



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

Jul / Aug / Sep 2016

FOURTH OF JULY

Each Year on the 4th of July we celebrate the birth of a great nation — a nation of people "united" in a dream. It was through hope, determination and a bonded strength that the people of America strived to achieve their dream of freedom to be a free nation.

Nothing, however, is achieved without a strong will. We, too, as bereaved parents, are fighting a battle to be free — free of the pain that has become a part of our waking days. We want to be happy. We want to be able to enjoy life again. You are one of those proud Americans. Refuse to give up. Fight for your dream. There is peace to be found in freedom!

written by a member of TCF Homdel, NJ

BEREAVED PARENTS

Different ages
Different stages
Different issues

Same pain
Daily strain
Occasional tissues

Our children have died
Often is all we know
A fact we fear to hide

Despite our ever-present woe
We live with pride
Though broken-hearted
To love, remember, and grow

Victor Montemurro
TCF Medford, NY

SUMMERTIME

With summer comes more time for relaxation and more time for get-togethers with family and friends. After our son died it left a void in all those family activities and lots of time for thoughts of summers gone by — vacations, 4th of Julys, Bible Schools, camps, baseball games, swimming lessons, skiing at the lake, and many other memories.



It still seems important for us to participate in those same activities because on each occasion some memory is stirred of a time when our son was a part of these activities that made summer such a special time for us. At first those memories made us so sad, but now when we remember what he did or said in certain situations, our hearts are a little lighter and even sometimes a little smile appears on our faces.

These memories are what we have left and they are so very precious. Summers are a good time to relax and remember our happy times together.

Carol Linch
TCF LaGrange, GA

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, July 7

Thursday, August 4

Thursday, September 1

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

THEY DON'T WEAR PURPLE HEARTS IN HEAVEN

I lost my brother to a foreign land;
I was too young to even understand

There was a knock at the front door,
Then Momma wasn't smiling anymore.
The man at the door was a Marine;
The first I've ever seen.

Momma told me to go out and play,
Then the preacher came and they started to pray.
Tears ran down Momma's eyes, and
I heard her say, "Why, Lord, Why"?
Father stood there seemingly mindless, all he said was,
"We've lost another of America's finest."
The Marine handed Momma a small velvet case,
Inside was a Purple Ribbon, attached to
a gold heart with Washington's face.

I asked Momma if it were mine,
But she said "It's your brother's, Sunshine."
"Momma can we send it to Kevin?"
She answered, "They don't wear Purple Hearts in Heaven."

Author unknown
Lifted from TCF Atlanta Linked Together Newsletter

ON YOUR BIRTHDAY

I wrote the date this morning,
Paused,
And felt the room grow cold.
It always does
When I remember
All of it –
Down to the last petal

Tossed by winds
Above the upturned earth.
This time the child
Does not leave so easily.
It would have been your birthday.
Soon, I shall be
As old as you will ever be.

Wanda Trawick
TCF Acme, PA



LITTLE BROTHER

Someone took you away from me
And I wonder if they cared
About the ones' they left behind
And the pain that each must bear
Why did you have to leave me
When there was so much left to do
I'm not sure if I can go on
If I have to go on without you.
But life dictates the rules
There are things that I can't change
When you left, my heart was torn in two
My life got rearranged.
I have to believe I'll see you again
It keeps the hope alive and new
So until we meet again, little brother
Never forget that I love you.

Jenny
TCF Indianapolis, IN

"I am grateful to my father for showing me I am not alone in my grief. Only time can lessen the pain of grief, but my pain is more bearable when I share my grief. I have grown up with the knowledge of people who believe real men don't cry. Maybe they haven't lost a son. Maybe they haven't had a chance to be an example to the daughters who share their grief." —Carrie Kears

When grief is new you need not find a reason however good and brave - to temper your despair.

When grief is new the heart accepts no answer however wise and kind - to ease your mourning.

When grief is new your life can only know disintegration, overwhelming pain...

My friend, try to believe what other grievers learned:

You will not always hurt as you hurt now...

Time will restore the soundness of your mind.

All other words are shadows on the wind when grief is new.

Sascha

TOGETHER WE'LL WALK THE STEPPING STONES

Come, take my hand, the road is long.
We must travel by stepping stones.

No, you're not alone, I'll go with you.
I know the road well, I've been there.

Don't fear the darkness, I'll be there with you.
We must take one step at a time but remember we may have to stop awhile.

It's a long way to the other side and there may be obstacles.
We have many stones to cross, some are bigger than others,
Shock, denial and anger to start.

Then comes guilt, despair and loneliness.
It's a hard road to travel, but it must be done.

It's the only way to reach the other side.
Come, slip your hand in mine. What?

Oh, yes, it's strong, I've held so many hands like yours.
Yes, mine was one time small and weak like yours.

Once, I had to take someone's hand to take my first step.
Oops! You've stumbled; go ahead and cry.

Don't be ashamed; I understand.
Let's wait here awhile and get your breath.

When you're stronger we'll go on, one step at a time.
There's no need to hurry.

Say, it's nice to hear you laugh.
Yes, I agree, the memories you shared are good.

Look, we're halfway there now; I can see the other side.
It looks warm and sunny.

Oh, we're nearing the last stone and you're standing alone.
We've reached the other side.

But wait, look back. Someone is standing there.
They are alone and want to cross the stepping stones.

I'd better go, they need my help.
What? Are you sure?

Why yes, go ahead, I'll wait, you know the way,
you've been there.
Yes, I agree, it's your turn, my friend—

To help someone else cross the stepping stones.

Barb Williams
TCF Ft. Wayne, IN



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

DID YOU KNOW THAT.....

Twenty of our 44 presidents and their wives are bereaved parents:

- John Adams, lost his son Charles, 20, while he was president.
- Thomas Jefferson had six children and only two lived to maturity. One daughter, Mary, 26, died while he was president.
- James Monroe lost a son two years of age.
- John Quincy Adams lost a daughter in infancy; a son died while Adams was president; and another son died five years later.
- William Harrison had ten children; six died before he became president.
- Zachary Taylor had six children; two died as infants and a daughter died three months after her wedding.
- Millard Fillmore's daughter Abigail died at 22.
- Franklin Pierce lost two sons in infancy. Two months before his inauguration to the presidency, their only child, Benjamin, 11 years old, was killed in a railroad accident
- Abraham Lincoln, lost two sons during his lifetime: Edward, four years old, while President Lincoln was in office; and William, 11 years old.
- Rutherford B. Hayes had eight children, three of whom died in infancy.
- James Garfield had seven children; two died while still infants.
- Chester Alan Arthur's eldest son died in infancy.
- Grover Cleveland's eldest daughter, Ruth, died at 13 years of age.
- William McKinley, lost both children: Ida, four months old, and Katherine, four years old.
- Theodore Roosevelt's son died at 21 years of age.
- Calvin Coolidge had a son, Calvin Jr., who died at 16 while his father was in office
- Franklin Roosevelt's son, Franklin Jr., died in infancy.
- Dwight Eisenhower's son, Doug Dwight "Icky," three years old, died at Camp Mead, Maryland.
- George H.W. Bush lost his daughter Robin at age 3 to leukemia in 1953
- John Kennedy 2 day old son Patrick died in 1963



RE-ENTRY INTO LIFE

May of brilliant greens, harbinger of summer, mother of daffodils and tulips, warm my soul in your sun glow!

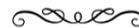
I am in need of that warmth, ready again to feel alive. For so long I have shut out life, unwilling to see beauty in a world without my child, unable to feel joy or love or laughter, longing only for him. I cared naught for life and would have welcomed death.

It has been a long climb, my re-entry into life. IN that climb I did not lose the pain of separation, but rather learned to assimilate it into my soul as a part of my life. I here...he there. And so I chance life again, mindful of its brevity, welcoming its brilliant colors, the song of birds, the grace of love.

L. Dolan
TCF Greenland, NH



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>	
Don Shlosman	07/04/78
Michael Stephens	07/06/51
Amiee McIvvene	07/07/78
Greg Dennis	07/08/60
Jill Whitaker	07/21/02
Fred Page	07/22/62
Bobby Starnes, Sr.	07/25/56
Scottie McLarrin	07/30/87

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Margie Godwin
Maggie & John Stephens
Rhea & Danny McIvvene
Camille Dennis
Cynthia Machen
Gloria Roye
Edwina Starnes
Mary McLarrin

OUR CHILDREN'S JULY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	
Leigh Ann Carlton	07/01/01
Andrew Rinicker	07/03/04
Hunter Carr	07/08/09
Derrick Sadberry	07/15/06
Steven Wisdom	07/15/06
Mike Hayes	07/19/97
Michael Hollier	07/21/09
Chris Culpepper	07/24/93
Allison Butler	07/30/11

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Gail Dupuy
Dale Rinicker
Juanita Carr
Belinda Sadberry
Dee Wisdom
Margaret & George Hayes
Lyn Hollier
Noel Culpepper
LuAnn & James Butler

OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>	
Heather Greer	08/01/83
Kim Smith	08/02/75
Adam McKenzie	08/04/68
Aaron McKenzie	08/04/68
Lisa Giovingo	08/07/59
Curtis Thigpen	08/07/78
Chad Byrd	08/13/79
Shontavious Foster	08/13/87
Robert Harrison	08/15/59
John Bruscato	08/19/74
Michele Perry	08/25/66
Dominique Bruscato	08/28/79
Tytianna Jenkins	08/28/98
Benjamin Box	08/30/63

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Kim & Heath Greer
Jackie Bailey
Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Frances Webb
Mary Jo & Art Thigpen
Janice & Randy Byrd
Sarah Foster
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Harrison
Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Don & Clara Perry
Gene Bruscato
Beverly Jenkins
Erlene & Jack Box

OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	
Don Shlosman	08/01/00
Chad Byrd	08/01/05
Hope Johnson	08/02/05
Joel Rundell	08/09/90
Brittany Braxton	08/11/09
Heather Greer	08/13/03
Paul Hayes	08/14/03
Scott Thompson	08/16/03
Stephen Sivils	08/19/03
Jeffrey Carter	08/22/10
Jason Hutts	08/22/99
Brian Perry	08/22/02
Greg Gilstrap	08/24/07
Debbie Pope	08/24/08
Brandon McGehee	08/30/02
Robert Harrison	08/31/06

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Margie Godwin
Janice & Randy Byrd
Fran Johnson
Sharon & Jim Rundell
Ursula Braxton
Kim & Heath Greer
Patty & Paul Hayes
Tammy Thompson
Veda Sivils
Dianne & Tim Carter
Carol & Greg Hutts
Clara & Don Perry
Jean Gilstrap
Jean Hamilton
Teddi & James McGehee
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Harrison

OUR CHILDREN'S SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>	
Mario Lambert	09/04/77
Fred Page	09/08/58
Pamela Ford	09/08/74
Leigh Ann Carlton	09/13/83
Anne Barham	09/14/77
Rodney Hubbard	09/15/64
Barry Kirby	09/18/89
Donald Acree	09/20/64
Paul Johnston	09/20/59
Michael Woods	09/20/95
Jayden Ward	09/21/09
Cole Brooks Hamilton	09/22/95
Wesley Canterbury	09/23/84
Emerson Johnson	09/23/14
Jeffrey Carter	09/24/82
Joel Rundell	09/26/65
Kody Spann	09/27/84
Richard Bryan	09/28/79

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Helma Lambert
Charlotte Colquette
Leona Upton
Gail Dupuy
Pat Barham
Claudina Vega
Lisa Kirby/Bridget Kirby
Fran Acree
Gloria & Paul Johnston
China Telano
Alicia Hill
Laurie & Britt Hamilton
Dewanna Canterbury
Sandy Johnson
Dianne & Tim Carter
Sharon & Jim Rundell
Cindy Spann
Linda & James Bryan

OUR CHILDREN'S SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>	
Amanda Maxwell	09/01/02
Kenneth Wall	09/06/99
Kaye Shields	09/06/04
Timothy Smith	09/25/76
Aaron McKenzie	09/29/10
Kim Smith	09/29/97

<u>Parent(s)</u>
Angie Maxwell
Beverly & Charles Wall
Lila & R.L. Hargrove
Mary & Buddy Smith
Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
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