



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Jul / Aug / Sep 2021

BUTTERFLIES AND RAINBOWS

You came to me on a butterfly's wing so very long ago.

What God had in His plan for us how could we possibly know.
I watched you laugh and play and dream as you grew into a man.
How beautiful you were to me as you chased rainbows in the sand.

It's incomprehensible to think that you have gone away.
And you won't be coming back again not even for a day.
Two years have come and gone since then and the sun still rises in the sky.
Butterflies and rainbows still exist and I have stopped asking why.

Your light shines brightly in my heart and always will my dear.
You are with the rainbows there and I'm with the butterflies here.

Robyn Bell
TCF Valley Forge, PA

PEACE OF MIND

Running stream –
Seemingly endless –
You flow past me
Cleansing rocks
Providing sustenance
For hidden trout –
As I watch your enduring strength –
You quiet my soul –
Helping me find
Peace of mind.

Norma Grove
TCF Tucson, AZ



IN THE GARDEN OF TREES STANDS A WILLOW

A willow that weeps through the years,
Named aptly for heartache and sorrow
Each leaf represents one more tear.
With grace those leaves blow on soft. wind,
To remind us of our child gone away;

Yet reaches its branches toward Heaven,
With the promise we'll see them someday.
It stands in the midst of the storm tossed winds,
A tree with quiet beauty and grace,
Like our hearts, it survives
through (the worst) of it all,
And will til we see our child's face.

In the garden of trees stands a willow tree,
A willow that weeps through the years
Just like our child, it's in God's hands,
And like us, sheds countless tears.

Author Unknown

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, July 1

Thursday, August 5

Thursday, September 2

6:30 PM

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

1901 Lexington Ave.

Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

WISH YOU WERE HERE

You'd be nineteen if you were here
But why you're gone still isn't clear.
Your things are still all in your room
As if you'd be returning soon.
Spongebob waits there by the door.
Your shoes are still there on the floor.

Your friends are all young women
now.
They're working jobs or college
bound.
Sometimes we see them and they
say
We miss her so, wish she had stayed.

Your boyfriend's in the Army too
And by the way, he still loves you.
You thought his love was not so true
And that some other girl he'd choose.
But near two years have passed on by
Still to your grave he goes to cry.

Your niece and nephews miss you too,
And talk of the things you used to do.
Your Mother's going to be alright
And doesn't cry so much at night.
She puts the flowers on your grave,
And scrapbook pictures tries to save.

And me, I'm still the same old Dad,
The same old routine like I had.
I work real hard to make a way
To pay some bills and pass the day.

I'm not as funny as before
My world's not happy anymore.
I don't let on the pain I feel
But deep inside the hurt is real.

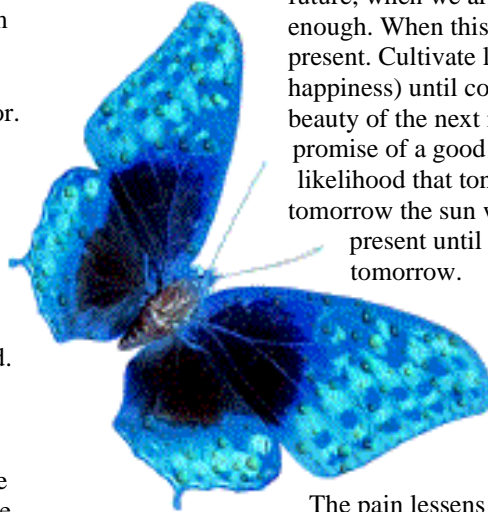
Time passes by year after year,
Life goes on with seldom a tear.
One wish I have, a wish so clear
My wish most of all, I wish you were here.

Steve Tutt
TCF Tyler, TX

HOPE FOR THE MOMENT

There are times when it is hard to believe in the future, when we are temporarily just not brave enough. When this happens, concentrate on the present. Cultivate le petit bonheur (the little happiness) until courage returns. Look forward to the beauty of the next moment, the next hour, the promise of a good meal, sleep, a book, a movie, the likelihood that tonight the stars will shine and tomorrow the sun will shine. Sink roots into the present until the strength grows to think about tomorrow.

Ardis Whitman



THE BUTTERFLY

The pain lessens and we begin to heal as we work through the grief process, we begin to see a ray of light -a little color. Some of the weight is removed. We break open our cocoon and begin to reach out ever so slightly and touch life again, just to see if it will hurt too much. As we discover the brighter days and brilliant colors of life we become more like a butterfly. We are free to once again be a part of life, and we can move about more easily and begin to take some nectar from life.

Source: www.groww.org

"A greater love comes from your deepest pain And there's power in that love to help you rise again"

***From "A Little Farther Down the Road"
by Alan Pedersen***

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

SUMMER THOUGHTS

Summer is a time when things naturally slow down, a time when many are waiting for the orderly routine of their lives to begin again. For those of us in grief whose lives are already in limbo, it can seem endless if we let it. Seeing children, babies, and teenagers is not easy for us, and we see them everywhere from shopping centers to beaches. Everyone is out living, loving, enjoying carefree activities with their children, and we want to scream, "It's not fair!" I was sitting on my patio one evening at dusk recently listening to the shouts of children playing, and I was crying as I remembered the sounds that my child used to make. I became very depressed as I thought what a long summer this was going to be.

In my reverie, I was reminded of a recent comment that I had heard at a TCF meeting: "My child was such a loving, giving person. He would not want me to waste my life being bitter." I also remembered a good friend telling me to "count my blessings" and naming all the things I had to be grateful for. I was furious at that time. Nothing I had to be grateful for could compensate for the fact that my child was dead.

Now, sitting in the twilight of this early summer evening, I began to see things differently. I determined that this summer would not be an eternity: I would not let it be. I decided first of all to stay busy. I know I can find plenty to do if I only take the time to look. I am also going to try to enjoy the simple things that used to give me so much pleasure, like flowers, and working in my garden. In then decided to try to be truly grateful for the blessing that I have, like my husband, my surviving children, my job, friends, etc. It has been almost five years for me, and I know that last year this would not have worked. Of course, I still have times of sadness; I know I always will. But I have decided that in the process of grieving we close so many doors, the only way to recovery is to reopen them gradually at our own pace.

I know I will never be the same person I was before the death of my child, but I hope eventually in some ways I will be a better person because suffering can be beneficial if we learn and grow through it. A year ago, I didn't feel that way, and I know I still have a long way to go, but in the meantime, I know the greatest tribute to my child will be to enjoy this summer as he would have done.

Libby Gonzalez
TCF Huntsville, AL

4TH OF JULY

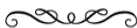
As our country celebrates Independence Day we are reminded of a nation which stood strong through many a crisis; which refused to give up or in; and today stands tall and strong because of her convictions.

As Americans we know the truth in the motto-- "No gain without pain." Those of us who are not newly bereaved know that this motto also applies to our suffering for many of us have found a deeper appreciation of life through our tragic experience. Priorities have also been rearranged for we have learned what things are most important.

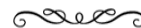
It did not come easy, my friend, but with the courage and determination that being an American has taught us. So, my newly bereaved friends, stand tall and do not give up.

You can claim YOUR "Independence" from grief, too.

TCF Camden County Chapter Audubon, NJ



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 JULY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Chris Springfield	07/03/75	Deborah & Walter Springfield
Don Shlosman	07/04/78	Margie Godwin
Joe David Williams	07/04/74	Dolph Williams
Michael Stephens	07/06/51	Maggie & John Stephens
Tonya Hurst	07/06/79	Pam Wimbish
Stacey Morrison		Sandy Kendrick
Amiee McIveene	07/07/78	Rhea & Danny McIveene
Greg Dennis	07/08/60	Camille Dennis
Jill Whitaker	07/21/02	Cynthia Machen
Fred Page	07/22/62	Gloria Roye
Randy Foote	07/25/75	Linda Foote
Scottie McLarrin	07/30/87	Mary McLarrin
Matthew Nolan	07/30/91	Karen Nolan

OUR CHILDREN'S JULY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Leigh Ann Carlton	07/01/01	Gail Dupuy
Allen Byrnside	07/02/19	Terri Musgrove-grandmother
Andrew Rinicker	07/03/04	Dale Rinicker
Hunter Carr	07/08/09	Juanita Carr
Andy Smith	07/12/16	Anita Wynn
Derrick Sadberry	07/15/06	Belinda Sadberry
Steven Wisdom	07/15/06	Dee Wisdom
Mike Hayes	07/19/97	Margaret & George Hayes
Michael Hollier	07/21/09	Lyn Hollier
Allison Butler	07/30/11	LuAnn & James Butler

OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Heather Greer	08/01/83	Kim & Heath Greer
Robin Munholland	08/02/81	Terry Williams
Michelle Putman	08/03/83	Gaye Laing
Kim Smith	08/02/75	Jackie Bailey
Adam McKenzie	08/04/68	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Aaron McKenzie	08/04/68	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Lisa Giovingo	08/07/59	Frances Webb
Chad Byrd	08/13/79	Janice & Randy Byrd
Shontavious Foster	08/13/87	Sarah Foster
Robert Harrison	08/15/59	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Harrison
John Bruscato	08/19/74	Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Michele Perry	08/25/66	Don & Clara Perry
Dominique Bruscato	08/28/79	Gene Bruscato
Tytianna Jenkins	08/28/98	Beverly Jenkins
Benjamin Box	08/30/63	Erlene & Jack Box

OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Don Shlosman	08/01/00	Margie Godwin
Chad Byrd	08/01/05	Janice & Randy Byrd
Hope Johnson	08/02/05	Fran Johnson
Matthew Elliott	08/04/16	Guina Elliott
Savannah Thornton	08/07/16	Rhonda & Ronald Thornton
Joel Rundell	08/09/90	Sharon & Jim Rundell
Brittany Braxton	08/11/09	Ursula Braxton
Heather Greer	08/13/03	Kim & Heath Greer
Paul Hayes	08/14/03	Patty & Paul Hayes
Scott Thompson	08/16/03	Tammy Thompson
Stephen Sivils	08/19/03	Veda Sivils
Jayson C. Crawley	08/20/90	Ruby Crawley
Jeffrey Carter	08/22/10	Dianne & Tim Carter
Jason Hutts	08/22/99	Carol & Greg Hutts
Brian Perry	08/22/02	Clara & Don Perry
Greg Gilstrap	08/24/07	Jean Gilstrap
Debbie Pope	08/24/08	Jean Hamilton
Dean Keirse	08/28/11	Shirley Porter
Brandon McGehee	08/30/02	Teddi & James McGehee
Robert Harrison	08/31/06	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Harrison

OUR CHILDREN'S SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Mario Lambert	09/04/77	Helma Lambert
Fred Page	09/08/58	Charlotte Colquette
Pamela Ford	09/08/74	Leona Upton
Holly M. Robertson	09/12/70	Nancy & Joe Mulhern
Leigh Ann Carlton	09/13/83	Gail Dupuy
Daran Reeves	09/13/63	Linda & Terry Reeves
Anne Barham	09/14/77	Pat Barham
Laureen Romero	09/14/88	Lenette and Larry Romero
Rodney Hubbard	09/15/64	Claudina Vega
Barry Kirby	09/18/89	Lisa Kirby/Bridget Kirby
Donald Acree	09/20/64	Fran Acree
Paul Johnston	09/20/59	Gloria & Paul Johnston
Michael Woods	09/20/95	China Telano
Jayden Ward	09/21/09	Alicia Hill
Cole Brooks Hamilton	09/22/95	Laurie & Britt Hamilton
Emerson Johnson	09/23/14	Sandy Johnson
Jeffrey Carter	09/24/82	Dianne & Tim Carter
Joel Rundell	09/26/65	Sharon & Jim Rundell
Kody Spann	09/27/84	Cindy Spann
Richard Bryan	09/28/79	Linda & James Bryan

OUR CHILDREN'S SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Amanda Maxwell	09/01/02	Angie Maxwell
Blade Gilbreath	09/06/15	Dawn & Brandon Gilbreath
Kenneth Wall	09/06/99	Beverly & Charles Wall
Kaye Shields	09/06/04	Lila & R.L. Hargrove
Matthew Nolan	09/11/17	Karen Nolan
Cole Crawford	09/22/18	Sylvia & Greg Crawford
Timothy Smith	09/25/76	Mary & Buddy Smith
Aaron McKenzie	09/29/10	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Kim Smith	09/29/97	Jackie Bailey

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