



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA CHAPTER

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OCTOBER / NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2012

## NOVEMBER AGAIN

Leaves are turning the shades of autumn, then falling, one by one, to the misted ground below. Summer flowers have faded and died. The sun hides behind dark and dreary clouds. It is November again.

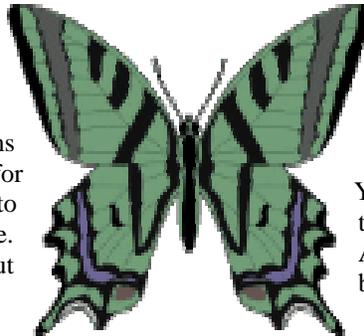
Was it so long ago that this month brought warm thoughts of Thanksgiving together? The smell of wood burning, walks in the nippy air?

This is the month you left us. And all the warm glow of November went with you.

All that remains are the chrysanthemums planted in a special memorial garden for you. They are ready to burst into beautiful shades of yellow and orange.

They symbolize one more year without you. But our love has not diminished.

Pat Dodge  
TCF Sacramento, CA



## YOU WILL

You will live;  
Although you feel like you are dying.

You will laugh once again;  
Although you feel that emotion is lost forever.

You will think clearly again;  
Although you feel very confused most of the time.

You will celebrate your child's life;  
Although now you are enveloped in the why's and if only's of your child's death.

You will somehow make your way through this rough work called grieving;  
Although today you feel you are slipping backwards.

You will find love, understanding and caring with The Compassionate Friends;  
Although today you are lonely, isolated and withdrawn.

Choose the "You Will.";  
I did, and it is helping with that large hole in my heart.

Carol Joyce  
TCF Fort Lauderdale, FL

## AS LONG AS I CAN

*As long as I can,  
I will look at the world for both of us.*

*As long as I can,  
I will laugh with the bird,  
I will sing with flowers,  
I will play to the stars,  
For both of us.*

*As long as I can,  
I will remember how many things  
On this earth were your joy.  
And I will live as well  
As you would want me to live,  
As long as I can.*

*Sascha Wagner  
TCF Des Moines*

### Monthly Meetings

**Thursday, October 4**

**Thursday, November 1**

**Due to the Candle Lighting Ceremony to be held Sunday, December 9, we will not have our regular monthly meeting in December.**

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 [tcfsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:tcfsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org) for the password

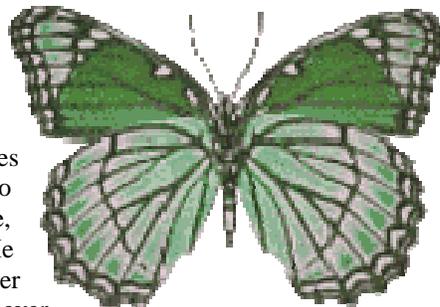
## MY FIRST FIVE YEARS AS AN ONLY CHILD

I've been without my brother for five years. I guess the hard part is over now. Sometimes I think I have aged 30 years in the past five. In a strange way, these past five years have been the best and worst years of my life. I have accomplished the many things of a typical young adult learning to drive, graduating from high school, going to college, and starting a career. Every one of my accomplishments has been clouded by the fact that my brother George is not here to share each milestone, and is not achieving any more milestones for himself. He was cheated of so many things. He will never graduate, get married, have children or travel. He will never grow old, and I will never have a brother to grow old with. I'll never have nieces and nephews. The sibling relationship, usually the longest relationship of one's life, has been cut short for us. In these five years, although I have learned to accept that he is not coming back, the difficult part is dealing with it day by day.

My relationship with George ended just when we started to become friends. The childish fights and other annoyances of having a big brother were changing to real conversations and to having an occasional ally. I am angry about all the things that we have missed and all the things that will never be, and I guess I always will be. Five years heals a lot of wounds, but the hurt will always be there, no matter how many years pass. In these past five years, I have been forced to grow up too fast. I have been forced into a new outlook on life. I have felt lonely and alone. I now realize that I will never be the same person as before. Maybe I am a better person because of what I have been through. Five years ago I never

thought I would survive, but I am still here dealing with it every day. I don't know what the next five years will bring, but at least I have made it this far.

Kristin Steiner  
TCF Staten Island, NY



## GIFTS I WOULD LEAVE FOR YOU

The gifts I would leave beneath  
your tree  
Aren't those you could touch or see.

Not wrapped in Christmas tissue gay  
But a gift of life to live each day.

The gift of love, warm and true  
And health your whole life through.

Smiles, and happiness, and cheer  
To keep us happy through the year.

These are the gifts I'd leave for you.  
Though I know your life is through

Even if my heart has no song  
I feel you here to guide me on.

Jeffrey E. Meredith  
Twin brother of Scott Meredith

## THE EMPTY CHAIR

The table is set, and ready with food to delight the  
eye

Everyone is waiting, with anticipation high.  
But one place is empty, void of a loved one dear  
And as we pause to remember, we wipe away the  
tear.

Your chair may be empty, and  
your presence no longer there  
But your memory is with us, as  
we gather around this fare.  
Someone recalls something you  
once said,  
and the memories start to flow  
And in this magic moment, your  
spirit upon us glows  
Gone but never forgotten, as with us  
you'll always be  
And if I look close, your presence, in the empty  
chair I see.

Sheila Simmons  
Dallas, GA

In Memory of My Son Steven  
March 24, 1970 – October 19, 1999

## SUMMER'S END

Always at summer's end  
There comes a moment when  
Memory brings to me  
Gifts from the past.

I see your faces then,  
Glistening in the sun.  
I hear your laughter then,  
Shared by the wind.

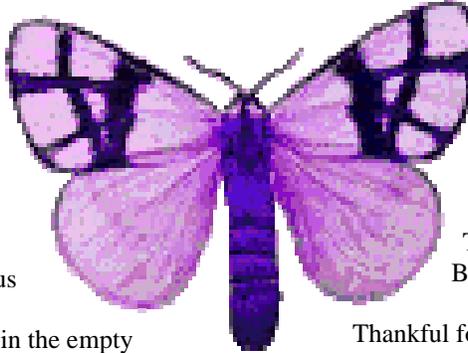
And in that glint of time  
I feel you near again,  
As you were, long ago,  
At summer's end

Sascha Wagner  
TCF Des Moines

## THANKSGIVING PRAYER

I'm thankful this Thanksgiving  
That my grief is not so new.

Last year it was so painful to  
Think of losing you.



Death can't claim my love for  
you  
Tho we are far apart,

Sweet memories will always be  
Engraved upon my heart.

Time can never bring you back  
But it can help me be

Thankful for the years of joy  
You brought our family.

To all the parents with grief so new  
I share your loss and sorrow

I pray you find with faith and time  
The blessings of each tomorrow.

Charlotte Irick  
TCF Idaho Falls, ID

*"Grief is like a long valley, a winding valley  
where any bend may reveal a totally new  
landscape." —C.S. Lewis*

### 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

Ann Cole, Outreach

Betty Jean James, Outreach & Hospitality

Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

Betty Jean & Johnny James, Memorial Park

## A HOLIDAY WREATH

*A holiday wreath is a traditional part of the holidays in many homes. It can be a simple arrangement of fresh greens in which four candles are placed. As you light each candle this year you may create a new ritual which will become a lasting tradition for the holiday season. We hope that this memorial will help you include your loved one in the holiday season.*

As we light these four candles in honor of you, we light one for our GRIEF, one for our COURAGE, one for our MEMORIES and one for our LOVE.

This candle represents our GRIEF. The pain of losing you is intense. It reminds us of the depth of our love for you.

This candle represents our COURAGE – to confront our sorrow, to comfort each other, to change our lives.

This light is in your MEMORY – the times we laughed, the times we cried, the times we were angry with each other, the silly things you did, the caring and joy you gave us.

This light is for the light of LOVE.

As we enter this holiday season, day by day we cherish the special place in our hearts that will always be reserved for you. We thank you for the gift your living brought to each of us. We love you.

From Holiday Help: Coping for the Bereaved  
by Sherry Gibson, B.S., R.N. and Sandra Graves, Ph.D.

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## THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northeast Louisiana Chapter

### CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

*Join with us as we honor the  
memories of our children.*

In loving memory of our children who are no longer with us, The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana extends an invitation for you, your family, and friends to join us for our annual Candle Lighting Ceremony.



**When: Sunday, December 9, 2012  
at 6:30 pm**

**Location: Grace Episcopal Church  
1400 North 4<sup>th</sup> St. at the corner of  
Glenmore Ave.**

*We do this . . . that their light may  
always shine!*



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting® is held every year on the second Sunday in December at 7pm for one hour local time in each time zone around the globe – a 24-hour wave of light in memory of all children who have died.

# 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 OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Martha Husmann	10/09/52	Betty & Harry Stone
Lance Thomas	10/13/87	Connie & Danny Thomas
Jeremy Barnhill	10/15/84	Kathi & Terry Barnhill
John Dobbs	10/23/89	Maggy & John Dobbs
Kenneth Wall	10/26/59	Beverly & Charles Wall
Lance E. Ulibarri	10/29/79	Connie & Richard Ulibarri

## OUR CHILDREN'S OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Lance E. Ulibarri	10/02/10	Connie & Richard Ulibarri
Travis Lowery	10/03/94	Joyce & Dale Lowery
John Bruscato	10/05/96	Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Jake Raborn	10/05/06	Staci & Don Raborn
Jon Bowman	10/09/06	Jill Puckett
Corey Washington	10/18/07	Gracie Washington
Wendy Williams	10/19/99	Nell Williams
Stephen Dupuy	10/22/05	Polly & Butch Dupuy
Aimee McIlveene	10/26/01	Rhea & Danny McIlveene

## OUR CHILDREN'S NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Joe Block Barham	11/06/78	Janie & Andy Barham
Dawn Rose	11/13/79	Debbie & Danny Upshaw
Teresa Gentry	11/18/55	Lynn & Jim Walters
David Allen Crawford	11/18/83	Pamela Crawford
Steven Wisdom	11/20/48	Dee Wisdom
Justin Walker	11/22/85	Beverly Walker
Dustin Allbritton	11/22/78	Linda & Ronnie Allbritton
Corey Hayman	11/23/77	Linda & William Hayman
Brandon Dempsey	11/25/76	Belinda Enterkin
Clifton Scarborough	11/30/87	Tina Scarborough

## OUR CHILDREN'S NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Dylan Smith	11/05/05	Joan Taylor
Stephen Smith	11/07/99	Marilyn & French Smith
Jason Farrell	11/08/02	Sandra Garrett
Bo Best	11/09/07	Charlene & Steve Best
Daniel Wilkerson	11/12/09	Dale Wilkerson
Joe Block Barham	11/19/03	Janie & Andy Barham
Sean Hanemann	11/28/06	Susan Tingle

## OUR CHILDREN'S DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Mica Lightsey	12/02/84	Karen & Larry McAdams
Stuart Morse	12/07/79	Tammy & James Morse
Wendy Williams	12/12/57	Nell Williams
Michael Hollier	12/12/66	Lyn Hollier
Brandon McGehee	12/16/77	Teddi & James McGehee
Carl Alexander	12/18/63	Valerie & Billy Matejowsky
Joyce Ann Powell	12/22/85	Cynde Dubois
Brian Perry	12/25/72	Clara & Don Perry
Beth Ann Smith	12/26/86	Judy & Randy Smith
Krista Corrent	12/28/64	Anna Ruth Hill
Cedrick Hotard	12/31/74	Sharon & Steven Hotard
Jake Raborn	12/31/01	Staci & Don Raborn

## OUR CHILDREN'S DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Josh Sumrall	12/02/08	Chasity Sumrall
Mica Lightsey	12/09/06	Karen & Larry McAdams
Justin Walker	12/09/08	Beverly Walker
Kelly Chapman	12/12/03	Judy & Bennie Chapman
McKenzie Hudson	12/20/10	Dayna Hudson
Norman Craig	12/28/02	Pat Craig
Seth Lowery	12/31/05	Joyce & Dale Lowery
Emilie Posey	12/31/00	Kathy & Mark Posey

### **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  
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Return Service Requested