



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Jan / Feb / Mar 2022

NEW YEAR

The new year comes when all the world is ready
for changes, resolutions - great beginnings.

For us, to whom that stroke of midnight means
a missing child remembered,
for us the new years comes
more like another darkness.

But let us not forget that this may be
the year
when love and hope and courage
find each other somewhere in the
darkness
to lift their voice and speak:
let there be light.

Sascha Wagner
TCF Aurora, Colorado

THE GIFT OF SOMEONE WHO LISTENS

Those of us who have traveled a while
Along this path called grief
Need to stop and remember that mile,
That first mile of no relief.

It wasn't the person with answers
Who told us of ways to deal.
It wasn't the one who talked and talked
That helped us start to heal.

Think of the friends who quietly sat
And held our hands in theirs.
The ones who let us talk and talk
And hugged away our tears.

We need to always remember
That more than the words we speak,

It's the gift of someone who listens
That most of us desperately seek.

Nancy Myerbolts
TCF Waterville, Toledo, OH



FAITH

It's raining now, it's dark and cold and wet;
But I know soon the sun will shine again.

I hurt once so bad inside I didn't want to live
anymore;
I thought the sun would never shine again.

It's shining once again in my life now;
I feel your goodness and warmth radiate.

I wonder sometimes why I was so helpless;
And I didn't believe?

It's all made me now who I am, they say;
Maybe so that others might believe in all their
darkness the sun will never go away.

In memory of Ben
Darrell Lee
TCF Phoenix, AZ

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, January 6

Thursday, February 3

Thursday, March 3

6:30 PM
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
1901 Lexington Ave.
Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

THE AFTER LOSS CREDO

I need to talk about my loss
I may often need to tell you what happened-
or to ask WHY it happened.
Each time I discuss my loss, I am helping myself
Face the reality of the death of my loved one.

I need to know that you care about me.
I need to feel your
touch, your hugs
I need you just to be
with me.
(and I need to be with
you.)
I need to know you believe
in me and in my
ability to get through my grief in
my own way
and in my own time.

Please don't judge me now
or think that I am behaving strangely.
Remember I am grieving.
I may be in shock.
I may feel afraid, I may feel deep rage.

Don't worry if you think I am getting better
And then suddenly I seem to slip backward.
Grief makes me behave this way at times.
And please don't tell me you know how I feel
or that it's time for me to get on with my life.
What I need now is time to grieve and to recover.

Most of all, thank you for being my friend.
Thank you for your patience.
Thank you for your caring.
Thank you for helping, for understanding.
Thank you for praying for me.
And remember, in the days or years ahead,
After your loss, when you need me as
I have needed you, I will understand!
And then I will come and be with you.

Author
Barbara Hills LesStrang

OUT OF ASHES

When my child died,
ashes are all that remained.

The ashes that symbolize
my unbelievable pain.

The ashes of all my future hopes and dreams
What else could be left, nothing it seems.

But even in ashes
there's one ember that
still beams
The memory of my
child's smile and how it
gleamed.

Those embers like his laughter
have such a glow
Soon only the love, not the hurt will
make the flame grow higher.

And the warmth of his love
will take me out of the mire.

I guess the old Fable of the Phoenix is true
For out of ashes you can rise too.

From these burnt ashes the warmth of his love still
glows
And I keep him alive as from me to you his love
flows.

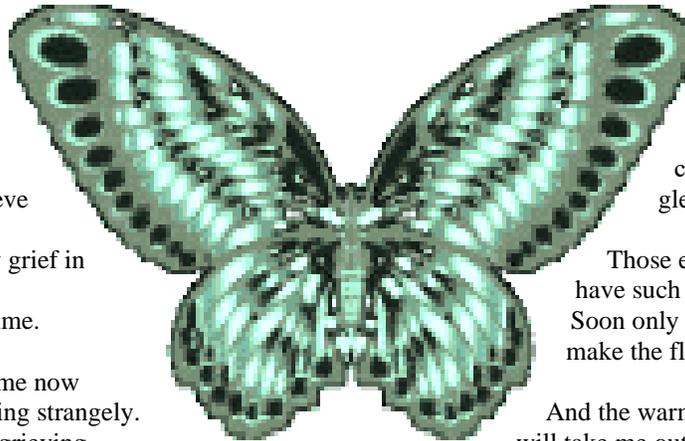
*Yet out of ashes love will survive
And keep both me and my child alive.*

Jackie Rosen
TCF Miami, FL

WHEN....

when we finally realize that you
are always going to be smiling
and dancing in our hearts,
then, our pain shall turn to joy.

Bob Walters
TCF South Lake Tahoe, CA



ONE SUNDAY

ONE Sunday The sun kissed the earth and a new day
was borne

ONE Sunday The Birds Sang and then our earth
shook

ONE Sunday God's Hand Guided our lives and
changes occurred

ONE Sunday our daughter's spirit flew as a bird to
our Father

ONE Sunday the pain came and life turned to despair
THAT Sunday our hearts were broken, and tears
came

ONE Sunday the pain eased in time, with our Father
always near

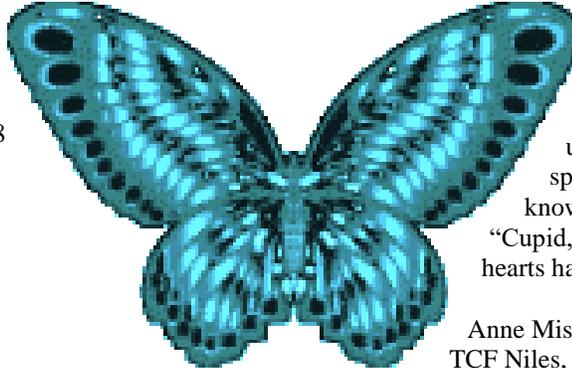
ONE Sunday the grief became bearable and then
turned to love

ONE Sunday Life though different; began as new
ONE Sunday a new day was born

ONE SUNDAY THE BIRDS SANG

Dedicated to the memory of our
Beloved Daughter
Brandi Nicole Spradlin
January 5th 1978 – March 22nd 1998

Rita & Terry Colegate
TCF Northeast Louisiana



with an old fashioned handmade Valentine. Think of the people around you that have helped you make it to the place you are today, and let them know they've helped you. It is easier to write and mail kind words than it is to say them face to face. If that just isn't your style, spend some time at the card shop; search out the sentiment that best reveals your inner feelings about your spouse, your children, your relatives or your friends.

We spend so much time indoors these cold winter days, it's easy to allow ourselves to crawl into an inner shell. Make an effort to come out of yourself. Go to the next TCF meeting with something to share: a card you've received or copy the verse of a card you chose to send to a loved one. Or try to write and decorate a card to your missing child. Prepare for Valentine's Day by binding the lovely cards of past years from your special child. It may take courage to re-read them, and it may bring tears to your eyes, but

maybe it will bring a little joy to your soul to remember how innocently and sincerely they loved you. Some of us have no card from our special children, but we know the special love of "Cupid, the Angel's Arrow". Our hearts have been pierced too.

Anne Misel
TCF Niles, OH

AFTER THE HOLIDAYS

The holidays are hard on all of us, but the let-down after seems to halt our grief work. As bad as the holidays are, they are filled with people, and noise, some laughter and tears. In general you have to roll with the activity of the large family.

It's quiet now. It would be a good time to "reach out and touch someone". Maybe with a call or maybe

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

WISHES FOR BEREAVED PARENTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

To the newly bereaved, we wish you patience, patience with yourselves in the painful weeks, months, even years ahead.

To the bereaved siblings, we wish you and your parents a new understanding of each other's needs and the beginnings of good communication.

To those of you who are single parents, we wish you the inner resources we know you will need to cope, often alone, with your loss.

To those of you who are plagued with guilt, we wish you the reassurance that you did the very best you could under the circumstances and that your child knew that.

To those of you who have suffered multiple losses, those of you who have experienced the death of more than one child – we wish you the endurance you will need to fight your way back to a meaningful life once again.

To those of you who are deeply depressed, we wish you the first steps out of the "valley of the shadow."

To those experiencing marital difficulties after the death of your child, we wish you a special willingness and ability to communicate with each other.

To all fathers, we wish you the ability to express your grief, to move beyond society's conditioning, to cry.

To those with few or no memories of your child, perhaps because you suffered through a stillbirth, a miscarriage, or infant death, we wish you the sure knowledge that your child is a person and that your grief is real.

To those of you who have experienced the death of an only child or all of your children, we offer you our eternal gratitude for serving as such as inspiration to the rest of us.

To those of you unable to cry, we wish you healing tears.

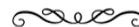
To those of you who are tired, exhausted from grieving, we wish you the strength to face just one more hour, just one more day.

To all others with special needs that we have not mentioned, we wish you the understanding you need and the reassurance that you are loved.

Joe Rousseau, Past President
TCF National USA



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 JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|-------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Eddie Foreman | 01/03/60 | Jimmie Sue Reeves |
| Lisa Pearson | 01/03/67 | Layne Pearson |
| Brandi Spradlin | 01/05/78 | Rita & Terry Colegate |
| David Dayton | 01/06/81 | Pat Dayton |
| Paul Johnston | 01/06/06 | Gloria & Paul Johnston |
| Tricia Smith | 01/08/74 | Brenda & Randy Smith |
| Stephen Smith | 01/08/76 | Marilyn & French Smith |
| Cody Allen | 01/12/92 | Regina Kenney |
| Hunter Potts | 01/14/05 | Terri Miller |
| Mario Lambert | 01/15/10 | Helma Lambert |
| Amanda Maxwell | 01/17/86 | Angie Maxwell |
| Mickey Loffin | 01/18/71 | Katye Loffin |
| Hope Johnson | 01/18/94 | Fran Johnson |
| Cole Crawford | 01/22/92 | Sylvia & Greg Crawford |
| Kimball James | 01/24/71 | Betty Jean & Johnny James |
| Stephen Sivils | 01/25/77 | Veda Sivils |
| Norman Craig | 01/28/64 | Pat Craig |
| Allen Byrnside | 01/29/19 | Terri Musgrove-granmother |
| Maaliyah Fletcher | 01/30/02 | Jeanette Fletcher |
| Matthew Elliott | 01/31/99 | Guina Elliott |

OUR CHILDREN'S JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|-------------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| David Dayton | 01/02/02 | Pat Dayton |
| Kelly O'Neal | 01/03/09 | Nancy Oliver |
| David Moore | 01/06/84 | Barbara Moore |
| Scottie McLarrin | 01/09/99 | Mary McLarrin |
| Jackson Kennedy | 01/11/02 | Jonann Layton |
| Trent Weaver | 01/11/13 | Donna VanVeckhoven |
| Benjamin Box | 01/13/06 | Erlene & Jack Box |
| Chris Smith | 01/14/14 | Roxanne Smith |
| Janey Kight | 01/20/83 | Sandra Casteel |
| Richard Bryan | 01/25/02 | Linda & James Bryan |
| Fred Page | 01/26/98 | Charlotte Colquette |
| Carl Alexander | 01/26/04 | Valerie & Billy Matejowski |
| Jeremiah Bynum | 01/26/17 | Darnita Williams |
| Dominque Bruscato | 01/26/88 | Gene Bruscato |
| Chris Travis | 01/26/13 | Gloria & Kenneth Travis |
| Elizabeth Vaughan | 01/28/17 | Marilyn Stern |
| Caroline Cole | 01/30/88 | Ann & Henry Cole |
| Robin Munholland | 01/30/18 | Terry Williams |
| Lauren Lang | 01/31/16 | Lisa Lang |
| Chris Springfield | 01/31/77 | Deborah & Waler Springfield |

OUR CHILDREN'S FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Michael Moreau | 02/03/69 | Bonnie & Ron Nay |
| Cecilia Mouser | 02/04/59 | Kathryn Hutchinson |
| Andy Smith | 02/04/87 | Anita Wynn |
| Matt Mouser | 02/05/53 | Kathryn Hutchinson |
| Corey Washington | 02/14/69 | Gracie Washington |
| Dean Keirse | 02/14/76 | Shirley Porter |
| Courtney Cole | 02/25/65 | Ann & Henry Cole |

OUR CHILDREN'S FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|-----------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Deborah Smith | 02/01/11 | Mary & Buddy Smith |
| Ryan Clark | 02/04/04 | Linda Clark |
| Walker Dayton | 02/04/09 | Vickie & Ed Dayton |
| Cecilia Mouser | 02/04/59 | Kathryn Hutchinson |
| Tricia Smith | 02/05/06 | Brenda & Randy Smith |
| Thomas Stephens | 02/05/11 | Susan & Gray Stephens |
| Greg Dennis | 02/06/05 | Camille Dennis |
| Jace Rowan | 02/08/21 | Jill Rowan |
| Eddie Foreman | 02/15/99 | Jimmie Sue Reeves |
| Layton Patton | 02/17/14 | Terri Miller |
| Hunter Patton | 02/17/14 | Terri Miller |
| Tracy Patton | 02/18/18 | Nina Shlosman |
| Alyssa Neitz | 02/23/18 | Jennifer & Joey Neitz |
| Jayden Ward | 02/23/14 | Alicia Hill |
| Cedrick Hotard | 02/28/07 | Sharon & Stephen Hotard |
| Adam McKenzie | 02/28/03 | Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie |

OUR CHILDREN'S MARCH BIRTHDAYS

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|-------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Allison Butler | 03/03/88 | LuAnn & James Butler |
| Kaye Shields | 03/04/62 | Lila & R.L. Hargrove |
| Zoe Simpson | 03/10/09 | Katie Masters |
| Tyrone Edwards | 03/10/81 | Sheila Edwards |
| Greg Gilstrap | 03/12/70 | Jean Gilstrap |
| Hope Bruscato | 03/24/72 | Gene Bruscato |
| Ryan Clark | 03/24/74 | Linda Clark |
| Ben Caldwell | 03/26/83 | Emily & Douglas Caldwell |
| Jon Bowman | 03/27/85 | Jill Puckett |
| Jayson C. Crawley | 03/27/71 | Ruby Crawley |
| Michael Johns | 03/28/75 | Nell Book |
| Ryan Simon | 03/31/81 | Sandra & Rene' Simon |
| Tracy Patton | 03/31/75 | Nina Shlosman |

OUR CHILDREN'S MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

| <u>Child</u> | | <u>Parent(s)</u> |
|---------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Mickey Chambers | 03/04/11 | Merrell & Mike Chambers |
| Jeremy Barnhill | 03/08/02 | Kathi & Terry Barnhill |
| Donald Acree | 03/10/10 | Fran Acree |
| Brian Gregory | 03/10/98 | Frances & Jim Gregory |
| CW2 Bryan Henderson | 03/11/13 | Kim Bryan Henderson |
| Lisa Pearson | 03/13.84 | Layne Pearson |
| Duston Albritton | 03/14/98 | Linda & Ronnie Albritton |
| Will Bryan | 03/15/19 | Beverly & David Bryan |
| Raymond Scott | 03/16/12 | Pam Lavender |
| Laureen Romero | 03/17/21 | Lenette & Larry Romero |
| Maaliyah Fletcher | 03/20/06 | Jeanette Fletcher |
| Brandi Spradlin | 03/22/98 | Rita & Terry Colegate |
| Daran Reeves | 03/26/21 | Linda & Terry Reeves |
| Danny Washington | 03/26/12 | Dorothy Washington |
| Michele Perry | 03/29/72 | Clara & Don Perry |
| Ryan Simon | 03/29/13 | Sandra & Rene' Simon |
| Tyrone Edwards | 03/30/02 | Sheila Edwards |
| Kimball James | 03/31/01 | Betty Jean & Johnny James |

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