



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

## NORTHEAST LOUISIANA CHAPTER

Phone: 318.388.1660  
Fax: 318.388.2368  
Web: [www.tcfnortheastla.org](http://www.tcfnortheastla.org)  
Email: [tcfnortheastla@aol.com](mailto:tcfnortheastla@aol.com)

*JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2009*

### YOU DID NOT DIE

You live in the beautiful wind that blows.  
You live in the sound of birds that crow.

You live in the sun that shines so bright.  
You live in the peaceful dark at night.

You live in a star I see in the sky.  
You live in ocean waves that come in  
with the tide.

You live in the smell of flowers and grass.  
You live in the summer that goes so fast.

You live in my heart that hurts so much.  
You did not die, we only lost touch.

Shari Swirsky  
TCF Toronto, Ontario, Canada

### TO ONE IN SORROW

Let me come in where you are weeping friend,  
And let me take your hand.  
I, who have known a sorrow such as yours,  
can understand.

Let me come in -- I would be very still  
Beside you in your grief.  
I would not bid you cease your weeping, friend,  
Tears bring relief.

Let me come in -- I would only breathe a prayer,  
And hold your hand,  
For I have known a sorrow such as yours,  
And understand.

Grace Noll Crowell

### SOAR TO THE HEAVENS

Soar to the Heaven on a summer wind  
Your new life of freedom will soon begin

No more sorrow, pain or anger  
No more worries, fears or danger

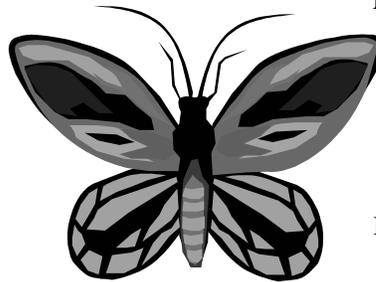
You have filled our lives with  
laughter  
Now you're in the life hereafter

We will miss your sunny smile  
But you blessed our lives for a little  
while

Soar to the Heavens on a snowy white dove  
And know in your heart that you are loved.

In Loving Memory of Our Daughter and Sister  
Donna Alicia Harner  
August 19, 1971 - October 2, 1992

By Lois, Ray, Missy, James, James Thomas Harner  
Cedartown, Georgia



### Monthly Meetings

**Thursday, July 2**

**Thursday, August 6**

**Thursday, September 3**

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.

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Visit the Sibling Resources Page at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)  
Email [tcsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:tcsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org) for the password

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## SIBLINGS

Tomorrow,  
I'll try to understand her,  
Try to understand the excitement behind  
Those piercing black eyes.  
Try to understand her zeal for life,  
Tireless energy, and love for others.

Tomorrow,  
I'll sit down beside her and get to know  
This sister of mine.  
I'll get to know the skinny little girl  
I grew up with and shared a bedroom  
with  
For all our teen years.

Tomorrow,  
We'll share secrets together  
We'll go for long walks,  
We'll just sit together for hours and laugh.

Tomorrow,  
I'll ask her about her boyfriends,  
I'll ask her about her girlfriends,  
I'll even ask what her favorite subject is in school.

Today?  
I'm too busy,  
I have too much to do,  
She's getting on my nerves.

Today,  
She's borrow my precious clothes, ruining them.

Today,  
She's using up all the gas in my car.

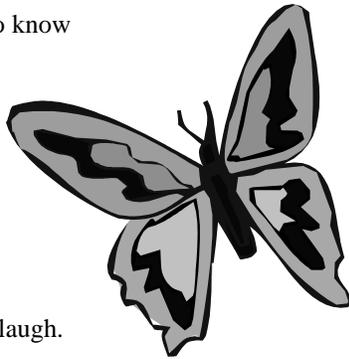
Today,  
She's asking stupid questions  
I just don't feel like answering.

Today,  
I'm too tired.

But tomorrow,  
I'll tell her how much I love her,  
I'll hug her and tell her she's pretty,  
I'll tell her I'm glad I have a sister . . . tomorrow.

Tomorrow  
Has finally come and she is gone.

by Cindy, Kathi's sister  
Taken from a book written by Kathi's  
mother called "18, No Time To Waste."



**My big brother was so good to me  
When we were kids, he always let me  
go first.  
The night he died, he looked up at me,  
smiled his little crooked smile, and  
said,  
"Sis, this time let me go first."**

**Connie Danson,  
eulogy for her brother, Frank Darnell  
from the book "Forever Remembered"**

## GREG GILSTRAP MEMORIAL FISHING TOURNAMENT

The Greg Gilstrap Memorial Fishing Tournament was founded in memory of Greg Gilstrap. Greg was an avid fisherman and loved duck hunting and baseball.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Greg Gilstrap Memorial Fishing Tournament will be held on the Ouchita River and is tentatively set for the last Saturday in August. Proceeds from the tournament benefit an endowment for the education of his children.

## THE GRAND FINALE

Its getting late...  
And dusk is settling in....  
The 4th of July fireworks...  
Are about to begin.

I wonder how far is Heaven...  
As I look up to the night sky...  
And wonder if my child is watching...  
Just from the other side?

The Fireworks have begun...  
As they fly into the sky....  
Just like my child, my angel...  
Who is forever soaring high.

The colorful bursts explode...  
Into a spectacular show of lights....  
And fill the heavens above...  
Its so beautiful and bright..

And as the fireworks fall...  
From the Heavens way up high...  
They burn out...and its dark again...  
And the crowd lets out a sigh.

But..then another is lit...sparkling brilliantly  
As the light trails through the night sky...  
I think I am beginning to understand..  
For its the same when our loved ones die.

For a life that has burned brightly...  
Can never fade away....  
For its rekindled through our memories...  
Each and every day.

So even though my child has gone...  
To the Heavens up Above....  
Their light will always remain ...  
And shine down on me with love.

And our Grand Finale WILL come...  
When we are reunited in Heaven again...  
But their light will always remain lit...  
...Until then.

By Laura  
Heavenly Lights Children's Memorial

## THE SURVIVOR A FATHER'S GUILT

A wife---two sons---my life is complete  
I work—I ride—I fly—I provide

To grow old with my family and grandchildren I seek  
In a car I nearly leave them but---I survive

To grow old with my family and grandchildren I seek  
In an airplane I nearly leave them  
But---I survive

To grow old with my family and grandchildren I  
seek

In a hospital I nearly leave them  
But---I survive

To grow old with my family and  
grandchildren I seek  
In a car he leaves me  
He does not survive

A wife—one son—my life is not complete  
But---I survive

In memory of my son Chris  
September 2, 1967 to December 5, 1994

Dale Mastley  
TCF Conyers, Ga



### [Chapter co-leaders](#)

Marilyn & French Smith

### [Steering Committee](#)

Henry Cole, Facilitator

Beverly & Charles Wall, Treasurer

Dianne & Frank Bruscato, Library

Ann Cole & Marilyn Smith, Hospitality

Frances & Jim Gregory, Outreach

Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

Betty Jean & Johnny James, Memorial Park

Sandy Chester, TCF Regional Coordinator

## ADVICE FOR SUMMER HEALING

Whether you are newly bereaved or you have been on this journey a long time, the change of seasons and the thoughts of coming “events” are hard but it is how you approach them that matters the most. How will we handle vacation this year? How can we go on vacation without our child? How can I possibly have a good vacation without my child? Why would I want to go on vacation without my child? These are some of the questions we ask ourselves either knowingly or unconsciously and the answers are as vast as the way we grieve.

For my family it wasn't a question of whether or not to go on vacation the following summer (we lost our son in December 2001) but it became a question of why shouldn't we go? We had vacationed at the same place for 18 years and we started thinking about all the good times we had at the “pond” over those years.

For us it became a desire to “go back” and visit the place where our son had been happy and felt safe and secure – a place where we could go and just let go. For both my husband and I and now our daughter and her family, the pond continues to be a place where we can go and feel close to our son because we know how much he loved it there.

It was hard that first year and even the next as we looked for him everywhere. We chose to have a different campsite than we normally used that first year, but the next we moved back to our favorite campsite – it just felt right. As hard as it was to return to the pond there was and is a peaceful feeling that comes to us there as we allow all of the good memories to invade our waking moments, and we open our hearts and head to those memories knowing that our son had been there and it was one of his favorite places to be....As you make plans for this summer, whatever they are, know that you have to do what feels right to you – there is no right or wrong. If you can, open your heart and follow it and let those stored memories carry you through.

Cindi Bolivar  
TCF North Shore Boston



## EXPERIENCING THE NEW IN MY LIFE

These times of grieving the loss of a loved one are times of change. It is as though we leave forever a room where we have been comfortable and functioning well, and enter a new room. Some of the same furnishings are there, and some of the same people, but the room is different nonetheless and requires a whole new adaptation from us - and, probably, from the others in the room with us.

We have choices. We can hide in a corner, cowering, unwilling to look around. We can tear around mindlessly, looking for an escape, though we know there is none. Or we can look around, see where the windows are and where doors open into the future, for the door we came through is closed. We can look for people who can help us - and begin to attend to this life, day by day. Slowly, and with some ambivalence, I will begin to experience the new in my life.

Martha Whitmore Hickman  
Healing After Loss



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>
Amiee McIlveene	07/07/78	Rhea & Danny McIlveene
Greg Dennis	07/08/60	Camille Dennis
Milton Scarborough	07/11/89	Tina Scarborough
Lonnie Matheson	07/20/68	Dorothy Matheson
Lauren Hemphill	07/26/78	Kitty McDougall & Tommy Hemphill
Scottie McLarrin	07/30/87	Mary McLarrin

## OUR CHILDREN'S JULY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Leigh Ann Carlton	07/01/01	Gail Dupuy
Lonnie Matheson	07/03/06	Dorothy Matheson
Andrew Rinicker	07/03/04	Dale Rinicker
Derrick Sadberry	07/15/06	Belinda Sadberry
Steven Wisdom	07/15/06	Dee Wisdom
Spencer Ramsey	07/17/06	Cindy & Billy Ramsey
Jennifer Leach	07/19/07	Verna Moss
Mike Hayes	07/19/97	Margaret & George Hayes
Stephen Blanchard	07/26/06	Tracey & Steve Blanchard

## OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Heather Greer	08/01/83	Kim & Heath Greer
Kim Smith	08/02/75	Jackie Bailey
Adam McKenzie	08/04/68	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Chad Byrd	08/13/79	Janice & Randy Byrd
Spencer Ramsey	08/13/90	Cindy & Billy Ramsey
Dylan Smith	08/18/77	Joan Taylor
John Bruscato	08/19/74	Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Michael Hoyem	08/26/54	Dorothy & Don Hoyem
Jesse Chilton	08/29/80	Cheryl & Ronnie Chilton
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	08/03/05	Janice & Randy Byrd
Beth Ann Smith	08/06/06	Judy & Randy Smith
Joel Rundell	08/09/90	Sharon Rundell
Heather Greer	08/13/03	Kim & Heath Greer
Paul Hayes	08/14/03	Patty & Paul Hayes
Brandon Dempsey	08/15/06	Belinda Enterkin
Stephen Sivils	08/19/03	Veda & Leon Sivils
Jason Hutts	08/22/99	Carol & Greg Hutts
Brian Perry	08/22/02	Clara & Don Perry
Greg Gilstrap	08/24/07	Jean Gilstrap
Alice Rains	08/28/94	Marie Rains
Brandon McGehee	08/30/02	Teddi & James McGehee

## OUR CHILDREN'S SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Dwain Whitehead	09/05/66	Mary & Ralph Whitehead
Fred Page	09/08/58	Charlotte Colquette
Pamela Ford	09/08/74	Leona Upton
Leigh Ann Carlton	09/13/83	Gail Dupuy
Stephen Blanchard	09/15/88	Tracey & Steve Blanchard
Ashley Taylor	09/15/98	Valerie & Doug Taylor
Wesley Canterberry	09/23/84	Dewanna Canterberry
Aaron Akers	09/23/93	Allison Woods
Joel Rundell	09/26/65	Sharon Rundell
Kody Spann	09/27/84	Cindy & Larry 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
Kenneth Wall	09/06/99	Beverly & Charles Wall
Kaye Shields	09/06/04	Lila & R.L. Hargrove
Colby Wixson	09/23/06	Laura Scriber
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.

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WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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

Return Service Requested