



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

Jan / Feb / Mar 2019

ONE SUNDAY

ONE Sunday
The sun kissed the earth and a
new day was borne

ONE Sunday
The Birds Sang and then our
earth shook

ONE Sunday
God's Hand Guided our lives and changes occurred

ONE Sunday our daughter's spirit flew as a bird to
our Father

ONE Sunday the pain came and life turned to despair

THAT Sunday our hearts were broken, and tears
came

ONE Sunday the pain eased in time, with our Father
always near

ONE Sunday the grief became bearable and then
turned to love

ONE Sunday Life though different; began as new
ONE Sunday a new day was born

ONE SUNDAY THE BIRDS SANG

Dedicated to the memory of our Beloved Daughter
Brandi Nicole Spradlin
January 5th 1978 – March 22nd 1998

Rita & Terry Colegate
TCF Northeast Louisiana

OUT OF ASHES

When my child died,
ashes are all that remained.

The ashes that symbolize



my unbelievable pain.

The ashes of all my future hopes and
dreams
What else could be left, nothing it
seems.

But even in ashes there's one ember that
still beams
The memory of my child's smile and
how it gleamed.

Those embers like his laughter have such a glow
Soon only the love, not the hurt will make the flame
grow higher.

And the warmth of his love will take me out of the
mire.

I guess the old Fable of the Phoenix is true
For out of ashes you can rise too.

From these burnt ashes the warmth of his love still
glows
And I keep him alive as from me to you his love
flows.

*Yet out of ashes love will survive
And keep both me and my child alive.*

Jackie Rosen
TCF Miami, FL

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, January 3

Thursday, February 7

Thursday, March 7

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

BECAUSE

Because you can't feel me,
Doesn't mean I'm not there.

Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm not near.

Because you can't hear me,
doesn't mean I don't speak.

Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm out of reach.

Because I am dead,
doesn't mean I'm gone.

Beth Oldani
TCF, Arlington Heights, IL

AN EMPTY CHAIR

The first wedding was two years after Alan, my twin-brother, passed away. My second oldest brother was getting married. I was waiting for the question, "When was I going to get married?" I was never asked so I couldn't use my prepared response, "When Alan could be my best man." I thought if I did get married I would have an empty chair next to me. If Alan couldn't be my best man, I didn't want anyone. My brother's name would appear in the program (that he would have designed) as honorary best man. This year I turned thirty-six, it was my sixth birthday without Alan. At the restaurant we had made a mistake, the reservation had been made for one too many. I had ended up sitting next to an empty chair. I thought I was doing better, no longer crying at family events. I now realize that I will not have an empty chair at my wedding, if I can ever bring myself to get married without Alan being there. The loss I feel will always be there, but it's much worse seeing an empty chair.

Daniel Yoffee

MY SISTER, MY FRIEND

Within our hearts
You will always be.
Our minds will be filled
With sweet memories.

Your spirit and love
Will never be gone,
For each life you touched
Will carry them on.

Catherine Hall
TCF Hinsdale, IL



SUICIDE

Once you were rich with life,
you were self-confident
and filled with beauty.

Until a darkness came
to seize your mind,
a force from out of silence,
an ache without a reason,
a pain without a name.

What was this darkness that
would not be conquered?
What force,
what reason,
what pain without a name
would use your hands
to take your life away?

Once you were rich with life,
you were self-confident
and filled with beauty.
Now we are left alone
without an answer.

Sascha

FAITH

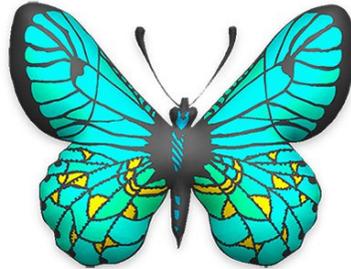
It's raining now, it's dark and cold and wet;
But I know soon the sun will shine again.
I hurt once so bad inside I didn't
want to live anymore;
I thought the sun would never
shine again.
It's shining once again in my life
now;
I feel your goodness and warmth
radiate.
I wonder sometimes why I was so
helpless;
And I didn't believe?
It's all made me now who I am, they say;
Maybe so that others might believe
in all their darkness the sun will never go away.

In memory of Ben
Darrell Lee, TCF-Phoenix, AZ

THE GIFT OF SOMEONE WHO LISTENS

Those of us who have traveled a while
Along this path called grief
Need to stop and remember that mile,
That first mile of no relief.
It wasn't the person with answers
Who told us of ways to deal.
It wasn't the one who talked and talked
That helped us start to heal.
Think of the friends who quietly sat
And held our hands in theirs.
The ones who let us talk and talk
And hugged away our tears.
We need to always remember
That more than the words we speak,
It's the gift of someone who listens
That most of us desperately seek.

Nancy Myerbolts
TCF Waterville, Toledo, OH



WHEN....

when we finally realize that you
are always going to be smiling
and dancing in our hearts,
then, our pain shall turn to joy.

Bob Walters
TCF South Lake Tahoe, CA

I WILL BE

If you think of me as gone forever,
I will be.
If you think of me as sadness and tears,
I will be.
If you think of me as your broken heart,
I will be.
That's not what I want to be, but
I will be.
If you think of me as memories to cherish,
I will be.
If you think of me as laughter and joy,
I will be.
If you think of me as your healing heart,
I will be.
That's what I want to be, please, let me be.

Rob Anderson
"WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE", autumn 2003

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

A WORD ABOUT CLOSURE

I don't use the word closure anymore. For years I thought it was a good way to express what happens to us at various times during our grief journey. I would often tell about the importance of viewing the loved one by saying viewing gives reality and closure.

I live in Oklahoma City. The general feeling here was that the survivors of the bombing would find closure when the trial was over. The ending of the trial was supposed to be some kind of magical day that would bring relief to the pain. The survivors walked out of the courtroom saying, "Don't mention the word closure to us. This does not close anything."

Closure conjures up the idea of healing or moving past. It sounds like some magic moment that happens and the grieving is over. A moment that closes the door to a bad time in our lives and we do not have to think about it anymore. I don't think there are any magic moments in grief. *Grief is a process — a long, slow process.* There are events that are memorable but they don't take the pain away. There are times of healing, but the process must still go on.

Closure also sounds like getting well. We do not "get well." A chunk has been bitten out of our hearts and it is not going to grow back. We do not get well. We move toward turning the corner in the way we cope. We live again, but we live again because we learn to cope with the chunk of our hearts gone.

We don't have closure; we have times of growing reality. Reality does not come all at once. We must gradually come to grips with our loss. We go through a time of real but not real. We know it has happened, but we still think it is a dream and we will soon awake. Reality develops gradually through many experiences. It grows in those times when we face a little bit more of our loss, and reality becomes more vivid. Viewing a loved one, the funeral, the first visit to the cemetery, cleaning out the closets, cleaning out the room, all of these are steps toward reality and toward coping, they are not some final step. They are not the closing of a door nor opening a new door. They are just tiny steps toward deciding to live again and learning to cope.

Doug Manning
Oklahoma City, OK

This article first appeared in We Need Not Walk Alone, Spring 1999



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is the hospital where my broken bones were reset and my wounds cared for and dressed with healing ointment. My fears were eased. Now I have been thrust into the hurting and wounded, and I find the grace is there to touch, to hug, to dress a wound. I want to say "thank you" my compassionate friends.

Kathi Barnhill
TCF Northeast Louisiana



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
Lisa Pearson	01/03/67	Layne Pearson
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
Cody Allen	01/12/92	Regina Kenney
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	Katy 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
Matthew Elliott	01/31/99	Guina Elliott

OUR CHILDREN'S FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Michael Moreau	02/03/69	Bonnie & Ron Nay
Cecilia Mouser	02/04/59	Kathryn Hutchinson
Matt Mouser	02/05/53	Kathryn Hutchinson
Corey Washington	02/14/69	Gracie Washington
Dean Keirse	02/14/76	Shirley Porter
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
Jayson C. Crawley	03/27/71	Ruby Crawley
Michael Johns	03/28/75	Nell Book
Ryan Simon	03/31/81	Sandra & Rene' Simon
Tracy Patton	03/31/75	Nina Shlosman

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 Matejowski
Jeremiah Bynum	01/26/17	Darnita Williams
Dominque Bruscato	01/26/88	Gene Bruscato
Chris Travis	01/26/13	Gloria & Kenneth Travis
Elizabeth Vaughan	01/28/17	Marilyn Stern
Caroline Cole	01/30/88	Ann & Henry Cole
Robin Munholland	01/30/18	Terry Williams
Lauren Lang	01/31/16	Lisa Lang
Chris Springfield	01/31/17	Deborah & Waler Springfield

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
Tracy Patton	02/18/18	Nina Shlosman
Alyssa Neitz	02/23/18	Jennifer & Joey Neitz
Jayden Ward	02/23/14	Alicia Hill
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
Lisa Pearson	03/13/84	Layne Pearson
Dustin 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

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

Return Service Requested