



# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *South Bay/LA Chapter*

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

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

OCT. 2025 ISSUE

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

**OUR NEXT MEETING:**  
will be Oct. 2nd, the first *Thursday* of the month at 7:00 P.M.

**LOCATION: use this one**  
**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. → Park In EAST lot. Follow path to back patio. Meetings are held at the **EAST** end of the church. Patio Meeting room is 101 classroom. Follow signs. (Last door, first floor.)

**--Please remember to park in the EAST 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 Oct. 2nd meeting will start with "**Finding The Connections.**"

To participate in our Zoom meetings, contact Leo at (310) 283-6739 or [Liccia79@gmail.com](mailto:Liccia79@gmail.com) for the link.

The TCF Friday Lunch Group offers you a drop-in- place to talk about your grief every Friday at 1. In Sept. we will meet at Chili's restaurant at 21835 Hawthorne Bl. Torrance. We invite you to join us. Please call (310) 963-4646 to let us know you are coming.

For a free Picture Button of your child, call Connie at (310) 292-5381.

South Bay/LA Chapter of TCF  
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The Thursday Oct 2nd meeting will start with **"Finding The Connections"**. Overwhelmed with the pain of losing a child, and then feeling like you are losing your mind, you slowly walk into a room filled with strangers...All with the hope of finding someone who can understand, who might have answers. Someone who can help you make sense of all this. Who truly gets the depths of your loss, and how deep your emotions are running. Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain! We welcome you and hope between the newsletters, shared stories and encouragement from other TCF members you will be able to survive your loss and embrace the growth you will slowly acquire as you build your "new normal." We all have been where you are right now and as our motto states; "We need not walk alone. We are the Compassionate friends." We are here for you just as someone was there for us when we first walked in with our desperation and uncertainty fully exposed.

## Quiet Courage

I have seen much courage in my life. Many types of bravery have inspired me. I am astonished by the courage of the elderly widow who buries her husband, quietly sells most of her personal belongings, furnishings and home and moves into a tiny apartment so that she can survive until death takes her, too.

I am distressed by the youthful courage demonstrated every day by soldiers who were high school kids heading for homecoming last year but who now serve in dangerous, hostile places fighting an enemy who is invisible in the crowd. The law enforcement memorial in Washington, D.C., speaks of the many brave men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty to keep anarchy at bay. The EMS and fire fighting people who hold strong to tradition and put themselves in harm's way each day to save others amaze me with their dedication and devotion to duty.

The single mother who works two jobs, raises her children, cares for them in times of illness, keeps a home, cooks, cleans and still finds time to bake cookies for the PTA fundraiser is a heroine who is doomed to remain faceless and unknown. Yet the courage to start each new day in the hope of making a better life for her children drives her

forward.

There are all types of courage in this life. All are impressive, all are worthy of praise and all set standards for us to emulate. But the deepest, most compelling courage I have seen in my life is that of the parent who has lost a child to death. Each has experienced total helplessness and real physical pain in their loss. Raw in their grief, they join our Compassionate Friends group. I am struck by how weakened in spirit these parents are, how tenuous their hold on sanity must surely be. Yet these parents quietly enter our meeting room and face the unknown with tears in their eyes and tremendous weight in their hearts. Their world is upside down, their children have died and the pain and loss seem insurmountable. They have been snatched out of their former reality and slammed into the depths of hell by a cosmic force more intense than a tsunami. These moms and dads who have lost their beautiful child listen quietly as others talk of children who have lived for years in their parents' hearts. Each parent tells a story, each voice breaks, each heart breaks as a lost child's name echoes in the quiet room. The courage to acknowledge and face this new reality and look for hope in the midst of this infinite despair is a pure wonderment.

What pain is in this room? What deep, agonizing loss is systemic within this group? What will I say? How can I relate when I cannot even remember what day it is? How can I go on for one more day? These are the agonizing feelings of the newly bereaved parent.

The Compassionate Friends meeting is the place they have chosen to begin their journey into what they perceive as a hideous, horrible, dark and unknown future. Yet their courage to face this, the greatest loss any human could possibly endure, is extraordinary. The power of the mind to begin to see reason, to begin to seek hope, to climb this mountain of trauma and travail cannot be overstated.

This power is pure courage, raw courage, desperate courage, but courage in its purest form. Each meeting brings the dread of facing the reality of their child's death. Yet the parents who have lost so much return to talk, to listen, to understand, to move into the light of hope. Gradually an understanding develops. Slowly each parent learns we must continue to live and honor our child. They light candles, visit cemeteries, fund scholarships, write poetry, raise funds to help others.....all in memory of their precious children.



They reach out to other parents who are newly bereaved, listening, talking and listening again with their hearts. Occasionally they smile. Then one day they laugh. The journey is long, the grief work is difficult, the pain is forever, yet they keep on moving forward into the light. There are no medals, no press releases, no television appearances, no accolades, no parades. The deepest, soul-permeating, life changing and amazing courage is found here. As I look at my Compassionate Friends I am awe-struck by the rare and quiet courage that fills this room.

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

## I'm Beginning

I'm beginning to know your children  
From the things I heard you tell.  
From the pictures that you've brought here  
I think I know them well.  
Our hurt and sorrow are immense  
I'm not sure where to start.  
Compassion after all is  
Your pain that's in my heart.  
My thanks to you for listening  
To words wrung from my soul.  
We are The Compassionate Friends  
That's all I need to know.  
--Jack Brown  
TCF Chapter Louisville, Kentucky

## The Bonds of Shared Grief

Divisiveness and intolerance for others' views seem prevalent all around us today. We see it in our political beliefs, social justice concerns, and health environment. It is apparent within families, workplaces, and organizations. When we are grieving the painful death of a child, grandchild, or sibling, this divisiveness creates walls that can make our sorrow even deeper. It's difficult enough when we're grieving to feel connected to the people around us, and these dividing walls can further isolate us.

The Compassionate Friends credo begins with these words:

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.

Uniting people who share this deep grief was the premise that started The Compassionate Friends. The death of our brother, sister, child, or grandchild permeates all aspects of our being. It's something that can't easily be explained to those who have not experienced it, while those who have, possess a deep and compassionate understanding that requires little explanation. The bonds within our TCF community can bridge these chasms we see around us. Rather than being further isolated in our grief, we can feel surrounded by understanding, community, and shared hope that can be lifesaving during this time.

While none of us would choose to be a part of this community given the reason that brought us, we are connected at a deeply meaningful level. It's hard to see someone across the table with a similar loss and stay in a place of intolerance and anger. When we remember what binds us as a group and honor our shared losses, we focus on supportive and comforting connectedness. When we reach for the love in our hearts that's bolstered by our shared sorrow, we can model a greater energy that's needed in our world. Our child, grandchild, or sibling who died and brought us to TCF is honored each time we choose this path of connection through our differences rather than more division because of them.

-- Shari O'Loughlin TCF, Chief Executive Officer

## The Harvest of Your Grief Work Getting "Better"

As I write this, the fourth anniversary of my son's death is days away. Every year when the calendar turns to October my thoughts turn to all the "lasts" we experienced with Chris— our last Parents' Weekend, our last family celebration, his last visit home, our last hug good-bye. October is painful; it represents the moment in history that divides my life into the "before" and "after." Life "before" was good, our family was happy, the future was bright. Life "after" had been a struggle to survive unspeakable pain, reestablish a new normal, and face a future that is littered with shattered dreams, assumptions, and expectations.

The person I am now barely resembles who I was four years ago. I have gained an acute

awareness of suffering and a heightened sense of empathy yet I have lost the ability to dream, the luxury of lightheartedness, and what it feels like to experience joy. The best of times I have a tenuous peace with sorrow; in my worst moments I am consumed by a profound sense of emptiness. At all times I ache with missing him, an ache I expect will never cease. How could anything or anyone fill his place in my heart, my mind, my soul? It is his space, his and mine; it is sacred.

And yet, as I recently admitted to a select few, I have begun to feel “better.” Better does not mean I am “moving on” without Chris, that I am “getting over” the loss, or that I am regaining my former self. For me, better means learning to coexist with the sorrow and letting go of the “why?” There isn’t an answer to the why that could possibly satisfy me that could make me say, “Oh, so that’s why he died. Now I understand. I’m okay with that.”

Learning to live with mystery is akin to admitting that there is little in this life that we actually control; the only thing we do control is how we react to life’s experiences. In the case of losing a child, the option to choose is very slow in coming because the shock is disabling and prolonged. Eventually the opportunity to choose comes, but it is not easy or simple or even obvious. To choose to let go of the blackness is a choice that needs to be made each and every day—consciously, actively, and repeatedly.

Feeling better is a journey not an endpoint. I will never stop loving Chris; never love him less than completely and wholeheartedly. For the rest of my life I will regret that he is not here to share, to love, to experience, to be. Despite all the pain and heartache, I thank God every single day that I had him for 21 years.

I wanted more—for him, for me, for my husband and girls, for everyone who loves him. It was not to be. I am grateful for what I had. Perhaps that is what “better” is all about.

--Sue Dudek We Need Not Walk Alone

## My Witch and My Angel

For Zoë, Halloween is just about as good as it gets. Not much in my daughter’s world beats candy, costumes, friends, make-up, and staying up late even on a school night. Life at age six can be gloriously simple. But I don’t know much of what my son Max thought of Halloween. When he



died at age two, he only had one real “trick-or-treat” to his credit. That year—1987—I dressed him in a pumpkin costume and we traipsed to a few neighbors. I took far too many pictures. Max was a fiend for sweets and with the candy ration lifted for the evening, he had to be living well.

I imagine that year would have been his last dressed as a mommy-pleasing pumpkin. At three or four I knew he would demand Ninja or pirate costumes; I would have laughingly bought them and maybe even the plastic sword. I would have let him paint grotesque stitches across his nose and wear fangs that glowed in the dark.

Instead, this is Zoë’s year to cast aside the girly version of Max’s pumpkin cap. The beloved pink princess frills and red nail polish are being exchanged for a witch hat and black glue-on fingernails sharpened into talons. For the first time, she wants to be Scary and Ugly. With mahogany lipstick and smoky eyes, she will fly out the door in less than a month to cross one more threshold that her brother did not.

I see the evening now. As I assemble face paints on the counter, I will take a deep breath—the same one I take every year at every holiday and milestone. With my unsteady hand I will design witchy warts and create wrinkles on Zoë’s perfect face. I will declare her the Scariest and Ugliest of All.

But as I help my little witch into her costume, I know my eyes will fill with tears. I will think about the years that were supposed to be: a young boy as Dracula, a 13 year-old teen in baggy clothes escorting his little witch-sister down the block. Who would he be now, the toddler we knew, the boy we lost? What would our life be like if the scary things were still just make-believe?

Zoë will see my tears, but she won’t be alarmed: in our family’s emotional lexicon, sad and happy often go together and crying is as OK as laughing. She will ask me why I’m sad and I will tell her the truth: I am thinking about Max and wishing he could be here.

And although she is now the mean and fierce Witch Zoë, she will nod her head with understanding. Her plastic nails will lightly graze my arm as she reaches to pat me. Suddenly the frown on her face will disappear and she repeats what has become her annual Halloween revelation: “Mommy, it’s OK. Don’t forget that Max can go ‘trick-or-treat’ as an angel.”

She describes a glittering figure, luminous wings aflutter, giant treat bag at the ready. I smile

at the idea and the moment passes.

Later, I light the candle in the pumpkin and watch Zoë skip next door to show off her costume. She heads up the sidewalk, stopping halfway to turn and wave to me. She makes her scariest face and yells, “Mom—take my picture!” I raise my camera and look through the viewfinder. As the flash glows briefly in the dusk, I see a beautiful angel standing in the shadows beside her. But this angel doesn’t wear white and his wings have been clipped. I am sure he never had a golden halo. He is a small chubby boy with a jack-o-lantern face on his tummy and chocolate on his fingers. It is 1987 and he is having a really great Halloween.

Just like his sister.

-- Mary Clark In memory of Max  
TCF Chapter Sugarland, Texas

### Halloween—A New Way of Seeing

It’s nearly Halloween, this year my view has been affected by what I’ve seen. The images of graves don’t perturb me, as I find peace at yours on bended knee.

Skeletons don’t scare me, your death is the only thing that has disturbed me.

Bats are not a worry as I gaze at the night sky looking for you, birds fly in a flurry.

Witches and ghosts hold no harm, as you are now my Angel protecting me with loving arms.

I don’t see a cobweb and scream, I see it more as a catcher for our dreams.

Trick or Treat, well I’ve faced the trick, I will have the treat when you again I’ll meet.

This Halloween I’ll eat a piece of pumpkin pie and look for you my love in the sky.

--Marie Ste BP/USA, Coeur d’Alene, ID

### The Decade Difference

A TCF meeting is the place to come for compassion, friendship, coping skills, understanding, hope, and more. Many bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings recall a special person they met, or the welcoming, accepting environment they encountered at their first meeting. Some seasoned grievers stay active in the chapter, or return to monthly meetings, to reach out to the newly bereaved with encouragement and support—grateful for the same encouragement and support they experienced in their early grief

“Helping is Healing” is a phrase often said and

easily understood by chapter members who assist in any way, big or small, behind the scenes or with their presence. We’re grateful to all who get involved! Get to know some of our Chapter’s Steering Committee members as they reflect on their volunteer participation within our chapter.

I’m so grateful to the steering committee for encouraging me to play a bigger role in our TCF chapter. I was finally ready to give back after being seen and heard with my own grief.

--Maggie Bauer, Sibling Loss Facilitator

### Grief is Like a Jigsaw Puzzle



Grief is a smorgasbord where you go down the line picking a little of this and a little of that. Grief is like a jigsaw puzzle, some people get all the edge pieces together first and work from the outside in. Others dump everything out on the table at once and dive right into the middle. Some never open the box at all, they just look at the picture on the lid and wonder why what’s inside doesn’t match or make sense.

You meet a lot of people when you start a jigsaw puzzle. Some are full of advice, or they may try to make the puzzle look the way it ought to be instead of the way it is. But, once in a while, you meet someone who shares their own finished puzzle and helps you make sense of yours. Then you find it is not as hard as before. Some of the pieces fit together more easily, and you sigh with relief— and remember.

--From Suicide Bereavement Support, SW Washington & NW Oregon

### Terrible Twos

In memory of Jennifer Privett

Jenny,

Since your death, you have missed:

2 birthday anniversaries,

2 Halloweens,

2 Thanksgivings,

2 Christmases,

2 summers and swimming pool sessions,

2 school openings,

2 sizes of shoes and clothing,

2 children who died of heart conditions and

2 pictures of them now sit beside yours,

too many children who died too soon

too young. --Your Mom, Susan Privett

## Newly Bereaved...

### Take It One Day At A Time

We can get trapped into thinking we always will feel this bad. Grief is easier to manage if you take it bit by bit. One way to do that is to live in the present. Don't try to take on tomorrow. If you feel like hell now, you only have to deal with this day. If you can't even face a whole day, take it minute by minute. Try not to get stuck in the past or jump ahead to the future. Just focus on this day, this hour or this minute. Pay attention to what you are thinking, feeling and doing. Just focus on where you are now.

Breathe through it. Pray through it. If this moment is peaceful, savor it, but don't be disappointed when it passes. Unfortunately, just like the hard times, our happier times will end, too. However, rest assured that eventually the happy periods will outweigh the bad.

--From "Lead Me Home" by Carleen Brice

## Looking Forward...

### Remember

When you remember me, it means that you have carried something of who I am with you, that I have left some mark of who I am on who you are.

It means that you can summon me back to your mind even though countless years and miles may stand between us.

It means that if we meet again, you will know me.

It means that even after I died, you can still see my face and hear my voice and speak to me in your heart.

--Frederick B., TCF, "Whistling in the Dark"  
Houston West Chapter



## Seasoned Grievors...

### The Compassionate Friends (Less than) Great Expectations

Life after losing a child is an ongoing coming to terms with missed expectations. It never ends. No matter how many years pass, no matter what else happens (good or bad), there is always that thought...what might have been.

Growing up, I had many dreams. They seem so simple now. I wanted to be a teacher. I wanted to find love and marry. I wanted to have lots of children. I dreamed of living in a house with a garden. I hoped I would do something lasting that would benefit mankind. Simple every day dreams. I always expected I would be able to accomplish them.

Calamity and misfortune were never a part of my thought process. It's not supposed to be. Anticipating those possibilities would have been and continue to be paralyzing. Knowing then what we all know now, would we have taken the chances we did and dreamed the dreams that made us all what we have become?

Early on, I began to learn that life might contain a series of missed expectations. Becoming a teacher was the first big disappointment. School just couldn't hold my attention and when I accidentally landed an exciting job in the fashion industry, I rebounded totally and enjoyed an amazing career that took me around the world.

Love and marriage was a realized dream. Having a lot of children was another story. After seven years I was preparing to come to terms with being childless when, happily, we discovered Peter was on the way. Joy quickly erased the growing panic that preceded that anticipated disappointment. Adapting to being childless would have been an almost insurmountable disappointment. I can remember my growing despair at the thought. Even now, it brings on an almost palpable ache in the pit of my stomach. I think about that feeling a lot these days.

The next missed expectation came upon discovering Peter would be an only child. That was a difficult time too. But it wasn't long lasting. After all, we did have Peter. It wasn't like we were childless. Like now. We had Peter for 22 years. Coming to terms with the missed expectation of having him for the rest of our lives has become an ongoing, relentless pursuit; chasing after some

impossible resolution that is clearly an exercise in futility. Life without Peter is one disappointment for which there is no resolve. This missed expectation requires total reinvention.

For ten years now I have worked hard at grieving and surviving. The first year was so very hard. But the second year was worse. You see, I expected (there's that word again) to feel better after the first year. But I soon discovered that the dreaded first anniversary did nothing, changed nothing and therefore, meant nothing. I was as miserable as ever and Peter was as invisible as ever. To this day, I don't know what I was expecting but, whatever it was, I didn't get it.

For ten years now, I've expected to achieve some resolution to the grievous pain of life without my treasured child. I've never really understood what "resolution" meant but I figured if I found it, I'd know.

As the holidays approach once again, I think perhaps "resolution" is the ability to function again as a seemingly "whole" person even when you're not. To be able to enjoy people and events again even when you're permanently sad inside. Life has become a strange collection of contradictions. Disbelief is a constant. Can it really be ten years I wonder? I have a friend who also wonders is it possible that it is 21 years!? We marvel that we are still here.

Another missed expectation. We both thought we'd be following our kids sooner rather than later. So here come the holidays again. My expectations are changing. I've learned to expect very little. I expect I will manage to enjoy a little Thanksgiving with friends. December will be filled with music, lights and the laughter of little children. I will smile at all the festivities and quietly wonder once again, what would it be like now, if Peter were here.

--Marie Levine TCF Manhattan, NY

## Friends And Family...



### Letter to A Friend

Grief is hard on friendships, but it doesn't have to be. Sometimes, all it takes is a little honesty between friends. If we gently and lovingly explain what we need from the relationship during our time of grief, and what we are willing to do in return, we can turn even a lukewarm friendship into something special. Share the following letter with a friend over lunch. You'll both be glad you did.

Dear Friend,

Please be patient with me; I need to grieve in my own way and in my own time. Please don't take away my grief or try to fix my pain. The best thing you can do is listen to me and let me cry on your shoulder. Don't be afraid to cry with me. Your tears will tell me how much you care.

Please forgive me if I seem insensitive to your problems. I feel depleted and drained, like an empty vessel, with nothing left to give. Please let me express my feelings and talk about my memories. Feel free to share your own stories of my loved one with me. I need to hear them.

Please understand why I must turn a deaf ear to criticism or tired clichés. I can't handle another person telling me that time heals all wounds. Please don't try to find the 'right' words to say to me; there's nothing you can say to take away the hurt. What I need are hugs, not words.

Please don't push me to do things I'm not ready to do, or feel hurt if I seem withdrawn. This is a necessary part of my recovery. Please don't stop calling me. You might think you're respecting my privacy, but to me it feels like abandonment.

Please don't expect me to be the same as I was before. I've been through a traumatic experience and I'm a different person. Please accept me for who I am today.

"In return for your loving support I promise that, after I've worked through my grief, I will be a more loving, caring, sensitive and compassionate friend - because I have learned from the best.

Love, "(your name)"

--Bluegrass Chapter Newsletter

## Book Review...



*O Susan!* By James W. Arnell

Powerful!! This is the first word that comes to mind, upon reading this inspiring book of how a father copes with the sudden death of his 21-year old daughter. It is a story of hope and courage telling us how we can go on living when faced with the death of our young.

## Helpful Hint...



### Wearing a Mask

Halloween is a great time to pretend to be someone else. You can be mean and nasty even though you're usually a pretty nice person, or you

can be scary when you usually are the one that gets scared. You can pretend to be strong and powerful or beautiful or mysterious or famous. You can pretend to be anything on Halloween. It isn't fun, though, to try to always wear a mask.

Sometimes, for a person who is grieving, it seems like you need to always pretend to be your old happy self. Your friends and others may want you to forget about your loss and go on as if nothing much has changed. But it is really hard to mask your true feelings all the time. It is much better for you, if you can, to take off your mask and just be yourself sometimes. If you let your feelings out, then you are being honest with yourself and others.

By taking off your mask and revealing your true self, you will be a much more REAL person. It's better to save masks for Halloween.

—Bluegrass chapter of TCF



## Welcome...

We, as bereaved parents, help grieving families rebuild their lives following the death of a child! Please join us at one of the meetings as we all work toward healing from the death of our child. Grief shared is grief diminished. You are not required to talk and this is not a group therapy session—just parents sharing in a safe environment. Come see how much it can help.

## Chapter Donations Are Down...

While there are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends, there are many expenses involved with our monthly meetings. Newsletters, mailings, events, and outreach all come with a price. None of this would be possible without your contributions and donations.

Some parents remember a birthday or anniversary date of their child, or a holiday or year's end donation with a "Love Gift". A love gift is a donation to help us carry on the work of our chapter. We are truly appreciative for any contributions, (which are tax deductible) that help to continue the efforts of our chapter.

We would like to extend our gratitude to all who donate to TCF. Their generosity allows us to reach out to the newly bereaved and give needed support to the bereaved parents and siblings in our community. Please remember, if given in memory of your child, to include his/her full name. A very

special THANK YOU to those who contribute to the basket during monthly meetings. We greatly appreciate your support!

**Save The Dates...** Steering Committee Meeting is on Tue Oct 7<sup>th</sup> & And the World Wide Candle Lighting Program is on Sun., Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>.

## Steering Committee Needs Your Input...

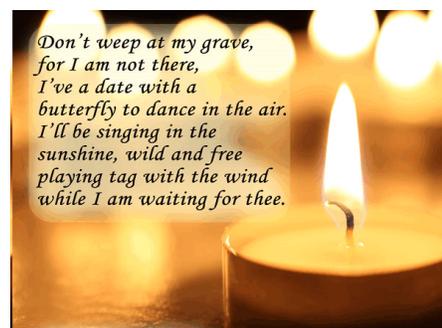
The Chapter would like to invite all TCF members to attend our Quarterly Steering Committee meeting to see if you could join us in the running of the South Bay/L/A. chapter. Please be willing to be an active participant. The Steering Committee is all volunteer, and is an integral part in planning how the group is run month to month, and our participation in the Balloon Liftoff and the Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony.

Our next Steering Committee Meeting will be held on Oct 7<sup>th</sup> at Leo & Connie's house. Please consider helping our chapter find new ideas, topics, and memorials to honor our children and help other bereaved families. Call (310) 283-6739 for the Licciardone's address and more information. Thanks, South Bay/L.A. TCF

## The World Wide Candle Lighting...

The Worldwide Candle Lighting is held annually the second Sunday in December, this year on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Join us as friends and family around the globe light a candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age and from any cause. Candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual wave of light, as hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor the memory of children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

Leo has volunteered to create a slide show of all our children to play during the ceremony. Start looking for a picture of your child that you would like to be shown. More details to follow next month.



## Lessons in Life

I've learned people don't care how much you know until they know that you care.  
 I've learned to avoid judging others so I think what I say, not say what I think.  
 I've learned that it's taking me a long time to become the person I want to be.  
 I've learned that a child who has lived just moments can be your greatest teacher.  
 I've learned that you can keep going long after you think you can't.  
 I've learned that we are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.  
 I've learned that heroes are people who do what needs to be done regardless of their personal circumstances.  
 I've learned that learning to forgive takes a lot of practice.  
 I've learned that friends can become strangers, and strangers can become friends.  
 I've learned that ignorance isn't an excuse for the lack of compassion.  
 I've learned that ignorance begets ignorance.  
 I've learned that some people will never, ever get it.  
 I've learned some people love you dearly, but just don't know how to show it.  
 I've learned that true love continues to grow, even over the longest distance.  
 I've learned that the community of sorrow is the strongest of all.  
 I've learned that it isn't always enough to be forgiven by others.  
 Sometimes you have to learn to forgive yourself.  
 I've learned that no matter how bad your heart is broken the world doesn't stop for your grief.  
 I've learned that your life can be changed in a matter of minutes.  
 I've learned that writing, as well as talking, can ease emotional pains.  
 I've learned to trust myself.  
 I've learned that the people you care most about in life are taken from you too soon.  
 I've learned that you should always leave loved ones with loving words.  
 It may be the last time you see them.  
 I've learned that love isn't measured by the amount of time you have with someone.  
 I've learned that some sorrow is so deep that it has no words. But so is love.  
 What has your child taught you?  
 --Adapted by Joanne Cacciatore for Bereaved Parents

## Angels Among Us

Our Angels are among us  
 In all the forms that God created...  
 We see them in the sunrise,  
 We feel them in the summer breeze.  
 They are there among the flowers...  
 They soar with the eagles,  
 The night will find them in the stars,  
 And even in our dreams,  
 As the snow melts with the sun,  
 They come on the wings of butterflies.  
 They are telling us they are with us,  
 Until it's time for us to meet again,  
 We see them every day  
 They are with us along life's way.  
 That brightens and warms our soul.  
 That chases away our cold.  
 Their sweet scent a memory of love.  
 As they fly so high above.  
 Lighting our path below.  
 Their presence we'll still know.  
 And spring flowers peek through their beds,  
 And flutter about our heads.  
 And will be forever more...  
 As we pass through heaven's door.  
 --Jacquelyn M. Comea



## Last Moments

Last moments  
 Snatches of conversation  
 That echo across all decades...  
 Priceless words  
 Indelibly etched on the heart.  
 Sometimes  
 Thoughts were never spoken  
 But unexpected sentiment—  
 A quick embrace, a silly smirk,  
 Or joyous laughter—  
 Reaches through the pain  
 And warms the heart.  
 We came too soon to understand  
 The folly of harsh words  
 Or neglected touch,  
 For who can know which  
 Taken-for-granted event  
 Will become  
 A last moment.  
 --Diane Fields, TCF Westmoreland, PA

**Our****Children****Remembered**

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

Larry Broks Jr.  
Born: 7/88 Died: 9/17  
Mother: Thessia  
Carpenter

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

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

Josue  
Born: 3/04 Died: 6/07  
Mother: Elizabeth  
Centeno

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

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

Ryan Dobie  
Born: 7/92 Died: 2/19  
Parents: Linda &  
Douglas Dobie

Brandon Armstrong  
Miscarried: July 1995  
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Julian Burns  
Born: 12/18 Died: 1/19  
Parents: Daniel & Marta  
Burns

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

Michael John Dornbach  
Born: 7/60 Died: 10/17  
Parents: Maria Triliegi &  
Edward Dornbach

Connor Aslay  
Born: 5/99 Died: 7/18  
Mother: Erin Aslay

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Carina Chandiramani  
Born: 5/86 Died: 9/18  
Mother: Norma  
Chandiramani

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

Joel Draper  
Born: 1/84 Died: 5/2004  
Mother: Tracy Solis

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

Blair Chapin  
Born: 4/82 Died: 5/18  
Sister: Elizabeth Chapin

Michael N. Daffin  
Born: 2/85 Died: 4/17  
Parents: Michael & Diana  
Daffin

Brian Daniel Edelman  
Born: 5/86 Died: 8/23  
Father: Ray Edelman

Cheianne Jayda Berry  
Born: 12/01 Died: 7/16  
Mother: Kristina Berry

Alexandra Chi  
Born: 2/03 Died: 12/24  
Father: David Chi  
Parents

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

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

Sam Boldissar  
Born: 10/91 Died: 3/17  
Parents: Jeeri & Frank  
Boldissar

Michael Edward Clapp  
Born: 2/93 Died: 4/18  
Mother: Patti Clapp

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

Gregory Robert Ehrlich  
Born: 4/91 Died: 2/19  
Mother: Sarah Ott

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

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

Sean Michael Denhart  
Born: 3/88 Died: 12/20  
Mother: Janna Denhart

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

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

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

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

Bettina Mia Embry  
Born: 8/65 Died: 4/22  
Parents: Larry & Elena  
Bruns

Nicolas Frank DiMarco  
Born: 9/89 Died: 9/22  
Father: Frank DiMarco

**Our Children**

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

Cody Jarod Esphorst  
Born: 3/02 Died 7/19  
Parents: Jesse & Julie  
Esphorst

Jesse Eric Esphorst  
Born: 9/00 Died: 3/17  
Parents: Jesse & Julie  
Esphorst

Chidinma Ezeani  
Born: 8/89 Died: 10/19  
Mother Ifeoma Ezeani

Robert Justin Fields  
Born: 1/00 Died: 1/22  
Parents: Loree & Bob  
Fields

Shawn Eric Fillion  
Born: 12/82 Died: 8/21  
Mother: Lise Fillion

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

Bryce Patrick Fisher  
Born: 10/86 Died: 8/21  
Mother: Nancy Goodson

Miles Andrew Gallas  
Born: 2/89 Died: 3/21  
Mother: Denise Gallas

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

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

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

Marc David Guerreva  
Born: 7/97 Died: 7/17  
Mother: Sharon Cortez

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

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

Christie Hagenburger  
Born: 4/63 Died: 12/17  
Father: D.W.  
Hagenburger

Bishop Michael  
Hernandez  
Born: 3/98 Died: 6/21  
Father: John Hernandez

Jesse Hernandez  
Born: 2/90 Died: 11/22  
Mother: Joann  
Hernandez

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

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

Sarah Jade Hurley  
Born: 6/97 Died: 5/17  
Father: Tim Hurley  
Grandmother: Laurie  
Hurley

Taylor X. Hyland  
Born: 8/06 Died: 7/20  
Mother: Tessa Hyland

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

**Remembered**

Alexander John Jacobs  
Born: 3/90 Died: 8/19  
Mother: Diane Jacobs

Stefanie Jacobs  
Born: 5/87 Died: 1/97  
Father: Rob Jacobs

Jason Christopher  
Jenkins  
Born: 4/86 Died: 11/20  
Parents: Alvin & Caprice  
Jenkins

Lizzie Jester  
Born: 6/93 Died: 7/18  
Father: Lee Jester

Zachary Hyun Joon  
Jeong  
Born: 12/24 Died: 12/24  
Parents: Ken Jeong &  
Cydney Shapiro

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

Jillian Nicole Katnic  
Born: 3/87 Died: 10/18  
Mother: Debbie Hughes

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

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

Chase King  
Born: 4/87 Died: 11/19  
Mother: Laura King

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

Margareta Sol Kubitz  
Born: 9/05 Died: 9/09  
Parents: Maria & Bill  
Kubitz

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

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

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

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

Emma Nicole Lerner  
Born: 11/99 Died: 7/06  
Mother: Nancy Lerner

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

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

Gaby Lindeman  
Born: 7/64 Died: 9/12  
Parents: Gilberto &  
Graciela Rodriguez

Joshua Lozon  
Born: 6/91 Died: 6/21  
Mother: Tracey Gentile

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

**Our****Children****Remembered**

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

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

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

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

Jesse Robert Martinez  
Born: 1/89 Died: 9/21  
Father: Harry Martinez

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

Matthew "Matty" Louis  
Match  
Born: 5/02 Died: 7/18  
Parents: Mike & Shirley  
Match, Grandmother:  
Dorothy Match

Max McCardy  
Born: 4/05 Died 8/15  
Parents: Derk & Akemi  
McCardy

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

John Paul Mc Nicholas  
Born: 12/89 Died: 11/20  
Parents: John & Leeann  
Mc Nicholas

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

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

Christopher Metsker  
Born: 11/94 Died: 3/18  
Parents: Justin & Tara  
Metsker

Blanca Isabel Meza  
Born: 9/21 Died: 9/21  
Mother: Angela Azurdin-  
Meza

Mathew Scott Mikelson  
Born: 4/77 Died: 4/20  
Mother: Dorthy Mikelson

Keith Moilanen  
Born: 10/80 Died: 5/19  
Mother: Jill Moilanen

Reyna Joanne Monje  
Born 9/98 Died: 4/21  
Mother: Debbie Trutanich

Jacki Montoya  
Born: 10/89 Died: 6/15  
Mother: Theresa Montoya

Joshua Montoya  
Born: 4/15 Died: 6/15  
Grandmother: Theresa  
Montoya

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

Christopher Murphy  
Born: 11/92 Died: 4/18  
Mother: Deborah Murphy

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

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

Natalie Rose Nevarez  
Born: 5/90 Died: 11/14  
Parents: Gregg and Alison  
Nevarez

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

Stephanie Sue Newkirk  
Born: 12/67 Died: 10/15  
Mother: Cindy McCoy

Trevor Mitchell Nicholson  
Born: 7/99 Died: 1/18  
Parents: Brad & Kendra  
Nicholson

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

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

Steven Thomas Pack  
Born: 8/91 Died: 3/20  
Parents: Tom & Lisa Pack

Lilly Parker  
Born: 12/15 Died: 1/17  
Mother: Nicole Kawagish  
Father: J.D. Parker

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

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

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

Lindsay Nicole Pollack  
Born: 6/94 Died: 11/23  
Mother: Daphne Carroll-  
Pollack

Donnie Vincent Pulislich  
Born: 1/75 Died: 1/18  
Mother: Maria Pulislich  
Sister: Michelle Pulislich

**Our Children**

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

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

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

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

David Reade  
Born: 4/72 Died: 9/23  
Brother of Bobby Reade

Ronald Reade II  
Born: 9/69 to 8/23  
Brother of Bobby Reade

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

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

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

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

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

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

Andrew Sankus  
Born: 4/71 Died: 8/15  
Mother: Mary Sankus

Christian Saylor  
Born: 10/90 Died: 10/24  
Parents: Jeff & Coco  
Saylor

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

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

Nicholas M Sinclair  
Born: 1/80 Died: 2/22  
Mother: Suzanne Sinclair

Paul Slater  
Born: 10/71 Died: 11/16  
Parents: Bob & Gwen  
Slater

**Remembered**

Dale Lee Soto  
Born: 7/94 Died: 5/11  
Mother: Monique Soto

Patrik Stezinger  
Born: 1/89 Died: 8/17  
Parents: Paul & Rosemary  
Mosher

Jonathan David Streisand  
Born: 1/87 Died: 8/13  
Parents: Pricilla & David  
Streisand

Brittany Anne Suggs  
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/16  
Mother Camille Suggs

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

Kenneth Tahan  
Born: 2/66 Died: 7/16  
Parents: Shirley & Joseph  
Tahan

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

Jamie Taus  
Born: 5/85 Died: 5/21  
Sister: Jackie Taus  
Mother: Susan Taus

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

Julie Catherine Thomas  
Born: 1/80 Died: 9/2023  
Mother: Mary Thomas

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

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

Catarina Sol Torres  
Born: 12/16 Died: 12/16  
Parents: Marcus &  
Vanessa Torres

Carlos Valdez  
Born: 10/90 Died: 1/12  
Parents: Antonia &  
Refugio Valdez

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

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

Manuel Vargas III  
Born: 3/95 - Died: 5/15  
Father: Manuel Vargas

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

David Michael Villarreal  
Born: 11/90 Died: 2/18  
Parents: David & Barbara  
Villarreal

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

Adam Michael Wechsler  
Born: 3/2003 Died: 11/23  
Father: Zach Wechsler

Matthew L. Weiss  
Born: 9/96 Died: 8/18  
Mother: Natalie Narumoto

Rennie S. Wible  
Born: 8/66 Died: 1/18  
Mother: Jinx Wible

Dovan Vincent Wing  
Born: 6/83 Died: 9/17  
Mother: Becky Wing



## Our Children Remembered



Aaron Young  
Born: 9/74 Died: 6/15  
Mother: Sheila Young

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

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

Ryan Yorty  
Born: 4/81 Died: 5/84  
Mother: Denise Gonzales

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

Michael Jordan Zareski  
Born: 5/71 Died: 12/17  
Parents: Susan & Norm Zareski

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

Christopher Zuchero  
Born: 5/85 - Died: 5/22  
Parents: Mike & Shelly Rudeen

Vincent Zuniga  
Born: 1/99 - Died: 10/24  
Parents: Shonnie Allen & Eddie Zungia

\* For corrections or to add your child to the Our Children Remembered section of the newsletter, call Lynn at (310) 963-4646 and leave a message.

## Birthday/Anniversary Tributes...

In honor of your child's birthday or anniversary, we welcome you to submit a tribute. Anniversary tributes show how important our children still are to all of us. 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 or anniversary donations that help offset chapter expenses.)

Sorry, no tributes were submitted this month

## By Siblings...

### The Greatest Loss



The other night I spent a moment with my sister in a dream and it bothered me more than anything. She'd never want me to be upset by her presence, but the thing is I haven't seen her in over 2 years – at all. In this dream she was healthy because I recall thinking to myself, "Wow, she's healthy and she has all her hair."

One thing I lived for since I was little was to make her laugh, and it took hardly any effort to make her laugh in general, but especially at me. I still always wanted to perfect it though, find new ways, new cynical/dark phrases or new dance moves to surprise her with just to hear the sound of her laugh. On the phone, in person, even over text she would crack up at me.

Back to the dream, I can't remember what I did, but it was the way I was saying something and she was just laughing so hard at me and it felt so good! That was it. In a flash it was over, and I woke up feeling sick to my stomach. So many reasons ran through me, but mostly because it hit me that I have not seen or felt that feeling in over 2 years.

Many people thought it was great that she "finally visited me," but as grievers we often hear comments we don't align with. In my life now I have the ability to find new versions of 'happy,' and I certainly still have my quirky way of making things funny, but as I said before – I lived to hear Maureen laugh with me, at me, and I have not felt that. It shocked me when I woke up.

Someone in my brain tumor group recently asked us when was the last time we felt happy, and I said without even thinking July 27, 2017 – the day before Maureen had a seizure at the gym 3000 miles away. He said, "Yea, my life ended on \_\_\_ date and then my new life began." That date was when his wife was diagnosed, and we all just knew what he meant.

I say the day before Maureen was diagnosed rather than the day she died because, putting it mildly, brain cancer wreaks havoc on everything anyone ever once knew as normal. Maureen was never sick a day in her life, and in the blink of an eye, her brain cancer immediately began to take everything away from her that she could once do.

Throughout her illness though, her laugh thankfully still remained and I could feel happy. Losing this feeling from this amazing person is in itself the greatest loss. -- Katharine Heaton, Sister

of Maureen

## I Don't Know

I don't know what grief will  
look like tomorrow.

But I'll face it. I'll feel it.

As your memory washes over me.

One day at a time.

For such a love, grief is the price of admission.

The cost of the human condition.

So, I'll pay over and over again

until I see you again.

The love was worth it

—Author unknown



## “Life Goes On.”

I have often heard this sentence, said perhaps to console me, or perhaps as a way to put an end to conversation about loss and death. Of course life goes on, no matter how shattered our lives are by the loss of someone we love so dearly. Life doesn't ask whether we want to go along. We want the world to stop turning because of our loss.

Days turn onto nights, again and again, and this is how we arrived at this day. Suddenly another month, another year has gone by, although we all probably asked ourselves how we would be able to go on living. It just happens. We do not die because of the pain. We keep on living and I still wonder how this can be.

I do not want life to go on, but to stop it right here, or better yet, to turn back to the day when I lost my sister and baby niece. I do not want the changes life brings. Each change seems to increase the distance between the life I knew with them and the life I live today. I cannot ask my sister's opinion about the new things that happen. I cannot share them with her, tell her about them, laugh or cry with her about them. Changes make me aware that in fact life does go on, without her. My birthdays make me sad because they change the difference in age... my sister was always four years older than I was. Sometimes I feel guilty that I live on. I smell, I breathe, touch feel, see and experience life, while my sister and her daughter were ripped away from it.

My sister and I never talked about death or losing each other, but if we had, I am sure we both would have said that we could not imagine life without one another. If it had been me, my sister would have been forced to do exactly the same; go on living despite the agony, just because there is no choice.

Before I lost them, I trusted life to be good. I

believed in fairness; if we are good, life will spare us tragedies and besides, these tragedies only happen to other people, those I do not know, those I read about in the papers, distant, easy to forget about. I lost this sense of security and trust in life. I now find that living takes courage. Life becomes meaningful through love and friendship, but loving is what makes us vulnerable.

Daring to invite love into our lives means to increase vulnerability to the threats that seem to be around every corner. Instead of asking “why us?” I often find myself asking “why not us?” Tragedy hits good and bad people for no reason. It seems the world is just random and unpredictable. Just because I am a good person and I already lost so much does not mean I will be spared more pain.

Life goes on and because it does, with all the good and bad things that happen to us, it scares me to live and particularly to love. What if more happens? The fear is paralyzing. I pray to God, to my sister and my niece to protect us, although I know they don't have the power to prevent other things from happening. What then can I ask them for?

Courage I guess. Courage to let life go on, to give myself a chance that new and good things will happen to me that will add JOY to my life  
--Britta Nielsen, TCF Manhattan

## For Grandparents...



## Grandparents Remembrance

We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives. Our grief is two-fold and at times we feel powerless to help. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts. We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild, and we have lost a symbol of our immortality. As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them, and when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together. We continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. We support the new ones, which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort.

--Susan Mackey TCF, Rutland, VT

## From Our Members...

### You Don't Get Over It - You Carry It

Everyone expects you to eventually stop grieving at some point...right? They think it can't possibly be healthy to grieve someone you lost for too long. Wrong! You'll grieve the one you lost forever. Why? Because love is forever. So do you know why you'll never get over it? Because 'it' is the one you love. What you learn to do is live with the grief. The pain, visible or not, stays with you forever, until you take your last breath.

You may wonder how long the grief will last. The truth is that healing comes slowly... but it does come. Nothing can replace the person you lost, and yet gradually you'll find you're able to continue with life, and start to feel happy at times, while remembering the one you love and lost.

Grief comes in waves... and you'll have dark days when it seems as though nothing can ever be right again. But there will also be better days when the pain eases, and it's possible to begin to hope and believe in the future again.

Some people find it easier to show their feelings than others, but nearly everyone finds at some stage that it helps to talk. So talk about your loved one every chance you get. This can be to friends, relatives, or by seeking professional help. There's no magical invisible wall clock that's ticking pressuring you to get over it. You're allowed to take as much time as you need to heal. Don't think that you have to get back to 'normal'...that will never happen.

The pain you feel when you miss them is never going to go away, but that's okay. You're stronger than you've ever been in your life, and you're capable of doing things that you were never capable of doing before.

Here's the thing...you don't get over it... you carry it. You'll never get over it, because 'it' is everything you loved about the person who died. It's all the memories and time spent with them. Just remember that the decision to start the healing process is entirely up to you. So when you're ready... get out there and take a chance on yourself.

-- Gary Sturgis - "Surviving Grief"

TCF Chapter North Shore Boston, Massachusetts  
So true. So helpful...I wish someone could have told me that up-front. Submitted by Linda Curtis

**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, the people and topics change and need to talk or share fluctuates between each meeting. 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.



**Flash Zoom Meetings...** are called on short notice, and are of shorter duration. The intent is check in on each other and share nothing more. The goal is to meet weekly but if it occurs every other week that's ok. To participate in our Zoom meetings, contact Leo at (310) 283-6739 or [Liccia79@gmail.com](mailto:Liccia79@gmail.com) for the link.

**Birthday Table...** In the month of your child's birthday, a Birthday Table is provided where you can share photos, mementos, your child's favorite snack, a birthday cake, a bouquet of flowers or anything you'd like to bring to share. We want to know your child better, so please take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful day of your child's birth. This is your chance to tell us a favorite story, or whatever remembrance you choose, in memory of your child. Our child's, grandchild's, or sibling's birthday will forever be a very special day and we at TCF know how important that day is and how helpful and healing it can be to share with others. Please plan on attending the meeting of your child's birthday month and filling our Birthday Table with pictures and/or mementos.

**Newsletter 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.) You can mail them to the P.O. Box or send them by e-mail to [Lynntcf@aol.com](mailto:Lynntcf@aol.com) Tributes must

be in by the 1st of the month **preceding** your child's birthday month or at the prior meeting. (Example: Oct. first for Nov. birthdays). If you miss the deadline, call Lynn at (310) 963-4646 and let me know. I will try to fit them in. Otherwise they will appear in the following month's issue.



**Get Your Photo Buttons...** Photo Buttons are a perfect way to share your child, grandchild or sibling with others at our monthly meetings. If you would like to have some made, call Connie at (310) 292-5381. You can mail her a photo for each button you would like (color photo copies work great) and she can make them for you. There is no cost, but donations are welcomed. 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.

**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. Blank pages are located in the back of the book. Feel free to take a page home to work on. 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 Lori know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

We also welcome "book reviews". If you have read a book which was helpful on your grief journey, please let us know. Send book reviews and other articles or poems for submission to the newsletter to [Lynntcf@aol.com](mailto:Lynntcf@aol.com) Also, a friendly reminder, if you have books at home you have checked out and are finished reading them, please remember to return them to our library.

**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.



A receipt will be emailed to you for tax purposes if you include your name. Please let us know if you want the tribute published in the next newsletter.

**Our Website...** Leo Licciardone is hosting the website and updating it with the current newsletter and chapter information. Thank you to those who are willing to get your 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) 963-4646 to update by phone. You can also e-mail Lynn at [Lynntcf@aol.com](mailto:Lynntcf@aol.com) if you want to do it electronically. Thank-you for your understanding and help. TCF South Bay/LA

**Phone Friends...** Sometimes you want or need to talk about the life and death of your child, sibling or grandchild with someone that 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.



Leo & Connie Licciardone (chpt. leaders)....(310) 292-5381  
 Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla (chpt. leaders).....(310)530-8489  
 Lori Galloway.....(760) 521-0096  
 Linda Zelik.....(310) 648-4878

#### Local TCF Chapters:

Beach Cities/L.A. (Manhattan Bch): (970) 213-6293 Third Tue.  
 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) 236-3635, 4th Thurs.  
 Spanish speaking: Mary Trujillo (323) 347-9469

#### Local Support Groups...

Family & Friends of Murder Victims: Rose Madsen, (909) 798-4803 Newsletter and support group, e-mail [Roseydoll@aol.com](mailto: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 of Suicide:** Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Rick Mogil (310) 895-2326 or 24 hrs: (310) 391-1253

**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:** (800) 821-6819

**Walk with Sally:** Cancer loss bereavement & art therapy for children. (310) 378-5843

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

### Other Grief Support Websites...

thetearsfoundation.org	childloss.com
goodgriefresources.com	griefwatch.dom
bereavedparentsusa.org	opentohope.com
healingafterloss.org	webhealing.com
survivorsof suicide.com	alivealone.org
taps.org (military death)	angelmoms.com
save.org (suicide/depression)	M.A.D.D..org
pomc.com (families of murder victims)	
grasphelp.org (substance abuse deaths)	
www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub (Suicide)	
Griefwords.com (for grandparents)	



**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 CO-LEADERS: Leo & Connie Licciardone and Jarmo & Bonnie Mantoya

CHAPTER ZOOM HOSTS: Connie & Leo Licciardone

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks

TREASURER: Kristy Mueller

WEBSITE: Leo Licciardone

### Steering Committee Members:

Linda & Joe Zelik

Marilyn Nemeth

Bill Matasso

Nancy Lerner

Connie & Leo Licciardone

Sandra & Eddie Myricks

Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla



Lori Galloway

Crystal Henning

Lynn Vines

Kristy Mueller

Kitty Edler

Susan Kass

**National Office Information:** Compassionate Friends E-Newsletter: TCF National Office publishes a monthly e-newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on what's going on with the organization and its chapters. We encourage everyone use the valuable information it holds to help you in your grief. To receive TCF's e-newsletter, sign up for it online by visiting TCF national website at <http://compassionatefriends.org> and filling out the request to sign-up at the bottom of the page.

**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 for specific topics that you need to register for.

**Online Support (Live Chat)...** TCF offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. Please Note: Times posted on the schedule are based on Pacific Time. Select "enter room" under the chat room you would like to participate in and you will be prompted to register. Once registered you will be able to log-in with your username and password that you have set up. You can keep abreast of any changes by going to: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)



# 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 tax deductible donation is what keeps our chapter going. **In honor and in remembrance of you child, please consider a donation to our chapter.**

When making a donation, please make checks payable to  
The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. chapter.  
Mail to: The South Bay/LA chapter of Compassionate Friends  
P.O. Box 11171 Torrance CA 90510

No Donations were submitted this month.

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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**

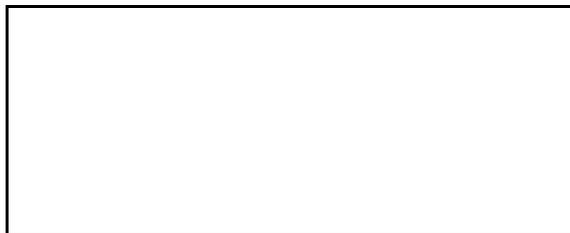
In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_ Death date \_\_\_\_\_

Tribute \_\_\_\_\_

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We are always working a month in advance. To include your donation in the next newsletter we must receive it by the first of the month, otherwise it will appear in the following issue.

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



**October 2025**

## **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.**  
©2025 THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS -- SOUTH BAY/L.A., CA CHAPTER

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