



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

Oct / Nov / Dec 2017

## YOU WILL SURVIVE THE HOLIDAYS

You may hurt, but you will survive. The holidays may be the worst of your grief time. Eventually, you will heal, and your memories will persist without so much pain. Meanwhile, it's OK not to have a good time. There may be no way you can make this holiday fun. Allow that you may not enjoy parties, reunions and events of the season. If you are hurting and unable or unwilling to have your attention on any-thing else, let yourself be.

It is OK to have a good time, even though you have experienced a loss. You do not have to deny pleasure to yourself or your family. While grieving, we often feel guilty about having fun, as if we should be miserable all 24 hours a day. That is not necessary. Often we think it is how much we grieve that signifies how much we care about the one who died. Not true! Our love is not measured by the extent of our grief. We can love forever without having grief as our testimonial to that love. Remember, few of us would want others to forever be bereft because we were gone.

Perhaps the best testimonial we can give our missing loved ones is how we live our lives. Don't deny yourself life because someone has died. If you can do so, enjoy the holidays and every day, for death teaches us more than anything that every day of life is precious and worth living to the fullest. The best gift we can give ourselves and others for the holidays and every day is to live our loves wholeheartedly.

Judy Tatelbaum  
TCF Carmel Valley, CA

*"When the world says, 'Give up,' hope whispers, 'Try it one more time.'"*  
—Unknown



## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

It is not easy returning to the world of normalcy when your world is so upside down. It is not easy to stop being a mother or father to your child that has died. The thought for the day is a word — **patience** — patience with yourself who suddenly and powerlessly has been thrown into this horrid nightmare; patience with your spouse who always seems to be having an up day when you are having a down day; patience with relatives and friends who wish to help but seem to hurt with hollow advice and logical words; and patience with time, for it takes time to adjust, and time can move so slowly. **PATIENCE!**

Rose Moen  
TCF Carmel-Indianapolis, IN

*"With the passing of years, I have learned that if I can hang on for just a little longer, these emotions—strong as they are—will pass and I can live again with the longing hidden deep inside my breast."*

-Shirley Muller

### Monthly Meetings

Thursday, October 5

Thursday, November 2

**Due to the Candle Lighting Ceremony to be held Sunday, December 10, 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 [tcsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:tcsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org) for the password

## REST, MY BROTHER

Rest, my brother  
You now have peace.  
The wars within you  
All have ceased.  
And the rising sun  
Each day,  
Upon the heaven  
You will play.  
Until that day  
We meet again,  
Know I love you,  
My brother,  
My friend.

Sandra Evens  
TCF Kearsarge, NH



I thought my brother isn't dead, it's just a bad dream. Maybe I'll wake up and everything would be normal. Of course, I was sad. I wanted my brother to just wake up and then we'd do everything that we used to do. Another big feeling for me was anger. I was angry at God. I thought "Why'd he take my brother?"

I was angry at myself. I thought "If only I didn't tell my brother to go upstairs". When I knew my brother was dead, I took a pillow and started punching it. There were a lot of feelings that I felt, but there is one thing that will never change. I love my brother and I will never stop loving him. I'll always remember you Daren!

Corey Bashor  
TCF Omaha, NE  
In memory of Daren 1988-1992

## 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

## YOU ARE SO STRONG

Empty words that don't touch the reality that my life has become,  
Walking through fog,  
Incredible pain,  
Searching for the beloved face I crave to see,  
The voice that I strain to hear over the noises,  
Of people who have no idea,  
Of what the world has lost.

Charisse Smith  
TCF Tyler, TX

## FEELINGS

This is dedicated to all the siblings that have lost a brother or sister.

When I lost my brother, I had a lot of feelings. One was shock. I just couldn't believe that my brother was dead. I had him for so long, then in just one week he was gone. Another feeling was denial.

***"In the art of losing we can choose who we will be. We break, but we break open so that we can include more of life, more of love. We get bigger in order to carry with us what we choose to continue loving."***

**—Deborah Morris Coryell**

## THANKSGIVING ARTICLE

An excerpt—

A very difficult area of functioning is coming to grips with the knowledge that there is absolutely no way of getting around holidays despite your best efforts to avoid them. And they are horrendous times for many years. Their pain cannot be minimized. But they still must be faced.



minds as unsurvivable had become just another turning point.

There will be many such turning points as you work your way forward. You have already survived what you were certain you could not live through—the death of your child. Turning points, plateaus, are merely steps in coping and nothing more. As you go through each holiday, each season, each happy-sad occasion, you will gain strength from having passed beyond yet another painful event.

One family, trying to avoid Thanksgiving— which was the dead child’s birthday as well— decided that family gatherings were no longer for them. They would travel or simply ignore the festivities.

From *The Bereaved Parent* by Harriet Schiff

One day the mother came upon her ten-year-old daughter crying and asked what was wrong. “She was sobbing,” reported the mother. “All the children in school had told of their plans and made table decorations for the holiday and Lynn felt completely removed from her classmates. She cried that she was not only deprived of her brother who was dead, but she couldn’t even have Thanksgiving dinner and a turkey!

## THE MENTION OF HER NAME

The mention of my child’s name may bring tears to my eyes,  
But it never fails to bring music to my ears.

“I listened to her and held her in my arms and cried. What she was saying made sense. After all, we still had three living children. They also mattered. That night I talked to my husband and we decided that, no matter how bleak and empty it would be, we would have a traditional Thanksgiving dinner.”

If you are really my friend,  
Let me hear the beautiful music of her name.

It soothes my broken heart and sings to my soul.

The mother said the family sat around the table, very quietly at first. The father said grace and thanked the Lord for a bountiful meal. When he was through, their tenyear- old said she had something to add, “I want to thank Mommy and Daddy for making this very special dinner for our family. And most of all I want to thank you God for having let us have my brother, Eric, for six years.”

Nancy Williams  
TCF Marlboro, NJ

*I believe that imagination is stronger than knowledge — myth is more potent than history — dreams are more powerful than facts — hope always triumphs over experience — laughter is the cure for grief — love is stronger than death.*

— *Robert Fulghum*

The mother, who will never forget what her daughter said, told me there was not a dry eye at the table for a few minutes. But gradually, as the meal progressed, they made an effort to discuss why the holiday was celebrated. From there, the parents told of amusing experiences at Thanksgiving dinners in their younger years. The mother said she planned to tell the stories to lighten the atmosphere just as carefully as she planned the menu. By the time the meal was over, the parents discovered what had been built up in their

### Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith  
Luann & James Butler

### Steering Committee

Henry Cole, Facilitator  
Johnny James, Treasurer  
Dianne & Frank Bruscatto, Library  
Maggy & John Dobbs, Outreach  
Ann Cole, Outreach  
Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

## THE ANGEL TREE

Last December I went into a store and saw beautiful china angels to be placed on Christmas trees. I thought for a minute whether I should buy a few and put them on Michael's tree at the cemetery. Michael was 5 when he died from complications associated with open heart surgery. Unfortunately, I quickly realized that they would probably be stolen and decided against buying them. Later that same afternoon and while at my office, I looked out the window through the winter air and thought silently of our precious little boy and those china angels. I then began to write:

“As Christmas approaches, many of us forget that the true meaning of this holiday is to give. We know that Michael would have given his last toy to a child without one. In remembrance of our child; those of you who come to visit Michael may take an angel from his tree and hang it in your home to keep Michael's spirit alive.”

I left my office that evening and went immediately back to the store and bought every single china angel they had. Last year, we went through 200 angels. We could not keep them on the tree long enough. We received notes and gifts at the cemetery from strangers who said they could not take something without leaving something in return. And how special our child must have been. Even six months later a stranger approached me at the cemetery and asked if I would be putting the angels up again this year because every time she got to the tree they were gone.

The joy we received in giving the angels was insurmountable. We know that there is a part of our son in so many homes and every time these people look at their angels, they will think of Michael.

Lori and Mike Devanney  
TCF East Haddam, Connecticut

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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 10, 2017  
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!*

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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

<i>Child</i>	
Martha Mikel	10/05/53
Jennifer Hale	10/05/84
Trent Weaver	10/11/12
Lance Thomas	10/13/87
Jeremy Barnhill	10/15/84
Deborah Smith	10/22/58
John Dobbs	10/23/89
Kenneth Wall	10/26/59
Lance Ulibarri	10/29/79
Stephen Dupuy	10/30/68
Raymond Scott	10/30/80

### *Parent(s)*

Ruth Mikel
Sheila Hale
Donna VanVeckhoven
Connie & Danny Thomas
Kathi & Terry Barnhill
Mary & Buddy Smith
Maggy & John Dobbs
Beverly & Charles Wall
Connie & Richard Ulibarri
Polly & Butch Dupuy, Jr.
Pam Lavender

## OUR CHILDREN'S OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

<i>Child</i>	
Shannon Scharf	10/01/98
Lance Ulibarri	10/02/10
John Bruscato	10/05/96
Emerson Johnson	10/05/14
Jenna Johnson	10/05/14
Michael Woods	10/06/12
Jon Bowman	10/09/06
Cole Brooks Hamilton	10/08/14
Wendi Janway-Jones	10/09/09
Wendy Williams	10/15/99
Hope Bruscato	10/16/98
Brady Hairston	10/16/11
Corey Washington	10/18/07
Wendy Williams	10/19/99
Stephen Dupuy	10/22/05
Fred Page	10/24/03
Aimee McIlveene	10/26/01

### *Parent(s)*

Robert S. Green
Connie & Richard Ulibarri
Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Sandy Johnson
Sandy Johnson
China Woods
Jill Puckett
Laurie & Britt Hamilton
Rosalyn & Tom Janway
Nell Williams
Gene Bruscato
Cindy & Lee Hairston
Gracie Washington
Nell Williams
Polly & Butch Dupuy
Gloria Royce
Rhea & Danny McIlveene

## OUR CHILDREN'S NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<i>Child</i>	
Joe Block Barham	11/06/78
Ben Brubaker	11/09/75
David Moore	11/12/58
Brady Hairston	11/16/96
Teresa Gentry	11/18/55
Amanda Moule	11/18/77
Steven Wisdom	11/20/48
Tonya Bell	11/21/97
Justin Walker	11/22/85
Dustin Allbritton	11/22/78
Corey Hayman	11/23/77
Autumn Henderson	11/27/82

### *Parent(s)*

Janie & Andy Barham
Jena & Ron Brubaker
Barbara Moore
Cindy & Lee Hairston
Lynn Walters
Fae & Nolan Moule'
Dee Wisdom
Ann Smith
Beverly Walker
Linda & Ronnie Allbritton
Linda & William Hayman
Janet & Daniel Wyatt

## OUR CHILDREN'S NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<i>Child</i>	
Stephen Smith	11/07/99
Jason Farrell	11/09/02
Bo Best	11/09/07
Tytianna Jenkins	11/16/11
Joe Block Barham	11/19/03
Amanda Moule'	11/20/77
Kerry Alex	11/22/14
Cody Allen	11/24/14
Matt Mouser	11/25/79

### *Parent(s)*

Marilyn & French Smith
Sandra Garrett
Charlene & Steve Best
Beverly Jenkins
Janie & Andy Barham
Fae & Nolan Moule'
Joseph Alex
Regina Kenney
Kathryn Hutchinson

## OUR CHILDREN'S DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<i>Child</i>	
Mica Lightsey	12/02/84
Terry Watson	12/09/70
Michael Hollier	12/12/66
Wendy Williams	12/12/53
Janey Knight	12/16/59
Brandon McGehee	12/16/77
Carl Alexander	12/18/63
Brittany Braxton	12/21/85
Brian Perry	12/25/72
Kerry Alex	12/28/61
Krista Corrent	12/28/64
Cedrick Hotard	12/31/74

### *Parent(s)*

Karen McAdams
Henrietta/Paul Watson
Lyn Hollier
Nell Williams
Sandy Casteel
Teddi & James McGehee
Valerie & Billy Matejowsky
Ursula Braxton
Clara & Don Perry
Joseph Alex
Anna Ruth Hill
Sharon & Steven Hotard

## OUR CHILDREN'S DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<i>Child</i>	
Rodney Hubbard	12/09/01
Mica Lightsey	12/09/06
Justin Walker	12/09/08
Kelly Chapman	12/12/03
Autumn Henderson	12/19/10
McKenzie Hudson	12/20/10
Jennifer Hale	12/23/14
Robby Jenkins	12/24/10
Norman Craig	12/28/02
Ben Brubaker	12/30/13

### *Parent(s)*

Claudine Vega
Karen McAdams
Beverly Walker
Judy & Bennie Chapman
Janet & Daniel Wyatt
Dayne Hudson
Sheila Hale
Beverly Jenkins
Pat Craig
Jena & Ron Brubaker

## 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**  
Northeast Louisiana Chapter  
P.O. Box 6114  
Monroe, Louisiana 71211

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