It doesn't matter. They find me. It's not like I didn't have therapy. I've had dance therapy, art therapy, regular therapy, travel therapy, friendship therapy, biofeedback/hypnosis therapy, cream puff therapy, swimming therapy, forgiveness therapy, spiritual community therapy, law school therapy ... Law School therapy? The fun had to end somewhere.

Seriously, losing a sibling is heart wrenching and no laughing matter. It took me 10 or 15 years to truly laugh again, let alone make light of myself. That just happened this year. No doubt, because I am writing of it, rather than speaking of it which I rarely do. It feels safer to write.

Other than to therapists, I've spoken of his death to three people in 30 years. Who could understand, I felt, and why diminish his being or expose myself? I adored my brother Don – he made me laugh like a monkey. I adore both my brothers; as a child they were my world. Not very healthy perhaps, but it worked for me.

Home life was chaotic and quite frightening because my father was more than a little nuts. My mother's energy was spent containing his insanity and keeping our bodies and souls together. She was part steel, part angora. We never spoke of Don after his death. The community ostracized us; my father took a trip down devil's lane, and my mother mourned my brother until the day she died.

I'm sad to say that we never had Don's picture in our home again, because the pain was too severe. It seems we could not get past it. We went to our separate corners and quietly mourned.

It was different years ago; so much remained hidden. Self-healing groups were non-existent; shrinks were stigmas, and the Catholic Church unforgiving. I couldn't save him. I was the last person he talked with on Christmas Eve. For months, I barely spoke and relived the shock daily. I ate a lot. Death by mashed potatoes. That was sure to bring him back. I retreated into a private world for several years where if I wasn't dead, I'd sure like to be.

This is grief. And it does soften over time. It softens like water softens rock, in its flowing, gentle, rushing, mysterious way. It softens like a sweet whisper of a memory that lulls you to sleep, knowing that love knits the bones of despair together, tighter, stronger, more curious, more delicious than ever before. Knowing that the fires of your being burn the dross of despair. Knowing that the chamber of the heart is strong beyond measure and can take it and transform the pain into joy. Joy for having known this person, for a day or 10 years or two months. Joy for having the courage to be. For knowing yourself in many garments. For taking a risk to love anyone again: a neighbor, a friend, a cat, a lover, a stranger, yourself. The broken heart opens and mends itself in the middle of the night, when no one is there but many are listening. Joy seeps into me. After all, I'm entitled. I'm a survivor.

-- L. Nicole Dean © Permission to reprint granted to TCF; for permission to reprint in other publications, please contact the author.

## A Letter to Grief

Grief,

I wish we never met. You are so mean! You make me feel so sad when I think about Brandon, when all I really want to do is be happy. You are such a distraction. How am I supposed to stay focused at work when you keep rearing your ugly face! You keep reminding me of how much I miss Brandon. I keep trying to remember his beautiful face, goofy grin and gorgeous green eyes, but you, lousy grief, keep putting the image of my son lying in his casket.

All I want to remember is how sweet he smelled as a baby and how soft his baby hair was when I kissed the top of his head... but you make me remember what it was like to give Brandon his

final kiss goodbye. That cold kiss – no warmth. No sweet smell.

Grief, you are rotten and awful. You have made me and my family feel such pain! I know you too well. You are sly. You try to sneak up on me when I've pushed you away. I am winning this battle you and I have going on. You tried to smother me in the beginning but I have gained strength from Brandon's love. I will keep fighting you, lousy Grief! Every day I will make you a smaller part of my day. You will never completely disappear; but what control you had over me has been and will continue to be filled with Brandon's love for me, his Mom.

--Tammy Lass In loving memory of son Brandon Lass, TCF, Rochester NY



## For Friends and Family...

### Please Don't Forget About My Child Who Died

Please, don't forget about my child. This is my heartfelt plea. I know you love and care about my family. I know that you don't always understand nor do I expect you to. I know that you wouldn't want to cause more pain to our already aching hearts. So, you mention my child less for fear of stirring up the dust that has seemingly settled. The truth is, the idea that my child will one day be forgotten is one of my greatest fears. The less you talk about him the more that fear feels like a reality. I don't expect him to be the topic of every conversation. I don't expect you to mention him every time I see you. Perhaps at one time or another, I wanted that. But time has taken me further and further away from the early days of deep, suffocating grief. Even though I am always reluctant to admit it, I know the world has carried on. But what I need and what I want now is just to know that he has not been forgotten.

Maybe that means the occasional, "I thought about him the other day ..." but mostly it means I need you to remember the important day he was born and the day he died. You see my friend, I don't expect you to fix any of this. And really all I need is to know that his name can be mentioned without fear, without guilt, and without uncertainty. I need to know that he is remembered because, at the very least, he deserves that. He does not deserve to be swept under a rug because you fear my tearful response. Or because you think that

my grief has subsided. Or because you have moved on. Or because you have trouble talking about him. He deserves better than to be forgotten or remain unmentioned. After all, he is still my child.

My child is a huge part of who I am now. You know this. His name and his face replay in my mind every single day. Even the days I smile or the days when joy washes over me. He is still at the heart of who I am now. And I need you to know that it's okay. It is okay to speak his name whether it is a good day, bad day, or a sad day. It's okay and it's what I need from time to time.

I need to be reassured that his life holds within it so much value, still. I need to know that his story is not over and his story has not been forgotten, even though he has been gone for some time now. I need to know that I do not remember him alone. And all it takes to remind me of these things is to say his precious name. I don't need gifts, I don't need flowers or cards. I just need you to say his name aloud, unapologetically, and unprovoked.

I need you to remember the significance of important days like his birthday. Because while they are normal average days to you, they are days that we remember, that we mourn. They are days that bring up extremely complicated feelings. It doesn't matter how many years have passed. These days are significant to my family. And they always will be.

So please, please don't forget about my child. The greatest gift you can give to my family is the gift of remembrance. It costs you nothing. It requires very little. Yet it is more precious than gold. Hearing my child's name is the greatest reminder that he has not been forgotten.

And there is nothing that I want more.

[www.huffingtonpost.com/10/13/16](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/10/13/16)



## Newly Bereaved...

Dear Newly Bereaved Parent,

This will likely be the hardest thing you'll ever do. Survive this. And eventually, maybe even thrive again. At times it will feel virtually impossible. You'll wonder how a human being can survive such pain. You'll learn you know how to defy the impossible. You did it from the moment your child's heart stopped, and yours kept beating. You do it with every breath and step you take. You're doing it now. And now. And now.

Your fingernails will become bloodied from

clawing your way from the depths of despair. Your spirit will grow weary from fighting to survive. Your eyes will cry more tears than you ever thought possible. Your arms will ache an ache for which there aren't words. For a lifetime.

Your heart will break into a million tiny pieces. You'll wonder how it will ever mend again. But with every morsel of unspeakable pain, there is love. An abundance of love. A love so strong, so powerful, it will buoy you. You will not drown. Others will say things that are intended to be helpful, but aren't. Take what is, leave what isn't. Still, you'll meet others along the journey who will get it without ever saying a word. Kind souls who will breathe you back to life again. Let them. Years down the road you'll tire of hearing the same advice and clichés, over and over again. Advice you don't want or need. Everyone will try to tell you how to best "fix" your broken heart. The trouble is, you don't need fixing. There is no fix for this.

Eventually you'll learn how to carry the weight of this pain. At times it will crush you. At other times you'll learn how to shoulder the burden with newfound grit and grace. Either way, you'll learn how to bend with the weight of it. It will not break you. Not entirely. And even if you don't believe in hope— not even a little— hope will light the way for you. At times you won't realize your path is lit. The darkness feels all consuming when you're in it. But know the light is there. Surrounding you now. And now. And now.

Know you're being guided, by all of us who have survived this impossible hell. You may not hear us, or see us, but we are with you. Beside you. Hand in hand, heart to heart. Always. Just like your child still is. Above all else, know that no one can save you but yourself. You are the heroine/hero of this sad story. You are the one who gets to decide how, and if, you'll survive this. You are the one who will figure out a way to survive the sleepless nights, and the endless days. You are the one who will decide if and when you'll find a purpose again that means something to you. You are the one who will choose how you'll live with the pain. You are the one who will decide what you'll to cling to, what will make your life worth living again. You, and only you, get to decide how you'll survive.

-- Angela Miller January 27, 2016

*"The trick is to enjoy life. Don't wish away your days, waiting for better ones ahead."*

-- Marjorie Hinckley

## Seasoned Griever...

### Survival and Salvation

I came to this group almost 17 years ago, with the same crushing grief and sadness that we all are engulfed in upon our first meeting. Every single thing in my life was overwhelming and I just had no clue as to how to go on without my precious son. I knew I had to go on, I just didn't know how. In the beginning, in that initial fog that we live in for so long, in the back of our minds we keep waiting to feel the same way we used to before the death of our child. We keep waiting for our breathing, our sleeping, our thinking, our everything to get back to some kind of normal. This grief journey slowly takes us down a road where we learn to live with the devastating truth that our child will not be walking back through our front doors. I didn't know then that I would have to create a whole new "normal". My thought processes changed, my priorities changed, my future changed...I had to recreate everything in order to survive this pain.

I was literally led by the hand to my very first TCF meeting...I just did what I was told. I brought my raw, heart-wrenching pain into that room and I was filled with this subliminal fear that was lingering just below my level of consciousness, buried under the suffocating grief. As much time went on, I came to realize... that buried subliminal fear was due to the realization that eventually I would have to accept and learn to live with my child's death. How does one do that??

With a heart full of gratitude, I can tell you that had it not been for those monthly meetings with TCF, I may not have been able to find a path to acceptance and peace. It has meant my survival to be able to grieve as well as to grow with the family I have come to know at those meetings. The common bond that we all share and fully understand together has been paramount in my journey. It has been my salvation to share with and care for these parents, all of us going through the same pain, the same journey. We are all broken, but together we can learn to put the pieces together in a different way. I get so much peace in my heart giving back to the group that gave so much to me, in memory of my son. Giving back provides me with an avenue to do kind things in my son's name in memory of his life. It is so very therapeutic and satisfying to extend kindness and compassion in memory of my son. The greatest avenue available

to do that is to volunteer and participate in the events sponsored by our TCF Chapter.

In preparation for and during our events, we are always in need of volunteers for a number of things. You will be surprised at the amount of peace and satisfaction derived from celebrating the life of your child in this way. I am Nick's mom and I will continue to reach out and be a part of the healing process in his memory.

--Debi Giordano, Nick's mom.

TCF – Greater New Orleans Chapter

### Book in Review...



#### ***Help Your Marriage Survive the Death of a Child***

By Paul C. Rosenblatt Many parents who have experienced the death of a child struggle with painful and at times overwhelming marital distance, and it can magnify those problems that existed before the child's death. Grieving parents often fear that divorce is a real possibility. This book can help.

--TCF Greenville SC newsletter



### Welcome...

#### **Grief Is Like A Bucket Of Water**

You can start out with a full bucket, but when you find it too heavy to carry, you can bump it a little, so that some spills, and you can carry it a little farther. As you continue, you bump it again so that it becomes lighter to carry for the longer distance.

You must do the same with grief. To keep the burden from becoming intolerable, you must "bump the bucket" a little and let a little of your grief spill out from time to time, so that you can continue. How true is this? I am ever so grateful to my "Compassionate Friends" for encouraging me to "bump the bucket" occasionally.

If your burden seems to be getting too heavy for you, it might be time for you to join us for a meeting. I think some of us tend to try and carry that full bucket too long and too far. Remember that we are here if you need to "bump the bucket". --Lovingly lifted from TCF Cape Fear Chapter Editor's Note: We invite you to join us at a meeting. Here you will find ways to "bump the bucket" so your grief is not so overwhelming. Knowing other's have experienced the same kind of pain and uncertainties you are now facing and how they faced similar circumstances can help you on your

own path of grief.

## Helpful Hint...



"Moving on does not mean forgetting. It means gaining a freedom through the opportunity of closure. It means giving up being a victim. It means having the compassion and the courage to say, I don't like being miserable. It means getting on with our lives, with relationships, with work and play, and with living and growing."

Excerpts from "My Son .. My Son" by Iris Bolton

## Forgive me my Son

Forgive me for pushing thoughts of you away when I am out,  
 Sometimes the visions of you are too much to bare.  
 Forgive me for not saying hello in the middle of the day,  
 I need to get through my work without the tears.  
 Forgive me when I am alone as I let the tears run like an over flowing stream,  
 You see it's just all the love that I have for you that has nowhere to go.  
 Forgive me when I get mad at you for not being here,  
 I know it wasn't your fault but sometimes the anger gets the better of me.  
 Forgive me when I don't tell people your true story,  
 My fear is that not everyone will understand and for now I need to cover your brothers.  
 Forgive me when I might seem deranged as I talk to myself,  
 But no one understands my daily struggles as I roam aimlessly without you.  
 Forgive me when anger consumes my heart at people who I need not mention,  
 I hope now you can see the root of our twisted and broken life.  
 Forgive me for being blind and not seeing the signs,  
 My hope was we would be together as Mother and Son.  
 Forgive me as I get familiar with this new person that I have become,  
 For if you do perhaps I can forgive myself.  
 --Written by Christine Torricelli  
 In Loving Memory of her son Sean Hurley

## A Parent's Grief

Swept away in a process,  
 facing things that should not be.  
 We take unsteady steps,  
 into an altered world.  
 Suddenly, the days have no rhythm;  
 they begin and end.  
 There is no forward motion,  
 only the weight of the still air.  
 When we were with them,  
 never was a moment accidental.  
 They all had their place  
 and that was living.  
 If only you could know,  
 how to adjust your head,  
 to ease into healing,  
 but your journey is unpredictable.  
 Carry your heart;  
 hold it close.  
 Guard your goodness,  
 from the thievery of loss.  
 Forced to face your realness,  
 inspiration can be a gift  
 and when the sun rays touch your face,  
 you'll almost feel whole.  
 --By: Joanne Eisenstadt Baltimore nl

## Full Circle

The year has gone again  
 from spring to winter -  
 and in this year,  
 your memories may have found  
 a breath of calm between them,  
 quiet respite – sometimes.  
 Then why must there be  
 twice as many now -  
 these feelings, now,  
 these visions, songs and voices,  
 from Halloween to New Year's:  
 Twice memories and smiles  
 Twice memories and tears...  
 You know the answer,  
 even while you cry:  
 the tears are  
 (like the smiles)  
 the season's face of love.  
 -- Sascha Wagner



Troy Akasaka  
Born: 1/91 Died: 2/15  
Parents: Jay & Sharon Akasaka

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

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

Nancy Geraldo Andrade  
Born: 8/90 Died: 8/05  
Parents: Elizabeth & Rogelio Geraldo

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

Brandon Armstrong  
Miscarried: July 1995  
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jeremiah Bell  
Born: 1/88 Died: 6/15  
Mother: Angela Albarez

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

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

Scott Berkovitz  
Born: 5/88 Died: 1/16  
Parents: Carl Berkovitz & Maria Moore

Noah Bernstein  
Born: 6/87 Died: 2/17  
Mother: Beth Bernstein

Cheianne Jayda Berry  
Born: 12/2001 Died: 7/16  
Mother: Kristina Berry

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

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

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

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

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

Alex James Bonstein  
Born: 11/91 Died: 7/16  
Mother: Cynthia Sanchez

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Austin Broussard  
Born: 3/95 Died: 9/12  
Parents: Travis & Marty Broussard

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Matthew Clifford  
Born: 1/80 Died: 3/15  
Parents: Bob & Melissa Clifford

Aaron Christopher Cochran  
Born: 11/90 Died: 9/12  
Mother: Julia Carr

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

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

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

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

Mike Sebastian Cortez  
Born: 5/97 Died: 6/17  
Mother: Rita Cortez

Layla Crandall  
Born: 4/15 Died: 5/15  
Parents: Mary Shahroodi & Shawn Crandall

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

Adam Crow  
Born: 5/70 Died: 7/15  
Mother: Flora Crow

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

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

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

Dax Jordan Quintana Dantas De Oliveria  
Born: 6/17 Died: 8/17  
Parents: Alexandar & Sanderson Quintana Dantas De Oliveria

Daniel Elijah Day  
Born: 4/93 Died: 5/16  
Mother: Kristen Day

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



# Our Children Remembered



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gregg Emberson  
Born: 1/75 Died: 1/92  
Mother: Cindy London

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Marilyn Gardner  
Born: 6/53 Died: 1/14  
Mother: Pat Gardner

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

Lexie Rose Gilpin  
Born: 4/09 Died: 4/09  
Mother: Michele Gilpin

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

Natalie Danielle Glinskas  
Born: 12/95 Died: 3/13  
Father: Andrew Glinskas

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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: Beke & Dave Jordan

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

Jeffrey Hebert  
Born: 1/72 Died: 4/15  
Mother: Dora Tarn

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chad Michael 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 Llean Hyde  
Born: 3/89 Died: 12/05  
Mother: Kelli Rigby-Hyde

Michael Hynes  
Born: 3/58 Died: 3/03  
Parents: Joey & Geraldine Hynes

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

Steven Ishikawa  
Born: 9/75 Died: 4/17  
Mother: Miki Ishikawa

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Scott Koller  
Born: 10/83 Died: 3/15  
Mother: Betty Benson

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

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

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: 11/06  
Mother: Jackie Bowens

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

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

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

Quinn Frances Leslie  
Born: 12/12 Died: 9/14  
Parents: Ian & Katie Leslie

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

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

Joseph Licciardone  
Born: 4/94 Died: 3/16  
Parents: Connie & Leo Licciardone

Liliana "Lily" Lindlahr  
Born: 12/11 Died: 7/14  
Parents: Greg & Shannon Lindlahr

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Travis Frederick Marton  
Born: 10/91 Died: 1/15  
Mother: Ricki Marton

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

Max Mc Cardy  
Born: 4/05/15 Died: 8/15  
Parents: Derk & Ami McCardy

Daniel Mc Clernan  
Born: 7/53 Died: 2/07  
Mother: Lee McClernan

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

Sarah Mc Donald  
Born: 10/00 Died: 6/17  
Parents: Tom & Shideh Mc Donald

Kirk Mc Nulty  
Born: 7/84 Died: 2/14  
Mother: Elaine Mc Nulty  
Sister: Remee Mc Nulty

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jacki Montoya  
Born: 10/89 Died: 7/15  
Mother: Theresa Montoya

Joshua Montoya  
Born: 4/15 Died: 7/15  
Grandmother: Theresa Montoya

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



# Our Children Remembered



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

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

Danielle Murillo  
Born: 5/96 Died: 4/14  
Parents: Cheryl Outlaw & Manuel Murillo

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lisa Nakamaru  
Born: 12/93 Died: 10/14  
Mother: Grace Nakamaru

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Steven Scott Nussbaum  
Born: 5/61 Died: 11/15  
Parents: Will & Gloria Nussbaum

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

Isabella Ofsanko  
Born: 6/97 Died: 10/15  
Mother: Desiree Palmer

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Maddison Grace Partida  
Born: Died:  
Mother: Gabriela Partida

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

Jessica Perez  
Born: 5/89 Died: 10/03  
Sister: Monica Perez

Andrew Periaswamy  
Born: 5/97 Died: 10/16  
Parents: Megala & Xavier Periaswamy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Julius Ramirez Jr.  
Born: 8/09 Died: 8/10  
Parents: Bridie & Jules Ramirez

Brooke Randle  
Born: 3/04 Died: 11/15  
Parents: Sandi & Brenn Randle

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

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

Sarah Lynne Redding  
Born: 12/80 Died: 12/05  
Parents: Linda Redding

Megan Patricia Rexroad  
Born: 12/91 Died: 10/15  
Mother: Mary-Ann Rexroad

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

Mallory Richards  
Born: 8/92 Died: 1/11  
Mother: Lisa Richards

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ginger Romero  
Born: 1/47 Died: 5/15  
Sister: Genie Moreno

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Danny Ryan  
Born: 07/79 Died: 10/15  
Parents: Mike & Andrea Ryan

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

Daniela Mora Saldana  
Born: 3/17 Died: 3/17  
Mother: Rosa Saldana

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

Phillip Ruben Sandoval Born: 7/84 - Died: 6/16 Parents: Valerie & Joe Desjardin	Elizabeth D. Szucs Born: 4/72 Died: 6/11 Parents: Dolores & Frank Szucs	Manuel Vargas III Born: 3/95 - Died: 5/15 Father: Manuel Vargas	Andreas Wickstrom Born: 12/83 Died: 12/01 Parents: John & Inge Wickstrom
Andrew Sankus Born: 4/71 Died: 8/15 Mother: Mary Sankus	Kenneth Tahan Born: 2/66 Died: 7/16 Parents: Shirley & Joseph Tahan	Mark T. Vasquez Born: 5/75 Died: 5/11 Parents: Manuel & Blanca Vasquez	Kellen Morgan Williams Born: 11/88 Died: 11/11 Mother: LaFonda Williams
F. Marlow Santos Born: 10/84 Died: 7/93 Parents: Fred & Julie Gillette	Anthony Tanori Born: 8/82 Died: 8/12 Parents: Chuck & Sylvia Tanori	Tommy Villanueva Born: 10/68 Died: 5/02 Parents: Jennie & Edgar Villanueva	Victoria Winchester Born: 2/57 Died: 2/84 Mother: Erin Adams
Patrick C. Shillings Jr Born: 1/88 Died: 10/09 Parents: Patrick & Rena Shillings	Jacqueline Taylor Born: 1/83 Died: 7/11 Mother: Jennifer Flynn	Justin Alexander Velasquez Born: 7/12 Died: 7/12 Parents: Ricardo & Marcie Velasquez	Dovan Vincent Wing Born: 6/83 Died: 9/17 Mother: Becky Wing
Dylan Elwood Sievers Born: 8/08 Died: 8/08 Parents Daren & Marne Sievers	Kristi Nicole Taylor Born: 5/80 Died: 9/94 Parents: Kathy & Cory Taylor	Eric Douglas Vines Born: 7/77 Died: 7/91 Parents: Doug & Lynn Vines	Jennifer Winkelspecht Born: 7/75 Died: 8/95 Parents: Brian & Lisa Winkelspecht
Tyson Donald Sievers Born: 8/08 Died: 9/08 Parents: Darren & Marne Sievers	John Teresinski Born: 12/67 Died: 1/00 Parents: Beverly & Victor Teresinski	Serena Yasmeen C. Viveros Born: 11/05 Died: 11/05 Mother: Brenda Viveros	Jordan Michael Witte Born: 1/87 Died: 11/08 Parents: Licha & Mike Witte
Michael William Schlarb Born: 4/61 Died: 7/14 Parents: Bill & Sharon Schlarb	Ryan William Thomas Born: 2/82 Died: 4/04 Mother: Linda Thomas	Marisa Ann Vuoso Born: 7/83 Died: 3/93 Parents: Debbie & Marco Vuoso	Bob Woodyard Born: 7/55 Died: 10/08 Bill & Barb Woodyard
Karen Ailegra Scholl Born: 8/64 Died: 4/99 Mother: Kay Scholl	Ryan William Thomas Born: 2/82 Died: 4/04 Mother: Linda Thomas	Kristopher Wadman Born: 11/82 Died: 10/00 Parents: Michael & Melodie Wadman	Amy Woolington Born: 10/85 Died: 1/07 Parents: Pam Weiss & John Woolington
Matt Scholl Born: 2/73 Died: 4/08 Parents: Bill & Kay Scholl	Laura C. Toomey Born: 1/69 Died: 12/78 Mother: Michael & Elizabeth Toomey	Carl Alan Wagenknecht Born: 7/70 Died: 8/04 Parents: Tom & Janis Wagenknecht	Christopher Wootton Born: 11/86 Died: 5/08 Father: Jim Wootton
Candace Arond Schonberg Born: 3/98 Died: 11/00 Parents: Andrene & Arond Schonberg	Michael D. Toomey Born: 4/62 Died: 2/05 Mother: Michael & Elizabeth Toomey	Jeffrey Sinclair Wagstaff Born: 9/80 Died: 4/99 Parents: Johnny & Barbara Walker Sister: Sheimekia Wagstaff	Cristofur Daye Wroten-Kennedy Born: 2/75 Died: 9/01 Mother: Dusty Wroten Father: Joe Kennedy
Jonathan "Jamie" Schubert Born: 7/65 Died: 12/06 Parents: Lynn & Roy Schubert	Nathan Torbert Born: 1/78 Died: 12/05 Mother: Rebecca Williams	Cory Dylan Walker Born: 8/76 Died: 3/01 Parents: Jim and Susan Walker	Brett Yodice Born: 11/89 Died: 5/13 Parents: Sam & Susan Yodice
Melissa Lauren Schweisberger Born: 10/84 Died: 11/99 Parents: John & Margarita Schweisberger	Catarina Sol Torres Born: 12/16 Died: 12/16 Mother: Marcus & Vanessa Torres	Eric Webb Born: 6/85 Died: 10/07 Parents: Jim & Vickie Webb	Aaron Young Born: 9/74 Died: 6/15 Mother: Sheila Young
Spencer Simpson Born: 1/80 Died: 6/13 Parents: Rich & Shelly Simpson	David Torres Born: 6/66 Died: 3/06 Mother: Joyce Whirry	Dennis William Webber Born: 5/85 Died: 3/05 Parent: Blaine & Sin Young Webber	Steve R. Young Born: 7/57 Died: 2/90 Mother: Marjorie Young
Gerald Slater Born: 2/71 Died: 8/94 Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater	Marcelo Torres Born: 8/81 Died: 9/03 Parents: Jaime & Carmen Torres	Sharon Ann Wendt Born: 6/54 Died: 4/99 Parents: Mr. & Mrs. Carmel Doucet	Whitney Marie Young Born: 8/87 Died: 11/06 Parents: Marlene & Steve Young
Dale Lee Soto Born: 7/94 Died: 5/11 Mother: Monique Soto	Brian Gregory Trotter Born: 10/78 Died: 8/94 Mother: Abby Trotter-Herft	Brian Scott West Born: 8/70 Died: 4/08 Parents: David & Connie Schlottman	Thomas Zachary Born: 12/85 Died: 7/11 Father: Bob McGaha
Mia Amour Steen Born: 7/05 Died: 9/10 Parents: Janine & Dona Steen	Carlos Valdez Born: 1/61 Died: 1/12 Parents: Antonia & Refugio Valdez	Michelle Whitaker Born: 6/72 Died: 4/06 Mother-in-law: Karen Scott	Kevin Zelik Born: 11/85 Died: 6/10 Parents: Joe & Linda Zelik
Nancy Sterger Born: 8/57 Died: 6/12 Mother: Ann Leer	Vance C. Valdez Born: 10/90 Died: 3/12 Parents: Carlos & Maria Valdez	Taylor Whitaker Born: 4/00 Died: 4/06 Mother: Karen Scott	
Jonathan David Streisand Born: 1/87 Died: 2/13 Parents: Pricilla & David Streisand	Lexi Noelle Valladares Born: 4/04 Died: 7/10 Parents: Fausto & Erica Valladares		
Daniel John Swiggum Born: 6/88 Died: 7/08 Parents: Stewart & Marian Swiggum			

## Birthday Tributes...



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

Sorry, no tributes were submitted this month.

## For Siblings...



## I'm Not Contagious

In the two or three weeks immediately following my brother Nick's death, I received numerous calls, cards, plants, flowers, and offers of help. My loss sat on the front burner of many wonderful people's stoves for about 21 days. I was in their thoughts, prayers, and blessings.

Unfortunately, many issues and events vie for front-burner status. Part of me understood why the love, attention, and concern started to recede. Another part of me wanted to throw a full-blown temper tantrum live at Madison Square Garden. "My brother, Nick, is dead. Gone. Finished. Have you forgotten?" I would cry, and have a grand time berating others for overlooking my plight. No wonder I resonated so deeply with Madeline Sharples' poem, "Aftermath." I could have written the same poem, simply replacing her word "son" with my word "brother."

In my fantasy, I would tattoo a large "G" for grieving on my exposed forehead so that no one could possibly forget what had recently happened. They would have to remember to ask me, "How are you doing?" Either that or they'd be feigning blindness! The front-page headline of my imaginary newspaper would always have "Martha's Brother Has Died" as its leading story. Political scandals, tragedies, and stock market crashes would never get top billing. I suppose I would have some fine arguments with my imaginary editor about this! When it's our loss, it is the headliner for quite a while. When it's someone else's loss, it just isn't. In a journal entry written seven months after Nick died, I wrote: *Inside of me, there's a voice screaming to be heard: "No, you don't get it! I just lost my brother! Lost my brother! One of the most significant people in my life! Don't you dare move on to the next topic . . . I'm still on this topic and I am not ready to move on and I won't be ready to move on for quite some time."*

My heartfelt request to the world goes something like this: "If you feel like you don't know what to say, don't say much. Just show up! I have not just come down with strep throat! I'm not contagious!" When you have strep throat, a kiss, hug, or even a handshake is discouraged. The well-wisher will keep a distance, offer sincere apologies, and the sick person will

understand. But we don't have strep throat. We have grief. It's not a sickness, but a condition with symptoms and circumstances. Sorrow. Pain. Longing. Regrets. Tears. Unanswered questions. Forms to fill out. Belongings to give away. Shock. Insomnia. Memories, good and bad. Wills. Death certificates.

These symptoms last much longer than two weeks or a month; perhaps some will last a lifetime. They may be acute at first, but they don't go away when the initial wave of sympathy cards, visits, and other greetings ebbs. The intensity of the symptoms may ease, but they do persist. Unfortunately, many well-wishers disappear or forget or have new things on their own front-burners. Under our breath, we grievors are saying, "Please don't disappear. I need you." We don't really need that much, yet some friends and family members seem to feel like attending to us is the equivalent of running a marathon. In fact, all that's needed is empathy . . . that ability to walk a mile in our moccasins, as the old saying goes.

What do we need? The answer may be a bowl of chicken soup because we've forgotten to eat. We may need some groceries or a prescription filled at the drugstore. We may even need some solitude. However, don't confuse solitude with solitary confinement or quarantine. We are neither dangerous nor contagious. Well-wishers accrue karmic gold stars for showing up at a time when many can't.

We may need someone's presence or vitality or willingness to listen. We may need someone to hear the same story or memory or lament twice, three times, or more. We need others to let us move through our grief at whatever pace our particular journey selects. We do not need to be talked out of our feelings, unless we have asked for it. We don't need cheering up or problem-solving, unless we have asked for them. No one can hasten our return to pre-loss levels of activity or interest. The gift of attention we need is one that permits us to just be where we are in our grieving process. We will get better. Our condition will improve, but it takes time and patience: gifts we can give to ourselves and hope to receive from others.

In my teens, I took a walk on a city street in Athens, Greece. It was easy to distinguish the tourists from the natives. The tourists were in light-colored clothing while the denizens of Athens were, seemingly without exception, in black. Black skirts, dresses, pants, sweaters, shoes, socks, hats, and coats. Black. This was long before wearing all-black clothing was considered hip, vogue, or Goth. Sometime later, I was told that the Greek tradition is that you wear black for a year after someone close to you dies. My lasting impression of Greece, other than its stunning beauty and ancient architecture, was that an awful lot of people had died there.

In our country, grief can be invisible. If you met someone who was unaware that you'd recently suffered a major loss, how would that person know? Perhaps you appear a bit sadder or more distracted

than usual. More than likely, you look much the same on the outside as you looked the day or two before your beloved died. By comparison, if you were walking on that same sidewalk with crutches, it would be instantly obvious that something was not right. Your injury would elicit a question and open the door to further conversation about the trauma: "What happened?" "Are you okay?" In the aftermath of a death, crutches are not prescribed for treatment of our heartache. Because there is nothing visible to signal our grief to the outside world, it's easy to feel even more contagious.

We rarely get to see the pain of those still living, though perhaps feeling like the living dead as they suffer with the loss in their everyday, moment-to-moment existence. Much energy is directed toward containing the suffering, even in settings such as funeral homes, gravesites, or temples. Many a prescription for mild tranquilizers or sedatives is filled after the death and before the funeral in an effort to suppress any show of emotion. In my psychotherapy practice and elsewhere, I hear griever consumed with the challenge of hiding their tears, looking strong, and by all means not losing "it."

I salute those Greek women, men, and children who expose their loss in their choice of clothing day after day. If we only had some universal symbol, some universal color or badge that would announce to the world that we are grieving . . . shouldering a fragile and vulnerable myriad of swarming feelings and emotions underneath our clothing and inside our skin...perhaps then others could and would remember to attend to us. Our grief is frequently silent and out of sight – an experience not too different from that of those who have been quarantined with a virulent ailment. When we're without support, our feelings start to swarm, there is nowhere to go with them, and no one to talk to about them. It becomes difficult to temper our thoughts or feelings when we feel no link to the outside world.

I like to think I'm wearing my grief badge when I talk or write about my brother's death. By sharing my experience with others, my grief becomes more visible. I join a community. I hear and feel nods of recognition and support, and I feel a lot less contagious. This isn't a community that any of us wanted to join, as the entry requirements are very painful. It is nonetheless a loving community with sympathetic arms to hold us. What a gift to receive in the aftermath of such a profound loss.

--Martha Clark *We Need Not Walk Alone*, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends

## For Grandparents...



## Death By Ice Cream

Recently I was part of a discussion with some other Compassionate Friends about the very early days of grieving our children. We agreed that one of our fears

was that we might indeed actually get to live and spend many years in a life without our children. Instead of counting how many sleeps until an awaited wonderful happening, we were counting down the years we had left to suffer and mourn.

Sometimes we engage in unconscious behaviours that might give us a passive way out of our situation without doing anything overt that we could be blamed for. I think I chose death by ice cream. Night after night I sat in a chair, all evening, eating large soup bowls of vanilla ice cream, knowing full well that some health issues were not well served by this behaviour.

It all came to a head one night when my husband paused in front of me, probably consuming a second or third helping, and asked me if I didn't want to see my grandchildren grow up. That was a light bulb moment for me. I realized that I still had something to live for, something to do and contribute to my family. I knew I couldn't dishonour Kenneth by making him the reason to abdicate my life. It was a step.

Another area I was copping out on was taking care of my personal appearance. My family were used to me 'putting on my bestface', something I learned from my mother! I didn't realize my departure from normal routine was anything anyone noticed, including myself.

One day my daughter told me her little sons were worried that Grandma wasn't the same anymore, didn't even look the same. Another light bulb moment. I realized that the reason I hadn't been looking after my appearance was because I literally could not bear to look at myself in the mirror. That tear ravaged face with eyes so full of pain was a sight I could not bear to look at. Every time I saw myself I was reminded of the terrible loss of our son. Of course, once again, the pain and confusion of my grandchildren helped to move me outside of myself. The instinct to mother doesn't die with our children.

Ice cream didn't finish me and Maybelline didn't save me, but the same love that I have for Kenneth and all my children and grandchildren has a way of pulling me toward life and living fully. I can do that for him and all of us.

--Arleen Simmonds TCF Kamloops, B.C

## From Our Members...



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.



**Get Your Photo Buttons...** Photo buttons are a perfect way to share your child, grand-Child or sibling with others at monthly meetings. If you would like to have some made, simply bring a photo for each button you would like (color photo copies work great) to any of our chapter

meetings and Ken can make them for you. There is no cost. Keep in mind that the button is about 3" in diameter, so the picture needs to fit inside that area and the actual photo is used, so make sure it's one we can cut.

**TCF is On Facebook ....** Please visit and help promote The Compassionate Friends National Organization's Facebook page by becoming a fan. You can get there by clicking on the link from TCF's national website home page at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://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...** Joe Zelik is hosting the website and updating it with the current newsletter and chapter information. Thank you to those who are willing to get you newsletter online. To be able to send a reminder each month to let you know when the latest issue of the newsletter is available, we need your e-mail address. If you have not been getting a reminder e-mail, please let me know. To update our files, please call Lynn at (310) 530-3214 to update by phone. You can also log onto our website at [www.tcfbla.org](http://www.tcfbla.org) if you want to do it electronically. Thank-you for your understanding and help. TCF South Bay/LA

**The National Office** of TCF has an ongoing support group for parents and siblings online. For a complete schedule and to register for Online Support, visit <http://compassionatefriends.org> and follow the directions to register. There is also a closed group chat room for specific topics that you need to register for.

**Closed Group Chat... TCF National has several closed Facebook groups you may find helpful on your grief journey. Click the blue link above to be connected and request to join.**

**TCF - Loss to Substance Related Causes Moderators:** Barbara Allen and Mary Lemley

**TCF - Loss to Suicide Moderators:** Cathy Seehuetter and Donna Adams

**TCF - Loss to Homicide Moderators:** Debbie Floyd and Kathleen Willoughby

**TCF - Infant and Toddler Loss Moderators:** Susan Peavler and Tiffany Barraso

**TCF - Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes Moderators:** Andrea Keller and Barbara Allen

**The Compassionate Friends Sounds of the Siblings** (for bereaved siblings) Moderators: Tracy Milne and Keith Singer

**TCF – Loss of a Grandchild Moderators:** Betty Farrel and Jennifer Sue Hale

**TCF – Loss to Miscarriage or Stillbirth Moderators:** Kelly Kittel and Kenzie Janzen

**TCF – Loss of an Only Child/All Your Children Moderators:** Lisa Ridge and Vicki Woods-Ozias

**TCF – Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver Moderators:**

*Robin Landry and Rebecca Perkins*

**TCF – Loss to Cancer Moderators:** Lee Meyerson, Michelle Setzer, Marguerite Caraway Ward

**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](http://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, it is only your donations that keep us functioning, and we appreciate your help. Just a Hint: If you plan to leave \$\$ at the TCF meeting, you might want to make it by check so you can receive an IRS deduction. No amount is too small and they are needed to keep our chapter going.



**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. 1st 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 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.

Linda Zelik (chapter leader).....(310) 370-1645

Kitty Edler.....(310) 541-8221

Richard Leach (grandchild).....(310) 833-5213

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

**REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

Olivia Garcia.....(818) 736-7380

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

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

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

#### **Additional Grief Support .... Bereavement Organizations and Resources:**



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

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

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

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

**OUR HOUSE/BEREAVEMENT HOUSE:** Support groups in LA & So. Bay (310) 475-0299 Also Spanish Support Group, Loren Delgado 310-231-3196.

**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. 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. (310) 546-6407  
**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

**Camp Comfort Zone - Bereavement Camp for Children**  
[www.comfortzonecamp.org](http://www.comfortzonecamp.org) (310) 483-8313.

**NEW: Our House Grief Support Center has Free General Grief Support Group for Spanish speaking Adults in our area.**

#### Other Grief Support Websites...

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

#### **LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS**

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

**Newport Beach** (917) 703-3414 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed.

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

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

**Pomona/San Gabriel:** (626) 919-7206

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

**Riverside-Inland Empire:** (909) 683-4160

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

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

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

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

#### **A SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

Staples for their help in printing our newsletters each month and to The Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

#### **CHAPTER OFFICERS:**

CHAPTER LEADERS: Linda Zelik & Mary Santos

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks

TREASURER: Ken Konopasek

WEBSITE: Joe Zelik



#### **STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

Linda & Joe Zelik

Cheryl & Bill Matasso

Nancy Lerner

Kitty Edler

Mary Sankos

Marilyn Nemeth

Lynn Vines

Ken Konopasek

Susan Kass



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



The Compassionate Friends is a totally self-supporting organization.  
Our chapter is run entirely by volunteers, but we do have operating costs.  
Your donations are what keeps our chapter going.  
Please consider giving a donation in your loved one's name.

In loving memory of Scott Dykstra, 7/72 - Died: 10/01.  
Love, Mom

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

In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date \_\_\_\_\_ Death date \_\_\_\_\_ Sent From \_\_\_\_\_

Tribute \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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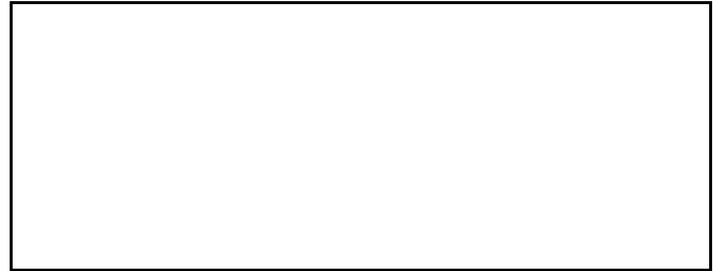
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**January 2018**

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**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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*If you no longer wish to receive this mailing or have a new address, please contact us.*