



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS Newsletter

MEMPHIS, TN

MARCH/APRIL 2009

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

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The Memphis Chapter of The Compassionate Friends conducts meetings on the first Thursday of each month from 7-9 p.m. at St. Louis Church located at 203 S. White Station at Shady Grove.

Be sure to bring a picture of your child to the meeting. We have a table set up for the placement of pictures of our children. We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.



TCF Meeting for March – “Mementos of our Children” We all have things that are precious to us that either belonged to or remind us of our beloved children, grandchildren, siblings or friends. We invite you to bring one thing that can be shared briefly with the group. This memento might be something that your loved ones treasured, something they gave to you or you gave to them, or something that simply reminds you that your loved ones lived and was loved; even if their life was very short, a footprint, baby blanket, hospital bracelet, etc.

Refreshments will be provided by Linda Woodard & Jean Ray

TCF Meeting for April – “The Myth of Perfect Parenthood” We will discuss how often times we place unwarranted guilt thereby compounding our recovery through buying into this myth of perfect parenthood.

Refreshments will be provided by Jere Ferguson & Pri Morden

Show-n-Tell

We sit in a circle of metal folding chairs, bereaved parents, caressing our children in our hearts, our stomachs churning. Bereaved parents, waiting our turn to tell of our beautiful children, lives cut short by death. Death which came in many guises, but claimed them all. Bereaved parents, choking out the names of our sons and daughters; reliving the painful circumstances of death; expressing our anger and helplessness. Remembering our child's uniqueness, experiencing the joy they brought us, if the grief is not still too fresh. Bereaved parents; tenderly touching the circling photos, profoundly struck by the extraordinary beauty of all the children. Soft chubby babies whose smiles fill our hearts; adventurous toddlers who call us to play; lively youngsters who continue to trust us; trusting teenagers who teach us not to judge; fine young adults who let us glimpse the possibilities; our beloved children all. One of us with tears in his voice, a bereaved parent asks us to stand and make a circle of hands. In silence we communicate our unspeakable grief; we share the legacy of our children's deaths, and the understanding of what it is to love.

Betty Berleher, TCF Houston-West, TX

Imagine

Imagine for a moment a mobile, all the shapes are of different weights and designs; but they hang together harmoniously each catching the sunlight and creating a melodious rhythm in the wind. Now snip one of the pieces; there is chaos each of the remaining pieces smash into one another and what was a melodious sound is now a clanging almost wailing in the wind. When a child is snatched by death from a family the results are the same, multiplied innumerable times.

Stephen Barrett

The Twelve Freedoms of Healing in Grief

- You have the freedom to realize your grief is unique
- You have the freedom to talk about your grief
- You have the freedom to expect to feel a multitude of emotions
- You have the freedom to allow for numbness
- You have the freedom to be tolerant of your physical and emotional limits
- You have the freedom to experience grief attacks or memory embraces
- You have the freedom to develop a support system
- You have the freedom to make use of ritual
- You have the freedom to embrace your spirituality
- You have the freedom to allow a search for meaning
- You have the freedom to treasure your memories
- You have the freedom to move toward your grief and heal

Alan Wolfeldt, PhD

You have to count on living every single day in a way you believe will make you feel good about your life, so that if it were over tomorrow, you would be content with yourself.

Jane Seymour

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Parents

The Memphis TCF Chapter has a website with information about TCF and what is happening in the Memphis Chapter. We also have a page where we have a picture slideshow of our children. We are preparing a section for individual child pages which can feature images of the children and/or their favorite possessions, themes, personal comments and stories about our children. If you would like to have your child's picture added to our website you will need to sign a release form which is required by our Webmaster and the National Chapter. Bring the picture and the written verbiage to our next meeting or send it by email to dahrius1@yahoo.com. The written information on your child needs to be prepared in any text editing program and saved on a disk (to bring to the meeting or to send to the address below) or e-mailed as an attachment. You can view our website at www.tcfmemphis.org; click on "Our Children." On that page there is a link to obtain the required release form. Bring the form to a meeting or send to Clint Norwood, 3402 Douglass, Memphis TN, 38111.

Birthday Table

Each month we provide a Birthday Table for the parents whose children would be celebrating a birthday. We invite you to bring pictures, scrapbooks and other mementos that belonged to your child to share with your Compassionate Friends.

TCF Library

We have an extensive TCF Library that is a valuable resource for our Chapter and new parents. We ask that you check the books or tapes out by completing the check-out card in the front of the book/tape and return what you have checked out in a few months. If you have any books you would like to donate to our Library, contact Pri Morden at 274-9338.

Grief Materials

The Compassionate Friends has joined with Centering Corporation to provide resources at conferences and to our chapters. Centering Corporation is North America's oldest and largest bereavement resource company and carries more than 400 resources for grieving families and caregivers. If you would like to receive a catalog, contact Centering Corporation at PO Box 4600, Omaha, NE 68104; phone 402-553-1200 or visit their Web site at www.centering.org.

TCF Wristbands

Our chapter has Compassionate Friends wristbands with "Forever In My Heart" imprinted and framed by two butterflies available for \$1.00. If you would like to order TCF wristbands, call Gwen Elrod at 901-388-3298 or send your request to gwenelrod@comcast.net.

Religion – A Continuing Theme

The principles of The Compassionate Friends state that TCF reaches out to all bereaved parents across the artificial barriers of religion, race, economic class or ethnic group. TCF promotes no specific religion or philosophical ideology. Despite our non-denominational status, many writers indicate that they have found comfort in their faith, and some have shared their anger and loss of faith. The opinion and beliefs expressed in the articles and poetry are those of the author.



Phone Friends

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child and know that sometimes when you are having a particularly bad day, you might need to talk. We understand and would like to listen. Please feel free to contact any of us listed below.

Accidental Death – Sheila Foust 901-496-9649 or 662-895-1424

Sue Ann Duffy 901-848-4134

Illness/Cancer – Gwen Elrod 901-388-3298

Chronic Illness – Jack & Peggy U'Ren 901-388-6759

Infant/Baby – Jennifer Brown 901-483-0605

Suicide – Oliver & Claudia Ellison 901-466-0973



2009 TCF National Conference

"Community of Compassion – Rainbows of Love" will be the theme of the 32nd National Conference to be held August 7th, 8th and 9th 2009, at the Double Tree-Lloyd Center in Portland, Oregon. The keynote speaker for this year's conference is Candy Lightner, founder of Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD). Candy's 13 year old daughter, Cari was struck from behind on May 3, 1980 and killed by a vehicle as she walked down a quiet street. The hit-and-run driver, who had four previous drunk driving convictions, had served virtually no time in jail. Candy went from being a divorced mother selling real estate to a "Crusader with a Cause," starting, with friends, MADD which has changed the dynamics of the way people across the country view driving drunk. For the most up to date information, visit The Compassionate Friends website at compassionatefriends.org.

What is Normal Now?

- **Normal** is trying to decide what to take to the cemetery for Christmas, Birthdays, Valentine's Day and Easter.
- **Normal** is feeling like you know how to act and are more comfortable with a funeral than a wedding or a birthday party; yet, feeling a stab of pain in your heart when you smell the flowers, see the casket, and all the crying people.
- **Normal** is feeling like you can't sit another minute without screaming because you just don't like to sit through church anymore; and yet at the same time feeling like you have more faith in God than you ever had before.
- **Normal** is having tears waiting behind every smile when you realize someone important is missing from all of the important events in your family's life.
- **Normal** is not sleeping very well because a thousand "what ifs" go through your head constantly.
- **Normal** is having the TV on the minute you walk into the house to have some "noise" because the silence is deafening.
- **Normal** is telling the story of your child's death as if it were an everyday common event and then gasping in horror at how awful it sounds; and yet realizing it has become a part of normal conversation.
- **Normal** is each year coming up with the difficult task of how to honor your child's memory on their birthday and surviving that day; and trying to find a balloon or flag that fits the occasion, "Happy Birthday"? Not really!
- **Normal** is a new friendship with another bereaved parent and meeting over coffee and talking and crying together over your children; and worrying together over the surviving children.
- **Normal** is being too tired to care if you paid the bills, cleaned the house, did the laundry or if there is any food in the house.
- **Normal** is wondering this time whether you are going to say you have two or three children because you will never see this person again, and is it worth explaining that one of them has passed away; and yet, when you say two children to avoid the problem you feel horrible as if you have betrayed your child.
- **Normal** is hiding all the things that have become "normal" for you to feel, so that everyone around you will think you are "Normal".

Vicki Windham, TCF Platt, New England

Oh Baby

Oh, baby, my laughing treasure; where did you go? Are you hiding around some corner, are you playing peek-a-boo with the sky? Oh, baby, my loving joy, where are you now? Are you at last free of our meddling fingers, free of toil and trials? Are you riding the rainbow's curve, dancing on star dusted paths? Oh, baby, are you sleeping now; or has your life only just begun? Is that your smile I see sparkling in the sun? Is that your sigh I hear whispering in the leaves? Are those your tears I feel raining on my cheek? Oh, baby, so tiny, yet so strong; where are you now? Here, here in my heart; in my very being; here in my life. Oh, baby, I love you.

Darcie Sims, PhD

Take Time To Grieve

If your child's birthday or death date is approaching, take time to grieve. The restlessness, the endless searching, the lack of

concentration, the persistent gnawing pain deep in your gut; the arms that ache in agony to hold a child; or hug him just once more; the unswallowable lump, like a silent scream, stuck in your throat, this is all a part of your grief. You cannot run away for it goes with you. You cannot go around it, or under it, or over it. You must go through it; take the time to grieve; to feel the pain and the most important experience of your life; and your child's life. Attend to your "unfinished business." If you are "stuck" find out how to get beyond it. Do you need to go back to the hospital? the doctor? the autopsy report? do you need to pour out your feelings on paper? or write your final goodbye in a letter? or tell that child all the things you never had the chance to say? Remember, grief cannot be hurried; but it can be delayed. Time alone does not heal; it is what we do with that time; take time to grieve. We do not measure our grief in months or years. We measure it in small steps of positive resolution.

Shirley Meling TCF, Aurora, IL

Butterflies Make Me Happy

Sometimes in our grief we truly believe we are going crazy. We hurt so bad we don't think we can manage to go on living without our precious child here with us. Part of the grieving process is learning how to do just that. Some parents need the reassurance that their child is okay. I think the human mind can only take so much pain and jumps at the chance to see the sign from their children, reassuring them that they are okay. The way I look at it, if you get comfort from a dream or a sign, enjoy it. You've suffered enough, and believing in signs, butterflies, dreams or what ever else gives you comfort and hurts no one else, is your right as a bereaved person. Are these signs real, or just in my imagination? Can I prove they are messages from my son? Does it even need to be proven? No, I can't scientifically prove it; but I know that dreams, butterflies, signs and enjoyment in nature makes me feel closer to Eric and therefore I will continue to enjoy them. It hurts no one, I'm not obsessive about it and anyone who chooses to think I'm nuts for believing in such things can just think I'm nuts. We've all heard how the butterfly is a symbol of rebirth. Whether it's our child moving from this world onto a higher plane, or a bereaved parent emerging from the cocoon of grief into a world without our child here. With us, butterflies are a comfort for many. When I'm missing my son and see a butterfly fluttering from flower to flower, I smile and feel better. When I'm in a happy mood and see a butterfly, I enjoy the beauty of such a delicate creature. Taking the time to slow down and watch such a fragile creature going about its business is calming and I don't think anyone should discount the benefits from having a calming moment. About four months after Eric died; I had a dream about him. I woke myself up from tears of joy running down my face, I knew he was okay; what a relief that was. I still hurt terribly and missed him more than I thought I could endure, but I felt comforted by the dream. Some could say it was my conscious trying to sort things out, but I choose to believe it was his way of trying to comfort me. Either way, it made me feel better. Maybe it's because bereaved parents walk around in such a fog and function on automatic pilot that we are moving slow enough to notice the signs that are around us. Maybe dreams are one way for us to accept messages we need to hear and take into our hearts without logically trying to interpret them. Maybe faith is what we rely on when nothing else makes sense and we instinctively know we need something to hold on to. Whatever it is, just give me a second helping; I like feeling closer to my son!

Lynn Vines, TCF South Bay, CA

Memories are the legacy of love.

Steps to Making Progress

Allow Yourself

- To be imperfect
- To whatever brings you pleasure and a little peace
- To remember your child in whatever way you feel appropriate

Force Yourself

- To keep communication open
- To accept offers of help from family or friends
- To go through the old routines again
- To really listen to your spouse and children
- To try an activity you used to enjoy

Convince Yourself

- That every member of your family will and should grieve differently
- That you won't feel dead inside forever
- That your confusion about intimacy with your spouse is normal

Let Yourself

- Off the hook for problems
- Feel the anger
- Feel whatever it is that you do feel about God
- Treasure your special friends

Teach Yourself

- To establish small goals
- Everything you can learn about grief
- To ignore well-intentioned, unhelpful comments of others
- To let go of the moment of your child's death
- To embrace the memories of your child

Talk To Yourself

- To change the negative ways you think
- About everything

Forgive Yourself

- For not being the most perfect parent
- For all the things that you did or did not do

Find Yourself

- Now that you have changed into a different person
- Without relying on drugs, alcohol, etc.
- By relying on positive techniques such as reading, writing, new hobby, etc

Indulge Yourself

- By being selfish and doing something just for you
- Because you deserve it

Express Yourself

- By talking out your feelings
- In a safe place such as TCF
- Through a new activity

Forget Yourself And Give Of Yourself

- By seeking out other bereaved parents and others in trouble
- By concentrating on others who are in pain
- To discover that We Need Not Walk Alone
- As a tribute to your child

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

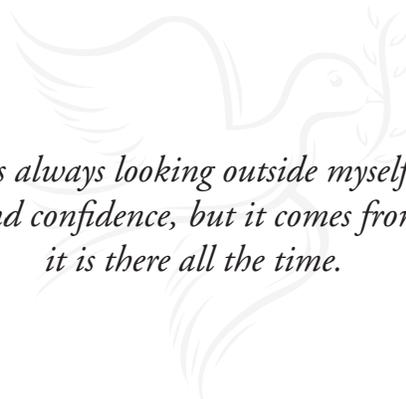
I've often thought the pain of losing one's child the most precious, the most beloved, was the worst tragedy one could ever endure. Now, I know for sure, it is. I've often thought of some who consider life so bad, their problems all so major when, in fact, their child is still alive. Now, I see how wrong their thoughts are. I've often thought if the worst calamity of life occurred, that the death of a child one surely could not survive. Now, I see parents can and do survive. But I've often thought, I would rejoice at the funeral of a parent whose child predeceased them, when their own time is through, now I know I surely will. For now I believe the joyous reunion that waits in the better place will far outweigh anything else this world could offer.

Rachel Ingles, In loving memory of her son Blake Emory Ingles

Prayer for Spring

Like springtime, let me unfold and grow fresh and new from this cocoon of grief that has been spun around me. Help me face the harsh reality of sunshine and renewed life as my bones still creak from the winter of my grief. Life has dared to go on around me as I recover from the insult of life's continuance. I re-adjust my focus to include recovery and growth as a possibility in my future. Give me strength to break out of the cocoon of my grief. But may I never forget it as the place where I grew my wings, becoming a new person because of my loss.

Janice Heil TCF, Vancouver, Canada



*I was always looking outside myself for
strength and confidence, but it comes from within,
it is there all the time.*

Anna Freud

Chasing After Closure

I keep reading in the newspapers about survivors of tragedy or death seeking "Closure." Yet no one really defines what closure means, whether it is possible or how to get there. For many in our society, closure means leaving grief behind, a milestone usually expected within a matter of weeks or months. Closure means being "normal," getting back to your old self, no longer crying or being affected by the death. It means "moving on with life" and leaving the past behind, even to the extent of forgetting or ignoring it. For we who have experienced death, this kind of closure is not only impossible but indeed undesirable. Closure, if one even chooses to use the term, is actually more a process than a defined moment. The

initial part of closure is accepting the reality. At first, we keep hoping or wishing that it weren't true. We expect our loved one to walk through the door. We wait for someone to tell us it was all a huge mistake. We just can't accept that this person has died, that we will never physically see them again on earth, that we will not hear their voices, feel their hugs, or get their input on a tough decision. Usually it takes weeks or even months for the reality to finally sink in. We come to know, in both our heads and our hearts that our loved one has died and is not coming back. We still don't like it, but we accept it as true. As the reality sinks in, we can more actively heal. We begin making decisions and start to envision a life different from what we had planned before, a life in which we no longer expect our loved one to be there. We grow, struggle, cry and change. We form fresh goals; we face our loneliness; we feel the pain and loss, but except for short periods of time, we are not crippled by it. We also make a shift in memory, memories of our loved ones, rather than being painful as they were at first, sometimes make us smile or even laugh. This healing phase takes a very long time, and involves a lot of back-and-forth. We alternate between tears of joy, fears and confidence, despair and hope. We take two steps forward and one step back. We wonder whether we'll ever be truly happy again, and often doubt that we will. Eventually we realize we are taking the past, with all its pain and pleasure, into a new tomorrow. We never forget, and in fact we carry our beloved with us; he or she is forever a cherished part of who we are. We are changed by the experience of having loved this person, by the knowledge of life's transience, and by grief itself. We become different and hopefully better, more compassionate, more appreciative and more tolerant people. We fully embrace life again, connecting, laughing and loving with a full heart. Still, there is no point of "final closure," no point at which we can say, "Ah, now I have finally completed my grief." Or, "Yes, now I have healed." There is no point at which we will never cry again, although as time goes on the tears are bittersweet and less common. Healing is a lifelong process, one in which we often don't even realize we are healing until we look back and see how far we have come. "Closure?" I don't think so; acceptance, yes; peace, yes; hope, definitely; but putting a period behind the final sentence and closing the book on it? No! Life and love are much too complex for that. The story does not end; instead it awaits the next chapter.

Amy Florian, Hoffman Estates, IL

When Your Infant Has Died

The death of your infant has shattered your hopes and dreams for the future. It has sent shock waves through your body; this is one of the most difficult times in your life. It may seem as if the world has stopped and everything is moving in "Slow Motion." Infants are not supposed to die and so it seems especially difficult to understand what has happened. If your baby was very young or not yet born, some people may discount your grief. They may assume that because you did not have time to develop a long-term relationship with your baby, your loss and your pain will be less. Sometimes a miscarriage or stillbirth is not even acknowledged by other family members and friends. These assumptions only increase the pain and feeling of isolation. You did however, have a long-term relationship with your child, if only in your mind. You dreamed of watching your child grow up and you anticipated being a parent for a long time. It is important to understand that you won't get over the death of your baby; you will learn to live through it. There will always be moments of intense pain as you remember the birthday, the anniversary of

the death and as you mark the passing of events you had planned to enjoy with your baby. Be prepared for these moments of grief and do not be alarmed as they continue throughout your life. Parents do not stop loving a child simply because the child has died. There are many things you can do to help yourself through grief. Acknowledge your loss and begin to accept the pain of grief. Try to live through it, not avoid it. Postponing the hurt simply intensifies it later. Take care of yourself; allow yourself to begin to heal. You will laugh again and enjoy life once more, but it will take some time. Do not be disturbed by your first laugh, it does not mean you have forgotten your baby, and it does not mean you are over your grief; be patient with yourself. Create a ritual to help you remember your baby. Lighting a special candle on important days, establishing a memorial fund in your baby's name, or donating a toy, money, rocking chair or time to a special charity all may help you commemorate your child's life. Right now you may want to talk to someone who has traveled his or her grief journey a few miles ahead of you. It really helps to know you are not alone, or crazy or a failure. And if you have misplaced your Hope for a while, borrow it from a friend. Grief lasts far longer than anyone expects; be gentle and kind to yourself. Your baby has died, but you did not lose the love you shared; even though death has come, love never goes away.

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We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children's 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 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

There is no way to predict how you will feel the reactions of grief – it is not like a recipe with given ingredients and certain results. Each person mourns in a different way. You may cry hysterically, or you may remain outwardly controlled, showing little emotion. You may lash out in anger against your family and friends, or you may express your gratitude for their concern and dedication. You may be calm one moment and in turmoil the next. Reactions are varied and contradictory. Grief is universal; at the same time it is extremely personal. Heal in your own way.

Earl Grollman, from Living When a Loved One Has Died

*One cannot weep for the entire world;
it is beyond human strength;
one must choose.*

Jean Anouilh

OUR CHILDREN LOVED AND REMEMBERED

March / April

In the month of their birth; in the month of their death; and always with love.

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|--|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| James Earl "Jim" Nordan Mar. 31 – Apr. 4 | Cliff & Leslie Acred | Christopher Allen Beshires Mar. 1 – July 10 | Johnny & Virginia Miller |
| Susi Norris Jan. 13 – Apr. 1 | Polly Arnold | Kyle Morden Apr. 24 – Nov. 6 | Pri Morden |
| Brandon James Baysingar Mar. 19 – Mar. 30 | James, Peggy & Travis Baysingar | Aaron Scott German June 10 – Apr. 23 | Read & Teresa Morton |
| Michael Brooks Bell Apr. 9 – Sep. 19 | Don & Kathy Bell | Daniel Alexis Muldrow Mar. 28 – May 30 | Toni Muldrow |
| Eric R. Calvin June 19 – Apr. 11 | Teresa Calvin | Ashley Danielle Muriel Apr. 8 – July 17 | David & Holly Muriel |
| Jonathan William Carter Nov. 17 – Apr. 14 | Beth Carter | Carter Lee Murray Mar. 12 – Sep. 26 | Seldon & Carolyn Murray |
| Rebecca "Becca" Brianne Spahr Aug. 28 – April 8 | Kathy Clements | James Earl "Jim" Nordan Mar. 31 – Apr. 4 | Joyce H Nordan |
| Richard Aaron Cohn, MD Nov. 19 – Apr. 4 | Dorothy Cohn | Spenser Lamar Norwood July 11 – Apr. 24 | Clint & Teresa Norwood |
| Hunter Ryan Davidson Apr. 12 – Mar. 5 | Brad & Kathy Davidson | John Calvin Hayes, Jr. Mar. 10 – Jan. 6 | Rita Oaks |
| Trippe Graham Detamore Apr. 8 – July 4 | Wade & Anita Detamore | Rebecca Sparh Aug. 28 – Apr. 8 | Emily Parr |
| Angela Gayle Dodd Mar. 24 – Feb. 26 | Brad & Sandra Dodd | Kevin Dewayne Burks Dec. 13 – Apr. 27 | Nellie Patterson |
| Jamie Elaine Doyle Apr. 28 – Apr. 28 | James & Virna Ruth Doyle | Wade Robinson Pennebaker Mar. 18 – Apr. 25 | Lucy Pennebaker |
| Charles "Chad" Wilson Eatherly Mar. 4 – Mar. 5 | Charles & Cheryl Eatherly | Kristopher Ray Rogers Feb. 10 – Mar. 4 | Tracye Petersen |
| Scott Alan Elrod May 7 – Apr. 4 | Larry & Gwen Elrod | William Shae Pierce Dec. 30 – Mar. 20 | Todd & Dawn Pierce |
| Alexandra Mae Sutton Ellsworth Jan. 10 – Mar. 4 | Robert & Rita Ellsworth | Stephanie Boyd Mar. 16 – Oct. 24 | Larry & Sandra Ray |
| Rachel LaVae Escue Apr. 19 – July 7 | Mark & Jencie Escue | Kaleigh Ann Bogard Riordan Feb. 9 – Mar. 25 | Kevin & Lisa Riordan |
| Cullen Lee Waddell, III June 29 – Apr. 24 | Randy & Kelly Fears | Keith "Teddy" C Rivers May 25 – Apr. 10 | Keith Rivers |
| Sarah Ferguson Apr. 2 – Mar. 25 | Jere & Jan Ferguson | Aaron Scott German June 10 – Apr. 23 | Lowell & Betty Salmon |
| Eric "Joshua" Foust Jan. 19 – Apr. 9 | Cathy Foust | Teresa "Terri" Lanette Sax Nov. 8 – Apr. 24 | Tommy & Christy Sander |
| Michael Paul Fultz Oct. 15 – Apr. 5 | Paul & Nancy Fultz | Samuel Jameson Trucks Oct. 10 – Mar. 30 | Debbie Sater |
| Jessica Sue Gafford Apr. 10 – Nov. 28 | Lee Anne Gafford | David Alan Shaw Dec. 26 – Mar. 18 | Charles & Rita Shaw |
| Jennifer Anne Gafford Apr. 10 – June 20 | Lee Anne Gafford | Audrey Elizabeth Southall Apr. 12 – Aug. 5 | Milton & Sharon Southall |
| Robyn Bryan July 1 – Mar. 3 | Karen Gale | Rebecca "Becca" Brianne Spahr Aug. 28 – Apr. 8 | Brittaney Spahr |
| Timothy David Garrod, Jr. July 26 – Apr. 28 | Teresa Garrod | Mark Adam Stallings Feb. 28 – Mar. 6 | Dale & Sylvia Stallings |
| James "Jamie" Wade Gillespie Feb. 15 – Mar. 15 | Sandra Gillespie | Roger Randall "Randy" Sullivan Apr. 25 – Apr. 30 | Bobbie J Sullivan |
| Jeremy Carlton Gingery June 14 – Mar. 18 | Jean Gingery | Jay Swamy Mar. 2 – July 31 | Al & Kala Swamy |
| Daren Everett Gray Sep. 28 – Mar. 20 | Ron & Wanda Gray | Bruce Daniel McSparrin Apr. 1 – Oct. 3 | Karen R Taylor |
| Sarah Emily Griffith Apr. 1 – Dec. 6 | Tom & Nelda Griffith | Natalie Emma Elizabeth Thomas Apr. 17 – May 4 | Herbert & Libby Thomas |
| Martin Justin Perry Aug. 17 – Apr. 13 | Gail Haley | Jacqueline Jean Thompson Carroll Apr. 12 – Nov. 25 | Jack & Dot Thompson |
| Todd "Hayes" Kent Mar. 14 – Jan. 27 | Scott & Beth Hall | Michael Allan Tiburzi Mar. 22 – July 19 | Allan & Karen Tiburzi |
| Abigail "Abby" Louise Hamric Apr. 10 – Sep. 23 | Ken & Rebecca Hamric | Matthew "Matt" Scott Tremblay Mar. 21 – Feb. 7 | Nancy Tremblay & Bobby Alexander |
| John David Hatch Nov. 1 – Apr. 24 | David Hatch | Erika Rachel Tritsch Barlow Oct. 17 – Mar. 25 | Thomas & Sharyn Tritsch |
| John David Hatch Nov. 1 – Apr. 24 | Debbie Hatch | Samuel Jameson Trucks Oct. 10 – Mar. 30 | James & Erin Trucks |
| Nicholas Joseph Horter Mar. 23 – Mar. 23 | Joe & Carolyn Horter | Heather Marie Hill Thorne Sep. 23 – Mar. 27 | Jack & Peggy U'Ren |
| Ellen Sarah Hyman Rose June 5 – Mar. 1 | Jerry & Estelle Hyman | Cullen Lee Waddell, III June 29 – Apr. 24 | Lee & Kathy Waddell |
| Brian Wayne Jacques Dec. 9 – Apr. 24 | Ken Jacques | Jamal Duan Walker July 13 – Mar. 7 | Charlie Mae Walker |
| Jocelynn Sarah Tina Holmes May 9 – Apr. 26 | Karen Johnson | Christopher Paul Westfield Apr. 18 – Aug. 13 | Paul & Lisa Westfield |
| John Terry Johnson Oct. 23 – Mar. 21 | Johnny & Tammy Johnson | Eric Flynn Wolf Mar. 26 – June 14 | Sandy Wolf |
| Joshua Danial Peeler Apr. 5 – July 10 | Jim & Lane Jones | Steven Andre Woodard June 25 – Mar. 24 | Andrew & Linda Woodard |
| Peter Henry Kling Sep. 12 – Mar. 12 | Joan Kling | Kyle William Kiihnl Mar. 20 – May 5 | Kathi Wright |
| Paul Christopher Smith Feb. 5 – Mar. 6 | Robert & Teresa Liles | William S Wright, Jr. Apr. 2 | William & Debbie Wright |

LOVE GIFTS

Love Gifts are tax-deductible donations to the Chapter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling or in honor of a loved one or friend. Our Chapter depends on these donations to help us reach out to others by sending the newsletter, purchasing books, brochures, and tapes/videos for our library, educating others about what we do and maintaining our relationship with the TCF National Chapter. Thank you for your support.



Barbara Isom
In memory of her son
Jermaine Isom
And in recognition of his
birthday January 17th

Jere & Jan Ferguson
In memory of their daughter
Sarah Ferguson

**Larry & Gwen Elrod
Brian & Rebecca Elrod**
In memory of our son
and brother
Scott Alan Elrod



In Memory of Scott Alan Elrod
5-7-1982 – 4-4-2000

God saw you getting tired and a cure was not to be, so He put His arms around you and whispered, "Come to Me." With tearful eyes we watched you and saw you slip away, and though we loved you dearly we could not make you stay. A golden heart stopped beating, our precious son and angel at rest. God broke our hearts to prove to us, He only takes the best.

I cannot ease your aching heart, nor take the pain away; but let me stay and take your hand and walk with you today. I'll listen if you need to talk; I'll wipe away your tears. I'll share your worries when they come; I'll help you face your fears. I'm here and I will stand by you each hill you have to climb; so take my hand, let's face the world, live one day at a time. You're not alone, for I'm still here, I'll go that extra mile; and when your grief is easier, I'll help you learn to smile.

Jeanne Losey TCF, Canada

Goodnight, My Child

My eyes are tied and weary now, I think I'll go to bed; I doubt if I will rest at all, as your memories fill my head. I wish that I would go to sleep and my dreams would be of you; you'd wipe away my tears and all my grieving would be through. I know it's not easy, but the pain won't go away. I only know that here and now you're in my thoughts each day. You're in a far, far better place, this much I know is true. I'm sure that you are happy there, but I'm still missing you. I'm not sure if I hugged you tight the last time we said goodbye, I can't remember the last words we said and it sometimes makes me cry. I sometimes hear you laughing even though you're not around,

and I know that you're still with me now whenever I hear that sound. But as times goes by, the sound of your voice slowly fades away, and one day I know I'll no longer hear the things you used to say. So do not wander far from me, for I need you more than ever; the love that bound us here on earth will still keep us together. I wish that I could see you if for only one more day; I wish I could tuck you in tonight and this is what I'd say. "Although it seems we have a lifetime left to share our hopes and dreams, a lifetime isn't long enough for some of us it seems. So here's a hug and kiss goodnight, I'll stay right here by your bed. No go to sleep little angel and may sweet dreams fill your head; goodnight my child, I can't bear to let you go. I love you more than words can say, more than you'll ever know. A butterfly landed on my shoulder today and I know that it was you. I could swear I heard it whisper to me just like you used to do. It's times like this when all I can do is sit and quietly weep; my eyes are tired and weary now, and I only hope that I can sleep

Doug Swissheim, Cincinnati, OH

When God calls children to dwell with Him above, we mortals sometimes question the wisdom of His love. For no heartache compares with the death of my child, who does so much to make our world seem wonderful and mild. Perhaps God tires of calling the aged to His fold, so He picks a rosebud before it can grow old. God knows how much we need them, and so He takes but a few; to make the land of Heaven more beautiful to view. Believing this is difficult, still somehow we must try; the saddest word mankind knows will always be goodbye. So when a child departs, we who are left behind must realize God loves children; angels are hard to find.

Unknown

BAPTIST TRINITY CENTER FOR GOOD GRIEF SPRING AND SUMMER SUPPORT GROUP SERIES

To register, call Baptist Trinity Center for Good Grief at 901-767-6767

Adult – March 2nd and 9th

June 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th, July 6th

Time: 12:00pm – 1:00pm & 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Baptist Trinity Center

Healing Hearts: Survivor of Suicide Grief Support Group

March 19th, April 16th, May 21st, June 18th, July 16th, August 20th

Time: 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Baptist Trinity Center

Camp Good Grief: Day Camp for Children Ages 7-12

July 27th – 29th

Pinecrest Conference & Retreat Center, LaGrange, TN

Time: 5:00am – 5:00pm

Teen Camp Good Grief for Teens Ages 13-17

October 16th – 18th

Camp Bear Track, Drasco, AR

You may send your Tax-deductible Donation to:

The Compassionate Friends

P. O. Box 38653

Germantown, TN 38183-0653

Child's Name _____

Parent's/Grandparent's/Friend(s) Name _____

Love Gift (Any Donation Amount) _____

In Memory Of _____

On The Occasion Of _____

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. Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for our children 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 and creeds. 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 we feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength; some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression; 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 our children. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that future together as we reach out to each other in love and 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.

Sibling Credo

We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the death of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individual we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on within us. When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is to not be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

The Compassionate Friends
P.O. Box 38653
Germantown, TN 38183-0653

March/April 2009



**Our Next Meetings:
Mar. 5th & Apr. 2nd**

*Printing of our newsletter is provided by Paulsen
Printing Company, Jim and Judy Paulsen, Owners;
In Loving Memory of their son Randy.*