



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Apr / May / Jun 2016

IT WILL BE ANOTHER BIRTHDAY WITHOUT YOU

The sun will shine
roses bloom, geese fly
throughout the sky
stocks will trade,
the weatherman predict
politicians debate
it'll seem like another day
just a day, same 24 hours
not a special holiday
But to this mother
who will stand at the grave
lifting balloons into the sky
serving angelfood cupcakes
with rainbow icing
coated with tears
fluctuating between emotions:
the grief over death
the celebration over birth
For this mother
it will be yet
another birthday without you.

In Memory of Daniel

Alice J. Wisler
TCF Wake County, NC

"It takes a lot of grief before our days can have more good hours than bad. But it does come. Most of us cannot even imagine that progress in our early grief. Eventually, we can make peace with our loss and our painful memories become warm treasures. Even though we always think of our child daily, it is with thankfulness that they were a part of our lives."

Marie Hofmockel

MEMORIES

Time can never erase,
The memory of your face;
Nor the passage of the years,
Stem the volume of my tears.

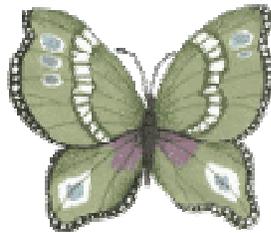
You are with me for always,
In my heart throughout all days;
Then in my dreams nightly,
Your star shines ever so brightly.

I want your spirit to remain,
Inside of me, despite the pain.

To forget you would be a curse,
Because no memories would be much worse.

You were born a part of me,
Now you live within the heart of me;
Forever precious, forever young,
My beautiful, darling little ones.

Jacquelyn M. Comeaux
In Memory of my angels, Michelle, Jerry and Danny



Monthly Meetings

Thursday, April 7

Thursday, May 5

Thursday, June 2

6:30 PM

St. Paul's United Methodist Church
1901 Lexington Ave.

Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

For Siblings

An outlet for siblings is the TCF Sibling Forum. It is available online and is a place where siblings from all over can share and help each other cope with the unique grief of losing a brother or sister. Siblings are able to ask questions, make a comment or leave a thought for others to respond.

Visit the Sibling Resources Page at www.compassionatefriends.org
Email tcfsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org for the password

SPRING COMES

The spring came and went
Summer lasted only so long
The fall visited briefly
And soon winter too was gone

Then we were back at start
A year already gone by
How quickly months pass us
How fast time can fly

You were here
I remember, I know
Hugging me goodbye
Not so long ago
The flowers came
The daffodils bloomed
The world was alive
Except for you

Empty skies
Watching over empty hearts
As spring comes
And we're re-winded back to start

Alex Bloom
sibling of Jessica Bloom
TCF Nashville, TN

TO MY SISTER

You touched us all, you loved us all,
Forever giving, forever caring,
Forever forgiving.
Never wanting in return.
Blessed are those who shared your life.
Rich are those who carry your memories.
Please rest now; your chores we will finish.
'Til we meet again...

Cindy Keltz
Arlington Heights, IL

DON'T TELL ME

Don't tell me that you understand,
Don't tell me that you know,
Don't tell me that I will survive,
How I will surely grow.

Don't tell me this is just a test,
That I am only blessed,
That I am chosen for this task,
Apart from all the rest.

Don't come at me with answers
That can only come from me.
Don't tell me how my grief will pass,
That I will soon be free.

Don't stand in pious judgment
Of the bond I must untie.
Don't tell me how to suffer,
Don't tell me how to cry.

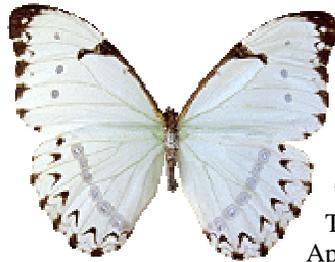
My life is filled with selfishness,
My pain is all I see,
But I need you, I need your love,
Unconditionally.

Accept me in my ups and downs,
I need someone to share.
Just hold my hand and let me cry,
And say, "My friend, I care."

Joanena Hendel
TCF South Dade, FL

"Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. Love still stands when all else has fallen."

—Author unknown



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MOTHER'S DAY

I don't think I really appreciated the significance of Mother's Day until I myself became one. My life would never be the same and the death of my child did not alter the fact that I am still a mother. I still have the intense feeling of love for my child, a love greater than any I had known before. So as Mother's Day approached, a day on which we recognize the love and pride of motherhood, I too, want to be remembered as a mother.

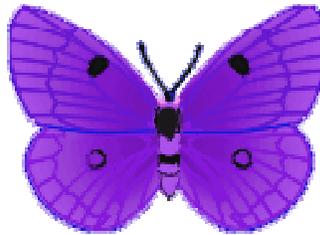
Ginny Smith
TCF Charlottesville, VA

They always ask if she's all right
And what she's going through
But seldom take his hand and ask
"My friend, but how are you?"

He hears her crying in the night
And thinks his heart will break
And dries her tears and comforts her
But "stays strong" for her sake

It must be very difficult
To start each day anew
And try to be so very brave
He lost his baby, too....

Author: Eileen Knight Hagemeister
Taken from TCF National Website



FATHER'S DAY

Warm and sunny day in June
Father's Day
Children, small and grown
Give gifts to father
Say thanks to father
Say I Love You.

But there are fathers
Whose children are not here
To give gifts and say thanks
And say I Love You.

Remember the fathers
Whose children are gone,
Because they will always be
Fathers at heart.

Sascha

SECOND SUNDAY OF MAY

Many happy memories
Linger in our hearts this day
As we each remember our child
Who has left this earthly plane.
The day is bittersweet for us,
The mothers who have lost so much,
For to remove all pain could well
Erase the precious life we touched.
Tears will trace the memories of
Other, happier Mother's Days,
As we dwell in a quiet reverie
This Second Sunday of May

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

MEN AND GRIEF

It must be very difficult
To be a man in grief,
Since "Men Don't Cry" and "Men Are Strong"
No tears can bring relief

It must be very difficult
To stand up to the test
And field calls and visitors
So she can get some rest

Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith
Luann & James Butler

Steering Committee

Henry Cole, Facilitator
Johnny James, Treasurer
Dianne & Frank Bruscato, Library
Maggy & John Dobbs, Outreach
Ann Cole, Outreach
Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

WHEN YOU LOSE AN ONLY CHILD

The loss of an only child is neither greater nor less than the loss of one of many children. However, the loss of an only child is experienced differently. It is different because you lose your parenthood, which is such a large part of the life of any parent.

1. With the death of an only child, you lose the one person who could use all of the love you had to give every hour of every day. One of the secrets of parenthood is that from birth, children teach us that we have a greater capacity for unselfish love than we thought possible. When your only child dies, you may feel that you are drowning in the parental love your heart continues to generate for the child you have lost.
2. With the death of an only child, you lose so much of your own future that was tied to your child's future. The first day of school, sports, learning to drive, a first crush, a first date, a first heartbreak, high school, college, career, marriage, children, grandchildren, great grandchildren. Your only child lost all of this from his or her future. And so did you.
3. With the death of an only child, you suffer many tiny losses that cause pain only another grieving parent can comprehend. You have lost the joy of checking the cereal aisle to see if Cocoa Puffs are on sale. You have lost the reason to keep up with the top ten hits on the pop music charts. You have lost the joy of caring what prize is in a box of Cracker Jack. You have lost the joy of getting up early on a Saturday morning for kids soccer, basketball, or bowling. You have lost the reason to hope for a December snow. You have lost the person who thought you made the best cocoa on a cool December evening. For me, I lost a gentle, kind, generous child who loved, watched for, and shared beautiful sunsets.

The loss of an only child is a devastating loss. Your child has lost his or her life. And you have lost an important piece of your own life, your parenthood.

The Compassionate Friends chapter near you is there to help you acknowledge and grieve these losses by sharing your pain with others who have known their own pain.

Bill Snapp in memory of son Bill Snapp
TCF, Atlanta (Tucker)

AFTER THE FIRST YEAR

After the first year the pain changes from a crushing weight to a wickedly cutting edge. Time speeds up from a grinding plodding to a more normal routine. And sometimes you forget, for a moment, that your whole life was destroyed just last year.

After the first year you start to remember the good times. You can tell a funny story about your child and save the crying for later. But sometimes it seems like you're the only one left who mourns. "What's the matter with you anyway? It's been a whole year." After the first year your child seems a little closer and yet still so far away. Miracle of miracles, you haven't forgotten how he walks, his voice, the shape of his head, or the solid warmth of his fingers curving around yours. Those memories ambush you at many unlikely moments and tear you apart.

After the first year, your heart begins to thaw. You remember that you once loved your surviving children and you love them once again. You remember that life used to hold joy; and you rediscover some small enjoyment in living. You learn to piece your life back together in a different pattern. After the first year you pick up your burdens and go on. Amazingly you have survived a blow more painful than anything you ever imagined. Even though you wish you had died too, it slowly dawns on you that you must still live because after the first year, comes the second year.

Liz Ford
TCF Madison, WI



Everyone is encouraged to contribute to the newsletter to keep our chapter going strong. Please contact Julie Petty with your ideas.



Also, remember you can bring your child's favorite snack for refreshments to our monthly meeting or do a flower arrangement for the table. Please contact Marilyn Smith one month prior to the meeting.

Our Children Always Loved and Remembered



A special table is set up at our meetings to honor children whose special days are in that month. We invite you to bring a picture or memento of your child to share during that significant month.

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL BIRTHDAYS

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|--------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| Jason Garrett | 04/02/67 | Sandra Garrett |
| Chris Pauley | 04/02/77 | Sharon & Gary Pauley |
| Chris Culpepper | 04/04/69 | Noel Culpepper |
| Shannon Scharf | 04/06/62 | Robert S. Green |
| Robby Jenkins | 04/10/88 | Beverly Jenkins |
| Thomas Stephens | 04/12/95 | Susan & Gray Stephens |
| Chris Travis | 04/13/72 | Gloria & Kenneth Travis |
| Rod Taliaferro | 04/17/64 | Shirley Taliaferro |
| Wendi Janway-Jones | 04/23/78 | Rosalyn & Tom Janway |
| Ashley Loflin | 04/23/73 | Katy Loflin |

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|------------------|----------|------------------------|
| Chris Pauley | 04/05/95 | Sharon & Gary Pauley |
| Michael Stephens | 04/05/68 | Maggie & John Stephens |
| Krista Corrent | 04/08/00 | Anna Ruth Hill |
| Pamela Ford | 04/10/04 | Leona Upton |
| Martha Mickel | 04/13/84 | Ruth Mickel |
| Michael Johns | 04/19/06 | Nell Book |
| Courtney Cole | 04/22/12 | Ann & Henry Cole |
| Mickey Loflin | 04/23/73 | Katy Loflin |
| Anne Barham | 04/25/91 | Pat Barham |

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY BIRTHDAYS

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|---------------------|----------|------------------------------|
| Bo Best | 05/02/84 | Charlene Best & Charles West |
| Tonya Bell | 05/05/69 | Ann Smith |
| Justin Petty | 05/07/82 | Julie & Danny Petty |
| Melissa Blankenship | 05/08/65 | Peaches Cathey |
| Jason Hutts | 05/12/81 | Carol & Greg Hutts |
| Mickey Chambers | 05/13/62 | Merrell & Mike Chambers |
| McKenzie Hudson | 05/13/88 | Dayna Hudson |
| Will Lensing | 05/13/83 | Cindy & Bill Lensing |
| Bobby Starnes, Jr. | 05/13/86 | Edwina Starnes |
| Derrick Sadberry | 05/15/65 | Belinda Sadberry |
| Hunter Carr | 05/21/91 | Juanita Carr |
| Jill Whitaker | 05/21/82 | Cynthia Machen |
| Timothy Smith | 05/26/61 | Mary & Buddy Smith |
| Brian Gregory | 05/28/73 | Frances & Jim Gregory |
| Kelly O'Neal | 05/28/70 | Nancy Oliver |
| Scott Thompson | 05/29/78 | Tammy Thompson |

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY ANNIVERSARIES

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|--------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Mickey Loflin | 05/10/05 | Katy Loflin |
| Ashley Loflin | 05/10/06 | Katy Loflin |
| Will Lensing | 05/11/11 | Cindy & Bill Lensing |
| Shontavious Foster | 05/12/13 | Sarah Foster |
| Lisa Giovingo | 05/15/15 | Frances Giovingo |
| Leigh Ann White | 05/15/05 | Janet & Ken White |
| Barry Kirby | 05/18/13 | Lisa Kirby |
| Lance Thomas | 05/18/08 | Connie & Danny Thomas |
| Bobby Starnes, Jr. | 05/18/12 | Edwina Starnes |
| John Dobbs | 05/21/08 | Maggy & John Dobbs |
| David Webb | 05/22/05 | Paula Webb |
| Justin Petty | 05/26/01 | Julie & Danny Petty |

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE BIRTHDAYS

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|---------------------|----------|-------------------------|
| Caroline Cole | 06/11/70 | Ann & Henry Cole |
| Jenna Johnson | 06/12/88 | Sandy Johnson |
| Debbie Pope | 06/14/52 | Jean Hamilton |
| Andrew Rinicker | 06/16/72 | Dale Rinicker |
| Jackson Kennedy | 06/18/00 | Jonann Layton |
| Mike Hayes | 06/20/63 | Margaret & George Hayes |
| Kelly Chapman | 06/23/78 | Judy & Bennie Chapman |
| Walker Dayton | 06/23/81 | Vickie & Ed Dayton |
| CW2 Bryan Henderson | 06/29/85 | Kim Bryan Henderson |

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|---------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Melissa Blankenship | 06/13/04 | Peaches Cathey |
| Kody Spann | 06/14/07 | Cindy Spann |
| Wesley Canterberry | 06/15/07 | Dewanna Canterberry |
| Terry Watson | 06/21/13 | Henrietta/Paul Watson |

TO OUR LONG TIME MEMBERS:

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting when new parents arrive with a fresh hurt and frightened eyes, I remember how we felt at our first meeting. Think back ... what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer." They were the ones who wanted to really listen when you talked about your child. Can you be an "oldie" for someone else? By helping someone else, you help yourself and share your child with someone who never got to know them. Come out and share with newly bereaved parents to help them heal. Our own healing happens when we are reaching out to others.

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE;
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

OUR 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 a 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

www.tcfnortheastla.org

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Northeast Louisiana Chapter
P.O. Box 6114
Monroe, Louisiana 71211

Return Service Requested