



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Wake County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

March
2016



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If this is your first Newsletter

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us it might be helpful for you. We hope it is. We also invite you to our monthly meetings at Hayes Barton Baptist Church. At these meetings you may talk or choose not to say a word. There are no fees or dues. We are sorry you have had to experience the death of a child (or children) but we are here for you. We, too, are on this journey of grief and extend our hearts and arms to you.

Attention: The Compassionate Friends meet in Room 224 on the 2nd Floor of the Church Building. Go left past Information Desk and at the end of the long hallway turn right. Then half way down this hallway take elevator on the right to 2nd floor. Meeting room is across from the elevator.

The Wake County Chapter meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at Hayes Barton Baptist Church, 1800 Glenwood Avenue, at the corner of Glenwood Avenue and Whitaker Mill Road at Five Points in Raleigh. Enter from Whitaker Mill Road into Main Entrance of the Family Life Center which is attached to

and behind the church. Ask directions to TCF meeting room at desk just inside the entrance door.

Tuesday, March 8th — The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

Tuesday, March 22nd — The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

Springtime Burden Becoming Promise

Seasonal changes are difficult for many bereaved parents. This is often most true as winter yields to spring. The land seems to throb with life once more as young buds emerge and robins return from their sojourn in the south. Lilacs bloom and the breeze carries their fragrance. Woodland and animals begin to lose the leanness of winter hunting or quiet hibernation.

The day is longer and filled with renewing vitality to match its length. It is as if a cold hand had loosed its bitter grip and the earth is reborn. It is this quality of resurrection that seems so bitter. For as we struggle in the darkness of loss, all around us is the vigorous rush of life breaking forth in colors and song. But our children do not come forth. They dwell in the land of death and the nether world nightmares of our anguish.

But I believe we can see as well the promise inherent in spring's unfolding glory and grasp the continuity its return affirms. Last fall we saw an acorn, but this year we see the tender shoot of an infant tree. From gnarled dead-looking stumps, the cut-back rose sends tendrils of green to drink the sun.

In each full cycle of our planet around its sun, we encounter irrefutable testament to renewal. In this we can sense the defeat of death. This is the time of year when twilight surrenders to darkness, to stand outside and feel the rays of countless stars, smell the scents granted by the new earth, hear the chorus of night creatures and sense the rebirth that has no end.

Stand silently then, beneath the constancy of the night sky and upon the rejuvenating earth, and sense our children, constant and growing too, yet beyond our sight. Life continues. There are no endings. There are only beginnings. That is the promise of Spring.

—Don Hackett, TCF Bingham MA



IN MEMORY



MARCH LOVE GIFTS

Gifts Given In Loving Memory Of Children

Toni Amirante
In Loving Memory of My Son
William Vincent Amirante
"Never Forgotten"

Bill and Colleen Lee
In Loving Memory of Our Son
Matthew William Lee

George and Marie Greenslade
In Loving Memory of "Our Valentine Children"
Corinne Greenslade
Stephen Greenslade

Tim and Lisa Pearce
In Loving Memory of Our Daughter
Hannah Victoria Pearce

Please send Love Gifts and pictures to:
Love Gifts – Wake County Chapter, The Compassionate Friends,
P.O. Box 6602, Raleigh, NC 27628-6602



Welcome New Chapters

Congratulations and welcome to new Chapter #2482 TCF of Clinton County that meets in Breese, IL chartered on February 9, 2016. Chapter Leader: Kim Fulkerson. For Chapter meeting information on our current Chapters, visit our [Chapter Locator](#).



Online Support Community

Connect with other bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings everyday of TCF's Online Support Community.



Subscribe to We Need Not Walk Alone

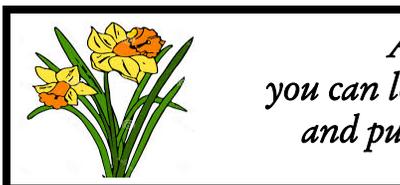
The Compassionate Friends' national magazine *We Need Not Walk Alone* is available free through an online subscription.



Open to Hope

Open to Hope features grief experts, Dr. Gloria Horsley and Dr. Heidi Horsley, who discuss many aspects of bereavement with a focus on the death of a child and its effects on the family. — www.opentohope.com

Above Info from TCF E-Newsletter Feb 2016



*Although your grief journey is distinctly yours,
you can look at those who have walked before you for guidance,
and put a handout behind you for the one who comes next.*

—Carol Thompson





February 2016

Over the years I have spoken to hundreds of audiences about the experience and grief journey after the death of a child. A key part of my message has always been to look for *"moments to make new memories."* Many who haven't experienced a loss of this magnitude consider the idea of creating new memories with your deceased love one to be a crazy notion. To those of you reading this, it probably seems perfectly normal to you.

For the past two months I have been blessed with the opportunity to participate in the Super Bowl run of my beloved Denver Broncos. With each win it felt like my Bronco buddy Ashley was right there with me and we were creating new memories. While the fan in me was caught up in the hype, the grieving father in me was clinging to the experience because it felt real and gave me a special connection to my little girl who loved the NFL.

As Super Bowl Sunday came around, I was both excited and anxious. The truth is, my anxiety began to grow bigger than my enthusiasm as game day approached, and none of it had to do with the football game. Of course, I wanted them to win, and I had convinced myself that Ashley was "up there" making it all happen so that we could celebrate a championship for the first time since her death in 2001. My anxiety was around the fact that once the game was over, then what?

Football had become Ashley and Ashley had become football and for many weeks we were partners in all of this. In the week leading up to the game, I was sharing some good-natured back and forth banter on my Facebook page with some Carolina fans including a guy named Mike (Jordon's dad.) We made a friendly bet on the game with the proceeds going to The Compassionate Friends. Mike told me that Jordon was a big Panther fan. Mike's words made me realize that he and I were both passengers riding the same train of emotions trying to soak in every bit of connection to our children as possible.

In the end, the game itself was bittersweet. Yes, I was happy we won, but I was also emotional because Ashley wasn't sitting next to me celebrating. I also thought about Mike and his beloved Jordon and hoping that he gained as much from an exciting Carolina season as I had from the Broncos. In the end, the experience was just another reminder that grief colors my world whether I want it to or not.

For guys like me and Mike, it doesn't matter how many Super Bowls our teams win or lose (I really am going to pull for Carolina to win one in honor of Jordon); our lives are forever changed and our perspective altered. We are both different people since our loss, and that difference allows us to have a special appreciation for things that draw us close to our children and allow us to create new memories. Our difference also allows us to brace for the pain, a pain which has nothing to do with football, winning or losing ... the pain of simply missing Jordon and Ashley.

What an honor it is to serve as the Executive Director of The Compassionate Friends which gives all of us a safe place to share our grief journey and openly celebrate the lives and share the pain of the loss of our beautiful children, grandchildren and siblings.

Blessings,
Alan

Alan Pedersen
alan@compassionatefriends.org
877-969-0010 ext. 308

From TCF E-Newsletter Feb 2016

SPRING

I'm afraid of the Spring, I'm afraid, you might say,
Of other children's voices ... as they come out to play.
I'm afraid of the feelings ... deep down in my heart;
With all the pain and the hurt I may fall apart.
Shall I shut all the windows so I don't hear a thing?
Shall I shut my eyes so I can't see the Spring?
Shall I let Winter live the whole year through?
And feel safer inside ... and a lot colder too.

Penny Lenehan



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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.

REGISTER TODAY FOR THE 39TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE!



39th Annual National Conference

Conference registration is now open for the 39th National Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona. Register online or print out a registration booklet to register by mail. The Conference schedule is available to help plan your weekend. Visit our website for more information. Website: www.compassionatefriends.org



Hotel Reservations

Reserve your room at the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess online or by calling (800) 344-4758. Please note that each attendee will only be able to reserve two rooms. If your group needs to reserve a larger block of rooms, please contact the National Office to make arrangements for your reservation.

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE A VERY SPECIAL PERFORMANCE!



***The Compassionate Friends National Conference is very proud to present
a performance by our very special guests
Amy Sky, Olivia Newton-John and Beth Nielsen Chapman
on behalf of the LIV ON Project***

**Friday, July 8, 1:00 pm immediately following the Friday luncheon
in the Palomino Ballroom**

TCF National Conference Special Performance

International superstar Olivia Newton-John, Canadian singer/songwriter Amy Sky, and Nashville-based singer/songwriter Beth Nielsen Chapman are lending their vocal/songwriting talents to create a collaborative, newly recorded twelve song collection, crafted especially for those who wish to transcend loss while walking a journey toward new-found meaning and hope. The songs are specifically designed to aid and comfort those working their way through the maze of grief and loss. The artists have taken into consideration the many forms of grief, while harnessing their unique ability to heal through music.

This album is designed to uplift hearts burdened by grief while also bringing awareness and understanding that bereavement is universal to all human beings ... with the ultimate goal being to bring comfort from the pain and loss.

~ Olivia Newton-John

Committed to the intent of this project, the artists have partnered with Dianne Gray, of Hospice and Healthcare Communications, to create a unique outreach and education initiative to coordinate with this music.

Why is this important? It's estimated that approximately 76 million Americans and tens of millions more globally are set to enter into the end of life care continuum either as patients or caregivers. At no time in our country's history have we seen such an unprecedented need for the most underfunded segment of the palliative care model: bereavement care. Like never before do we have the opportunity to shed light on an often underfunded and under-resourced area of end of life care: grief and bereavement. Also, this is a unique opportunity to harness the star-power of these internationally recognized artists who are willing to shed light on the importance of not just their work, but on the hospice and palliative care movement and the value of bereavement care.

Special introduction by Dianne Gray, Hospice and Healthcare Communications



CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



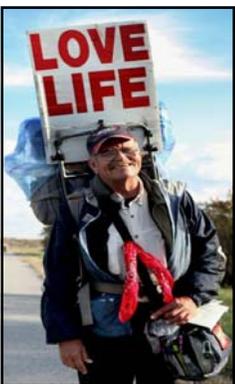
Alan Pedersen, Opening Ceremony Speaker **2016 National Conference, Scottsdale, Arizona**

Alan is the Executive Director of The Compassionate Friends/USA, a position he has held since December of 2013. In August of 2001, Alan's world changed forever when his 18-year-old daughter Ashley was killed in an automobile accident. After attending TCF meetings in Littleton, Colorado and serving on his steering committee for nearly 2 years, Alan, an award winning singer/songwriter and recording artist began writing songs about the experience of love, loss and trying to find life again after the death of a child. For nearly 10 years Alan traveled to more than 1000 cities across the United States and Canada sharing his music and story and offering support and hope to others in grief. In 2010, Alan was awarded the TCF Professional Award by The Compassionate Friends, and in 2011 he was named the Humanitarian of The Year by the Healing Hearts Foundation. Alan is certified as a Grief Services Provider and lives with his wife Denise in Roseville, California.



Nivia Vázquez, Saturday Evening Dinner Speaker **2016 National Conference, Scottsdale, Arizona**

Nivia is the bereaved mother of José Francisco "Yoito" Barreto and the bereaved sibling of Teresita and Miguel. Yoito died in a car accident in 1993. His surviving brother is Roberto José. She became involved with The Compassionate Friends after attending an International Conference in 1995 and in 2000 she and five other bereaved parents chartered Los Amigos Compasivos in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She has been Chapter leader for 15 years, is a professional bilingual legal secretary, translator and a professional/personal/spiritual coach. She is a member of TCF Board of Directors, has served on several Board committees, and currently serves as Secretary to the Board.



Steve Fugate, Closing Ceremony Speaker **2016 National Conference, Scottsdale, Arizona**

I'm Steve Fugate, I'm from Vero Beach, Florida and I'm 70-years-old. In seeking relief from my intense pain of losing both my beautiful children, my son to suicide at 26, while I was hiking the Appalachian Trail which we planned he would do the following year, and then six years later my daughter died at 36, due to an accidental drug overdose. I took to the road walking with a message over my head, "LOVE LIFE." Giving that message of love and life helped to heal me as well as some others. I began calling my endeavors Trail Therapy, and like all trails, it goes both ways. During those eight crossings of America on foot, accumulating over 43,000 miles in 16 years, I spoke to all who would listen about my message of loving life, in hopes of preventing as many as possible from doing what my two precious children did and keeping their parents from facing that horror of horrors!

My creed: *"To mend the broken heart while it is yet beating."*

Above Info from TCF E-Newsletter Feb 2016

Memory Garden — Choose a special area of your yard to create a garden in your child's memory. You may also want to think of a theme garden and plant a special tree for your child. Another theme could include planting a rose bush on every birthday. Place concrete stones with your child's name and birth date. These may lead from your backdoor to the garden. You may also place statues of angels in your memory garden. Place a sign with the name of the garden, such as *"John's Garden"* or something to that effect. Place a nice bench so that you may relax in your child's garden. Working in your garden can bring serenity and a lasting place of beauty. There are many possibilities. Choose a theme that you enjoy the most.



When we are newly bereaved, we are constantly looking for something to take away the pain and make our lives all right again. Unfortunately, there is no magical event or moment when this takes place. It does happen, but only with time and the grief work which we all must do before we can be healed. The coming of spring cannot make everything okay again. What it can do, however, is remind us that regardless of what happens in our lives, nature's processes will continue, and that can offer us hope. I am looking forward to spring this year. I welcome the sun's warmth, the return of the birds from their winter in the South, the forsythia, the daffodils, and the greening of the world. Know that someday you will once again welcome spring. Be gentle and patient with yourself and with nature. Don't expect too much. Be ready to let a little of the hope that spring can offer into your heart.

Evelyn Billings TCF Springfield, MA

Thoughts from a Sibling on the TCF National Conference

by Jordon Ferber

This past summer marked the 13-year anniversary of the death of my brother Russell. He was 21 years old, and not a day goes by that I don't think of him. This year was also my 10th national TCF conference and it was easily the most impactful experience I have had at any of the conferences I have attended.

Let me just say that I was not open to the conference being something that was going to be helpful to me, let alone actual TCF local chapter meetings. As I have often said, the irony of the position I find myself in these days is not lost on me. Initially, I went to the local TCF chapter meeting because my parents kept mentioning that there was a sibling group. I figured all I would have to do is come once, and we would never have to talk about it again. The joke was most definitely on me, as my parents do not even go to TCF group anymore, and I have been running my local siblings group for the last six years!

TCF saved me because I finally had a place to talk about it and I had a need to talk. I am a comedian and a New Yorker, so I come from a long line of over-sharers. As a comedian it was surreal to be on stage presenting a version of myself to an audience that did not reflect at all what I was going through.

In 13 years, I have only written one joke about my grief, and I only wrote it just this year. I tell audiences, "I go to a support group for bereaved siblings... and that is a great sentence you can use if you ever want to get out of a conversation." In my experience, that should be followed



Jordon with his brother, Russell

by you being alone with your thoughts again.

Getting the acknowledgment and understanding that only another bereaved sibling can provide has kept me sane. But as helpful as attending my local group has been—and it honestly has been just about the only thing that has helped—it was truly at the conference that I started to re-discover myself.

After my brother Russell died, I was lost... I was broken. I had lost a part of myself. I literally didn't know how to be myself anymore... not without my brother to counterbalance me. I literally had to relearn just how to be... how to exist. It was at the national conferences that I started that learning process.

And it didn't happen in any of the workshops. It was outside the workshop that I found myself. It was in the lobby of the hotel... it was in the bar... in the butterfly boutique... and in line to get some picture buttons of Russell made.

It was in the in-between times that I found myself in situations where I was able to be social. People who I talked to wanted to learn who I was and who my brother was. I got to talk about my life in a way where I

didn't have to explain anything, and I didn't have to wonder how long before the person in front of me was going to try and change the subject. I was able to connect to other people in a way that I hadn't been allowed to do. It was in these moments that I was able to reconnect with myself again.

It's always been strange to me that when I tell people that I'm going to my bereavement conference, they seem taken aback, usually asking me something along the lines of, "Well, that sounds about as depressing as anything. Why would you want to go to a whole convention of sad people? Doesn't it make you feel sadder to be surrounded by so much grief and brutally reminded of your own?"

The truth is exactly the opposite of this kind of statement. It is more depressing to be around people who don't acknowledge my struggle... who don't ask me about my brother... who don't ask how I'm doing... who don't let me express myself the way I can when I am at the conference. Being in a hotel completely populated with people who "get it" is a breath of fresh air. It is heartwarming and beautiful, and it is one of the only times all year that I get to feel as close to Russell as I want. And the moment the conference is over, I already can't wait until the next one!

Jordan's 21-year-old brother Russell was killed in a car accident in 2002. He has been the facilitator of his sibling group at the Manhattan Chapter of TCF for the past six years and has written often for the sibling page of his chapter's newsletter. A professional stand-up comedian, he is a unique public speaker and a frequent contributor to the sibling panel for parents.



A TIME FOR RENEWAL — Spring will wrap us in the glory of floral bounty with flowers, blooming bushes and trees, and wild bluebonnets hinting at a renewal. In the gentle rains we have received a sweet cleansing of the spirit. It is spring that gives us hope for the future. As the season changes, we sense the cloak of our grief lifting in tiny increments. Yes, it is uplifting. For those of us who are newly bereaved parents or siblings, discovering a bit of lightness in our grief mantle is so very welcome. And that is how our grief will be for the rest of our lives. No epiphanies, no giant steps, just a slight lifting each day, a microscopic rebirth of ourselves and a step further into our lives after the death of our child. There are setbacks, of course. The pain is agony in the first year — brain pain, soul searing pain, physical pain, anxiety, and much more seem to rule our days. But each day is a tiny step forward into hope.

To enhance our grief journey, we must do grief work. Just as the gardener tends to the soil, fertilizes, gently stimulates tender roots and removes weeds from the flower bed, we must tend to our grief on a daily basis. Throwing out the negative — the guilt, the anger, the anxiety — and adding the positive by seeking our solace in our journals, reading, movie choices, spirituality, friendships kept and friendships left behind. In the garden of our psyche, our grief must be tended as if everyday is the first day of spring. And so it is that with springtime comes a reminder of renewal and the grief work we must do to obtain that renewal of spring. Day by day we change, month by month we make note of that change. One day we are able to see the blossoming of our renewal as we move forward in life with our precious children in our hearts.

—Annette Mennen Baldwin,
TCF Katy, TX

A step parent is so
much more than just
a parent; they made
the choice to love
when they didn't
have to.

REFLECTIONS OF A STEP-PARENT

I watched my mate go through pure hell.
And I felt helpless, useless, and
Sometimes ... invisible.

Other times — I stood strong while
Bearing the brunt of my love's anger
That lashed out at the world —
As an angry God would open the heavens
With roaring thunder and lightning.

I was accused of not understanding
And surely ... I could not.

I felt heavy pain for my step-child
The one I took as my own.
I grieved for the good times we had together;
The tugs at my heart that always
Pierced through any resentments.

The guilt weighed heavily on my shoulders
For the times we didn't communicate
And I wonder if ...
I could have made it better.

At the funeral home, I felt even a pang of
... yes ... jealousy
Toward the natural parent of my beloved step-child
Knowing that they and my mate shared
a private room from the past
That I could never ... ever ... enter.

Life must go on ... This day-to-day existence
But things are different now.

I offer my support
As I see eyes staring off into
A distant land.
I hold a hand
And kiss away the tear drops.

With an added sorrow, I wonder
If my love will return to me or
Stay in that far-off land ... forever.
For deep in my heart I know that
This tragedy will bring us closer together
Or tear us completely apart.

by Peggi Hull — TCF Houston-Bay Area Chapter

It's Spring! The Butterflies Are Coming!

Many of us at TCF hold the butterfly with utmost regard, for it is a symbol of our child's life after death. We think of our children being born into a free and more beautiful existence after the drudgery of a caterpillar's life here on earth.

But what about us? Does the butterfly hold an even deeper meaning for bereaved parents? It seems in fact we have died also. We are never the same after the death of our child. But can we be transformed into a beautiful creature, or are we doomed to be trapped in the web of a cocoon forever? I believe it is simply a matter of choice. We can stay in the silken threads which we have spun for ourselves. It's quite safe there. Perhaps if we isolate ourselves with a really tough cocoon, no one can ever reach in far enough to hurt us again.

But if we take a chance on emerging into a new person, the light of our children's love will have a chance to shine through our newly formed wings. It won't be easy. The grief cocoon holds anger, fear, guilt, and despair. But we can work through it. In fact, there's no going around it. All butterflies must work their way through an ugly cocoon.

It's spring. The butterflies are coming. Won't you join them?

Kathie Silief, TCF —Tulsa

Just Let Me Be Sad

by Maria Kubitz
TCF Contra Costa County, CA

We live in a world where — if you have the means — pain and suffering are to be avoided at all costs. We are always looking for the next "quick fix" to alleviate discomfort with the least amount of effort required. In many cases, this means treating the symptoms while ignoring the root cause of the problem. In the United States, we live in a society so uncomfortable with emotional pain that when someone dies, society expects the outward mourning period to end once the funeral is over. When the bereaved do not cooperate with these prescribed time tables, they are often accused of "wallowing" in their grief. They are indignantly told to "move on" and "get over it."

Do these statements mean prolonged outward grief is a sign of weakness? Maybe self-pity? Perhaps it means they think the bereaved secretly enjoy the pain, and the attention it brings? For those of us who have lost someone dear to us, we know that it could not be further from the truth. If we could, we would give ANYTHING to not feel this pain. The hidden meaning behind these statements is that our outward projection of sadness is an unwelcome reminder of all the negative emotions they've managed to stuff deep inside until the pain went away. I see it kind of like "out of sight, out of mind."

So which is healthier? To bury the

pain, only to have it lie dormant until some tragedy unearths it again — but this time stronger and more painful? Or to acknowledge that there is no quick fix to alleviate the overwhelming pain of losing someone you have built your life — and in some cases, your identity — around?

I would equate the first option to following the latest fad diet to lose weight quickly without exercising or changing your eating habits. Maybe you'll pop some appetite suppressing pills and lose weight in the short term, but the chances of you keeping the weight off are slim, and the reality is that the next time you try to lose weight, it will likely be harder than the time before. The second option would mean facing the harsh reality that transforming your body to a stable, healthy weight requires permanently changing your eating habits and amount of regular exercise. It probably even requires you to re-adjust your expectations of what your ideal body should look like (sadly, most of us will never look like supermodels or pro athletes). In other words, the second option is HARD WORK, but it has the greatest likelihood of becoming a permanent reality. But if I'm being honest here, I have to admit that given the opportunity, I would have gladly chosen to bury the overwhelming pain when my daughter died. Suppressing pain and emotions is what I had done my whole life until that point. The fact is that the pain of losing some-

one I loved MORE than my own life was too much to bury. I reluctantly — and resentfully — took on more pain than I could bear. I did so because I had no other choice.

For the first time in my life, I learned how to slowly take small steps with that unbearable load on my back. I learned that by sharing my story and my pain with others — whether it was support groups, counseling, or with other bereaved individuals — the load was reduced, even if it was only a very slight amount each time. By reducing the load over months and then years, it became easier to carry. I have since come to understand that the load will never fully go away, but I have learned how to balance it with the rest of my life. And as time goes on, the balance will become easier still. That is not to say that occasionally, the load won't suddenly feel nearly as heavy as it did when my grief was new. And when it does, I'll remember how to go back to taking small, careful steps until it feels lighter again.

To all those who cringe in discomfort when they see me experiencing outward emotional pain, I say this: **just let me be sad.**

My intention is not to make you feel uncomfortable. I don't expect — or want — you to follow in my footsteps. But I do expect you to respect the path I have been forced to take on my journey through life. I truly hope you never have to carry this load yourself.



Assistance for Bereaved Parents Whose Only Child/All Children are Deceased

by Kay Bevington

From TCF *We Need Not Walk Alone* Autumn/Winter 2015



"My only child died and I am finding I do not fit in as others in our support group often talk about their surviving children and/or grandchildren." "All of our children died and there is just no one who can relate to our loss and grief." "Other bereaved parents try to 'fix me' by saying I am young and can have other children since our only child died." "I feel I am the only person who has no surviving children, my parents are deceased and I have no siblings." "I am truly alone as my spouse is deceased, my only two children are deceased, and I was an only child." "Who is going to be there for me when I age and have no surviving children?" "How do I plan and what do I do with all my child's possessions and mine since there are no surviving children to care about these items?" These are comments we often hear from many bereaved parents who now have no surviving children. Parents generally feel and think they are unique in their grief as there are more bereaved parents who have endured the death of a child and have surviving children than those whose only child/all children have died. There is also more support available for those parents who have surviving children.

Unfortunately, there are a few chapter leaders and support group members who feel, think, and will say that ALL bereaved parents are alike. This only alienates those bereaved parents with no surviving children, as it does not validate their uniqueness. When there are NO surviving children in the family it forces the bereaved parent to find a new and completely different focus, purpose and identity. There is absolutely no one in whom the bereaved parents can invest their time, energy, resources and love. One child does not take the place of another BUT a bereaved parent still has the identity of a parent when there are surviving children. Bereaved parents with no surviving children have no one with whom to celebrate the holidays or special events. There is no one who will call to wish you a Happy Father's or Mother's Day; there is no one who will be there to assist when there is surgery, an illness, or a major decision to make. There is nothing

current that is occurring in a child's life that you can relate to others with or about your child/children. People become very uncomfortable when you share about something that occurred when your child was alive. Everyone becomes silent and "The Elephant is in the Room."

The grandchildren issue is also another major issue as the now childless bereaved parents reach middle age or older. Everyone, including those who have had a child die and have surviving children, begins to share the photos and wonderful events that are occurring in the lives of their grandchildren. For most now childless parents there were no grandchildren when our only child/all children died and never will be. Grandparents beam and are so proud of those wonderful grandchildren, and rightly so. However, people often fail to realize that this fantastic experience will NEVER be one for the now childless bereaved parent to experience.

It is important at bereavement support group meetings and conferences to address the unique needs of bereaved parents as well as discuss the likenesses on grief journeys. Parents who experienced the death of an infant have different needs than those who had a teenager or adult child. Suicide, murder and addiction-related deaths need to be addressed as these are different experiences than those who had a child die of a disease or accident. Those bereaved parents with no surviving children also have unique needs. Special programs at support group meetings and conferences need to be presented so that these parents ALL realize that even though their differences are unique, once addressed, they can THEN relate to others with the similarities in grief.

There is additional online support for now childless parents and two organizations that minister primarily to the needs of now childless parents. The Compassionate Friends has a closed Facebook group that is monitored by Joannie Kemling, Pam Rayner and Lisa Ridge. Various topics relating to only child/all children deaths are discussed.

Alive Alone, Inc. is an international support organization that publishes a periodical and networks bereaved parents who have no surviving children by the age of the deceased child and/or cause of death. Alive Alone also has a Facebook page where thoughts, quotes, poems, and ideas that benefit now childless parents are posted on a daily basis. There is also discussion that occurs amongst the Alive Alone parents. Alive Alone has a database of 'veteran' bereaved parents who are qualified to present a program about being now childless at support group chapter meetings and conferences. More information can be obtained about Alive Alone on their website: www.alivealone.org. If you do not use the internet, Alive Alone can also be reached by writing to Alive Alone, PO Box 182, Van Wert, OH 45891.

In Loving Memory is an organization that plans conferences for now childless parents. The next conference will be held at Fair Lakes Hyatt Hotel in Fairfax, VA, April 7-10, 2016. More details about this conference may be obtained at the website: www.InLovingMemoryConference.org. You may also write to In Loving Memory, P.O.Box 2163, Reston, VA 20195.

The Compassionate Friends is planning on offering a variety of workshops for now childless parents at their National Conference in Scottsdale, AZ this next summer July 8-10, 2016.

Kay Bevington, mother of Rhonda, an only child, is the founder and editor of Alive Alone. Alive Alone, Inc. is a bereavement support organization that ministers to the needs of those bereaved parents whose only child/all children are deceased. Alive Alone publishes an international periodical which is composed of articles that address the specific topics pertinent to those now childless parents. Kay and Rodney Bevington also network with parents whose children died of a similar age or cause of death. There are no support group chapters. Alive Alone also provides presenters at support group meetings and conferences to educate others about the unique needs of now childless parents and to minister to those parents who have no surviving children.

Kay is a retired public school educator and bereavement specialist who has worked with funeral homes prior to her retirement.

Memory Scrap Booking — If you have lots of photos of your child, a good way to spend your time is Scrap Booking! The memory book is a creative way for you to preserve your child's history using their photos. This is a project the entire family can participate in while at the same time each family member will be able to get their creative juices flowing. Each will have their own special style for their scrapbook pages. Materials can be purchased at stores such as Michaels, JoAnn's Fabrics, and other similar places.



From TCF Atlanta Area Chapters Newsletter March-April 2002



Friends Supporting Friends — Telephone and E-Mail Contact List



Betsy Allen, 18 year old daughter, fire suffocation	<i>kiddiekottage@gmail.com</i>	919-981-0767
Shalika Bethel, 14 week old son, unknown	<i>shalika.b14@gmail.com</i>	919-864-9895
Kati Bourque, 2 day old daughter, diaphragmatic hernia	<i>frogsducksanddoc@hotmail.com</i>	919-637-9544
and 38 year old brother, heart attack	<i>frogsducksanddoc@hotmail.com</i>	919-637-9544
Debbie & Steve Brady, 31 yr old son, accidental prescription drug toxicity	<i>bizmen@aol.com</i>	919-441-0967
Kathleen Breland, 17 year old son, suicide	<i>ksabreland@gmail.com</i>	919-463-9409
Diane Brinkerhoff, 29 year old daughter, auto accident	<i>dbrinkerhoff@nc.rr.com</i>	919-781-1765
Mechelle Champion, 1 month old son, congenital heart failure	<i>mchampion91@aol.com</i>	919-753-7511
Mary Lou Clarkson, 21 year old son, leukemia		919-501-7769
Elise Cope, 15 year old son, auto accident	<i>surrid@aol.com</i>	919-656-5005
Rebecca Creech, 14 day old daughter, heart defect	<i>leonaseleno0105@aol.com</i>	919-803-5889
Chris Crosier, 25 year old son, motorcycle accident	<i>cc71236@gmail.com</i>	440-223-1765
Teresa Cyr, 24 year old son, complications from drug overdose	<i>teresacyr@gmail.com</i>	919-215-2641
Kimberly Edens, 16 year old daughter, auto accident	<i>kedens1015@gmail.com</i>	919-971-6975
LaTonya Ellis, 18 year old daughter, sickle cell anemia	<i>latonya.s.ellis@gmail.com</i>	919-706-2348
Cate Forrester, 21 year old son, undiagnosed heart defect	<i>kittycate521@gmail.com</i>	919-621-9666
Susan Gray, 27 year old daughter, auto accident	<i>scmusic62@gmail.com</i>	919-757-1664
Mary Chris Griffin, 44 year old son, heart disease	<i>mcgriffin48@gmail.com</i>	919-552-4440
Diane Haddon, 26 year old daughter, metastatic melanoma	<i>dkhaddon@nc.rr.com</i>	919-363-9721
Nan Hamilton, 5 year old daughter, accident		919-605-5557
Diane and Robert Harkness, 47 year old daughter, cancer	<i>dharkness.home@gmail.com</i>	919-803-1134
Sosan Harlan, 30 year old son, drug overdose	<i>sharlan48@gmail.com</i>	508-789-0839
Becky Hart, 16 year old son, auto accident	<i>bhart@rl-law.com</i>	
Denise Johnson, 18 year old daughter, suicide	<i>kimshispers78@yahoo.com</i>	919-815-5501
26 year old brother and 62 year old brother, both suicide		
D. Marie Jones, 13 year old son, struck by hit & run driver	<i>jones9807@att.net</i>	910-218-0754
Sharon Jones, 21 year old daughter, brain tumor	<i>shabrownjones@gmail.com</i>	919-971-1606
Cathy Joostema, 28 year old son, stroke	<i>joostema2@hotmail.com</i>	919-341-8434
Christi (Cathy's daughter) 28 year old brother, stroke	<i>christif@workplaceoptions.com</i>	919-880-8135
Gloria Jusino, 28 year old son, heart attack	<i>ghjusino3@gmail.com</i>	919-208-7360
Ellen King, infant son	<i>divabella2000@yahoo.com</i>	919-740-8799
Debra Lamberis, 25 year old son, drug overdose	<i>coohousedeb@gmail.com</i>	919-693-9922
Mara Lewis, 15 year old son, osteosarcoma	<i>mlewisnc@gmail.com</i>	919-655-5659
Jackie McCoy, 8 hour old son, complications of birth	<i>1204jacmcc@gmail.com</i>	919-633-2136
Cindy McLeod, 23 year old son, blunt force trauma	<i>cindymcleod1954@att.net</i>	330-926-7771
Sue Mellott, 21 year old son, suicide	<i>suemellott@yahoo.com</i>	
Jen Menard, 4 year old daughter, genetic illness	<i>jenmenard3@yahoo.com</i>	919-610-6781
Malissa Obonyo, 18 year old son, murder	<i>ann.mitzi@yahoo.com</i>	919-798-2831
Charlene Peacock, 22 year old son, congenital heart tumor	<i>peacockbig@aol.com</i>	919-706-9176
Faira Pearce, 3.5 month old son, pneumonia	<i>fairaharris@yahoo.com</i>	919-427-7169
Ora Riggs, 30 year old son, primary brain tumor	<i>orasriggs@gmail.com</i>	919-274-2769
Ann Riddick, 33 year old daughter, breast cancer	<i>ann.riddick@gmail.com</i>	252-939-0295
Cori Rochford, 20 day old son, kidney failure	<i>cori.rochford@gmail.com</i>	919-701-5066
Ron & Cindy Salyer, 21 year old son, motorcycle accident	<i>salyer86@hotmail.com</i>	919-868-7542
Angie Selvia, 25 year old daughter, murder	<i>kaiser22006@hotmail.com</i>	910-893-9607
Carol Shelton, 40 year old son,	<i>yaelsgma@bellsouth.net</i>	919-460-0694
Amber Silvers, stillborn daughter	<i>silversa0226@gmail.com</i>	919-400-3077
Linda Strother, 15 year old son, colon cancer	<i>ljstrother@yahoo.com</i>	919-294-6842
Barbara Thorp, 40 year old son, flue complications	<i>bstaw@aol.com</i>	919-847-7787
Rita Tolley, 23 year old son, auto accident	<i>ritatolley123@bellsouth.net</i>	919-215-0401
Libbie Toth, 36 year old daughter, prescription drug overdose	<i>libbie318@att.net</i>	919-848-1876
Jade and Bill Tsao, 24 year old son, accidental overdose	<i>billandjade@suddenlink.net</i>	252-560-9187
Lisa Tucker, 26 year old daughter, suicide	<i>phototucker@gmail.com</i>	919-938-9651
Nancy Turlington, 19 year old son, car accident	<i>dhtntt2@gmail.com</i>	919-553-4995
Edith Weiner, 30 year old son, murdered	<i>edithweiner1025@gmail.com</i>	919-559-0194
Risa Wolfzahn, 23 year old son, gun shot	<i>risenshine321@gmail.com</i>	984-232-0055



OUR MARCH CHILDREN

Loved and Always Remembered



Birthday

Alecyn Elizabeth Ross
 Jeffrey Schneider
 Dylan Raitz
 Matthew William Lee
 Ashley Scarborough
 Andy Crosier
 Mateo Rochford
 Jonathan Cannon
 Cole Burwell
 Wade Halford
 Tommy El-Ferkh
 Kenny Lewis
 Roy Taylor
 Cara Grace Hazell
 Julie Elizabeth McClelland
 Lisa Diane Gatlin
 Mark McCain
 Damian Curran
 Matthew Horney
 Benjamin A. Thorp IV
 Anna Christine Brinkerhoff Helms
 Caroline Kirkland

Carter Kirkland

Gavin William Boyd Westover
 Thomas M. Carr III

Anniversary

David Briggs Martin
 Amy Newton
 Noah Lanni

 Matthew Blake Salyer
 Peter Ruiz
 Ginny Buckner
 William "Joseph" Clarkson
 Michael Carpenter
 Ashley Scarborough
 Cole Burwell
 Shiloh Brock
 Cara Grace Hazell
 Greg Schrieber
 William Vincent Amirante
 Kellie Hahn
 Nigel Ellison
 Daniel Lee Winn
 Kenny Lewis
 Lori Schooley
 Mateo Rochford
 Katherine Rice
 Caroline Kirkland

Carter Kirkland

Matthew Cossa

Daughter
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Alexander & Cynthia Ross
 Vince & Judy Schneider
 Marie & Bill Raitz
 Bill & Colleen Lee
 Lynn & Emerson Scarborough
 Chris Crosier
 Cori & Thomas Rochford
 Becky & Mike Cannon
 Cathy Joostema
 Maggie & Scott Halford
 Ella & Danny Cagle
 Mara & Jack Lewis
 Dollie Glaum
 Cynthia & Tim Hazell
 Dru McClelland
 Jo Ann & Miller Gatlin
 Nickie McCain
 Sharon Wilks
 Donna McLaren
 Barbara Thorp
 Diane Brinkerhoff
 Angie & Kevin Kirkland
 Steve & Cindy Kovalcik
 Angie & Kevin Kirkland
 Steve & Cindy Kovalcik
 Ted & Patty Westover
 Thomas & Donna Carr

Dennis & Jean Martin
 Libbie & Steve Toth
 Ruth & Arthur Lanni
 Claudia Mormino
 Ron & Cindy Salyer
 Stephanie & Michael Sweeney
 Mike & Meredith Buckner
 Mary Lou & Bill Clarkson
 Theresa & Vince Carpenter
 Lynn & Emerson Scarborough
 Cathy Joostema
 Peter Brock
 Cynthia & Tim Hazell
 Joanne & Randy Schrieber
 Toni Amirante
 Claudia & Doug Campbell
 Rachel Ellison & Tony Smith
 Pat Winn Altman
 Mara & Jack Lewis
 Elizabeth & Virgil Carden
 Cori & Thomas Rochford
 Margaret Rice
 Angie & Kevin Kirkland
 Steve & Cindy Kovalcik
 Angie & Kevin Kirkland
 Steve & Cindy Kovalcik
 Bill & Amy Cossa



You gave them the gift of life and they gave you the gift of love in return.
 Nothing can deny that gift exchange.





The Compassionate Friends

Wake County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
Wake County Chapter
PO Box 6602
Raleigh, NC 27628-6602



March — Spring — Easter

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.
Wake County Chapter
PO Box 6602
Raleigh, NC 27628-6602

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