



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

Jan / Feb / Mar 2014

## WHEN I WAS THERE

When I was there with you  
and lived my life as your son  
I knew you loved me with all your heart;  
I felt it from day one.

I never once regretted  
having choose you for my mom and  
dad,  
And although our time together was  
short,  
please don't stay sad.

You see, when I was with you  
I learned so very much,  
and I took with me to my other life  
all my memories of your love ....

I share it with the other kids  
I've met since I've arrived,  
We all have memories of those special times,  
and please never doubt that we're alive ...

We are busy helping others  
and we watch over you with pride  
As we see you helping others  
and giving of your time.

I see sometimes when you think of me  
you are sad that I am gone,  
But remember that I'm still with you;  
you just can't see me tag along.

I go with you on your travels,  
and yes, that's me in your dreams at night;  
I still look the same,  
just maybe a little more handsome in this light. ..

Here there is no sadness, Mom,  
only joy and love and peace,  
And here is where I'll wait;

until you can come and live with me ...

In my world now there is no rush,  
things just happen day by day,  
So take your time and enjoy life,  
have a little fun, it really is okay.

And when you make your journey  
to this place where we're all one,  
Remember, I'll be waiting  
and I'll always be your son ...

By Shannon Hauber  
in memory of her son, Spence

*Before you know it, here's another March  
with daffodils and crocus--and hyacinths.  
Before you know it, here's another sorrow--the  
grieving over things she used to sing about.  
Before you know it, here's another greening with  
quiet hope and modest promise  
--listen, when you can.*

*Sascha Wagner  
TCF Des Moines, IA*



## Monthly Meetings

**Thursday, January 2**

**Thursday, February 6**

**Thursday, March 6**

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](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)  
Email [tcfsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:tcfsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org) for the password

## YOU'RE STILL HERE

At the finest level of my being,  
You're still with me.

We still look at each other,  
At that level beyond sight.

We talk and laugh with each other,  
In a place beyond words.

We still touch each other,  
On a level beyond touch.

We share time together in a place,  
Where time stands still.

We are still together,  
On a level called Love.

But I cry alone for you,  
In a place called reality.

Richard Lepinksy

## A WISH

I wish upon a rainbow  
In every single dream,  
And hope with my entire heart  
You will be here again.

I wish upon its colors  
That together we will be,  
For you are my brother  
And I want you here with me.

It's the way the color blends  
That gets my hopes so high.  
I know you didn't mean it  
When you left without a good-bye.

We didn't understand your feelings  
Or how sad you were inside.  
You drank until it killed you  
And your friend right by your side.

If only the world could be a rainbow  
Maybe they would see,  
But even though you're gone  
You're forever a part of me.

Chasitie Sharp, Sibling  
TCF Marion, OH



## 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

*"We are not alone, and by truly caring for one another we can help each other go way beyond 'just surviving,' or 'getting over it.'  
"We are truly sorry for your loss and we extend ourselves to you with compassion and love." —Sharon Steffke*

**You were on** my mind ...  
When I woke up this morning ...  
You were on my mind. You were on my mind.

You with that genuine enthusiasm, like a kid with his  
first bicycle.

You with the curiosity and excitement that dads love  
to be there for.

There's so much of you still with me.  
Still with us!

It's not fair that we feel cheated or that we won't  
share your ways anymore.

But in reality, after all the tears and inner feelings of  
pain and sadness pass

We will have joy and great happiness because we  
shared your days. Your laughter. You.

And when I wake up each morning  
It will be OK that you were on my mind ...  
You are on my mind.

That's a special place for you to be, because it will  
be forever.

Michael Tyler  
TCF Lighthouse Chapter  
Lewes, DE



## LITTLE VALENTINE

Sweet little angel of mine  
You are my precious Valentine

In Heaven, you now reside  
Save my place at your side

For all Eternity we shall gaze  
I'll count the blessing of my life  
At your side I'll feel no strife

I cherish you, oh child of mine  
For I love my little Valentine

I won't be sad, I've memories sweet  
So full and rich death can't defeat

I look forward with much delight  
To see your eyes shining bright

I know deep within my heart  
Our spirits are never apart

Sweet little angel of mine  
You are my precious Valentine

Jane Oja  
TCF Central Oregon Chapter

## JANUARY WARMTH

Like a tree in winter  
which has lost its leaves,  
we look ahead to spring  
for new growth and warmth  
of the sun to heal the pain in our heart.

Let us make January a time  
To reach out to each other  
And give that warmth from our hearts,  
And in return,  
We will all show new growth.

Pat Dodge  
Sacramento Valley, CA

### Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith

### Steering Committee

Henry Cole, Facilitator

Johnny James, Treasurer

Dianne & Frank Bruscato, Library

Frances & Jim Gregory, Outreach

Maggy & John Dobbs, Outreach

Luann & James Butler, Outreach

Ann Cole, Outreach

Betty Jean James, Outreach & Hospitality

Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

## WHAT IS NEW ABOUT THE NEW YEAR?

There is a lot of silliness about ringing in the New Year, and I have never been able to enter into the spirit with noisemakers, funny hats and loud hurrahs. Since the death of my son, I especially find myself wondering what this is all about. I think some of the partying and celebrating are motivated by a deep desire for a new start in our lives; a desire to leave behind some of the problems, sorrows, worries and pain of the year just ending. The short, sunless days and long, dark nights make us want something to cheer us. So we give the New Year's Eve party a try.

But it really doesn't work for most of us; we see now that we are just the same and the heaviness in our hearts, as we continue with the struggle to cope with the loss of our child, remains with us. Can we find new ways to live our lives in the New Year?

I'd like to suggest a few things we can try. Let's make an effort to find new friends. A good place to start this is at Compassionate Friends meetings. Here you are with a group of people who care about each other in special ways. We understand the pain and anger, the confusion and the inertia suffered by bereaved parents.

In the New Year, let's also find new ways to be close to the family that we have left. We feel regrets about hugs not given, letters not written, "I love you's" not said often enough. We can do all these things now. We can establish new memories with the family we have right now.

Another way to move into this New Year with a better feeling is to think about what we can do for others, because that is truly a way to help ourselves, too. If we can reach out to other sorrowing families, give a gift of our time, a note of love, a listening ear, or a shoulder to lean on, we'll grow stronger ourselves.

For those parents who are suffering the deep pain of the newly bereaved, none of the things I've mentioned may be possible yet. For you, I hold out the hope that soon your days will be just a bit better, your sorrow a little lighter, your tears healing, your friends strengthening and your memories filled more with the good times and less with the unhappiness of your grief.

Dory Rooker  
TCF Upper Valley, VT



*"I made a choice. I picked up the remains of my life, my aching heart and wounded spirit, my broken dreams and disbelief; and wrapped them carefully in my blanket of grief. Holding them closely to me, I walked steadfastly ahead into the storm with faith in the promise of peace on the other side."*

Sharron Cordaro

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 JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Eddie Foreman	01/03/60	Jimmie Sue Reeves
Brandi Spradlin	01/05/78	Rita & Terry Colegate
David Dayton	01/06/81	Pat Dayton
Paul Johnston	01/06/06	Gloria & Paul Johnston
Tricia Smith	01/08/74	Brenda & Randy Smith
Stephen Smith	01/08/76	Marilyn & French Smith
Bryan Gibbens	01/12/75	Dianne & Mike Gibbens
Mario Lambert	01/15/10	Helma Lambert
Amanda Maxwell	01/17/86	Angie Maxwell
Mickey Loflin	01/18/71	Katye Loflin
Hope Johnson	01/18/94	Fran Johnson
Kimball James	01/24/71	Betty Jean & Johnny James
Stephen Sivils	01/25/77	Veda Sivils
Norman Craig	01/28/64	Pat Craig
Maaliyah Fletcher	01/30/02	Jeanette Fletcher

## OUR CHILDREN'S FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Leigh Ann White	02/02/82	Janet & Ken White
Cecilia Mouser	02/04/59	Kathryn Hutchinson
Matt Mouser	02/05/53	Kathryn Hutchinson
Corey Washington	02/14/69	Gracie Washington
Jacob Causey	02/21/89	Christy Causey
Courtney Cole	02/25/65	Ann & Henry Cole

## OUR CHILDREN'S MARCH BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Allison Butler	03/03/88	LuAnn & James Butler
Kaye Shields	03/04/62	Lila & R.L. Hargrove
Tyrone Edwards	03/10/81	Sheila Edwards
Greg Gilstrap	03/12/70	Jean Gilstrap
Hope Bruscato	03/24/72	Gene Bruscato
Ryan Clark	03/24/74	Linda Clark
Ben Caldwell	03/26/83	Emily & Douglas Caldwell
Jon Bowman	03/27/85	Jill Puckett
Danny Washington	03/27/92	Dorothy Washington
Michael Johns	03/28/75	Nell Book
Ryan Simon	03/31/81	Sandra & Rene' Simon

## OUR CHILDREN'S JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
David Dayton	01/02/02	Pat Dayton
Kelly O'Neal	01/03/09	Nancy Oliver
David Moore	01/06/84	Barbara Moore
Scottie McLarrin	01/09/99	Mary McLarrin
Jackson Kennedy	01/11/02	Jonann Layton
Trent Weaver	01/11/13	Donna VanVeckhoven
Benjamin Box	01/13/06	Erlene & Jack Box
Janey Kight	01/20/83	Sandra Casteel
Bryan Gibbens	01/21/75	Dianne & Mike Gibbens
Richard Bryan	01/25/02	Linda & James Bryan
Teresa Gentry	01/25/06	Lynn Walters
Fred Page	01/26/98	Charlotte Colquette
Carl Alexander	01/26/04	Valerie & Billy Matejowsky
Dominque Bruscato	01/26/88	Gene Bruscato
Chris Travis	01/26/13	Gloria & Kenneth Travis
Caroline Cole	01/30/88	Ann & Henry Cole

## OUR CHILDREN'S FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Jacob Causey	02/01/12	Christy Causey
Deborah Smith	02/01/11	Mary & Buddy Smith
Ryan Clark	02/04/04	Linda Clark
Walker Dayton	02/04/09	Vickie & Ed Dayton
Cecilia Mouser	02/04/59	Kathryn Hutchinson
Tricia Smith	02/05/06	Brenda & Randy Smith
Thomas Stephens	02/05/11	Susan & Gray Stephens
Greg Dennis	02/06/05	Camille Dennis
Bobby Starnes, Sr.	02/11/94	Edwina Starnes
Eddie Foreman	02/15/99	Jimmie Sue Reeves
Curtis Thigpen	02/26/04	Mary Jo & Art Thigpen
Cedrick Hotard	02/28/07	Sharon & Stephen Hotard
Adam McKenzie	02/28/03	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie

## OUR CHILDREN'S MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Mickey Chambers	03/04/11	Merrell & Mike Chambers
Jeremy Barnhill	03/08/02	Kathi & Terry Barnhill
Donald Acree	03/10/10	Fran Acree
Brian Gregory	03/10/98	Frances & Jim Gregory
CW2 Bryan Henderson	03/11/13	Kim Bryan Henderson
Duston Albritton	03/14/98	Linda & Ronnie Albritton
Raymond Scott	03/16/12	Pam Lavender
Maaliyah Fletcher	03/20/06	Jeanette Fletcher
Brandi Spradlin	03/22/98	Rita & Terry Colegate
Danny Washington	03/26/12	Dorothy Washington
Michele Perry	03/29/72	Clara & Don Perry
Ryan Simon	03/29/13	Sandra & Rene' Simon
Tyrone Edwards	03/30/02	Sheila Edwards
Kimball James	03/31/01	Betty Jean & Johnny James

## 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](http://www.tcfnortheastla.org)

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

Return Service Requested