



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Jul / Aug / Sep 2022

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

LITTLE BY LITTLE

I once thought that my only link
to you was my grief.
I couldn't let go.
I knew if I did
I would lose us both.

But one day when
I couldn't take the pain anymore,
I decided to try.
So, slowly and carefully
I let go of my deathline to you,
and I was surprised to find myself
being held by God.

Little by little, step by step,
I learned that I didn't need
to hang on to the death
to remember the life.
What a joyous discovery!

Kittie Brown McGowin
TCF Montgomery, AL

THE MAGIC LIGHT OF DAY

Often, when I think of you
It's in the morning light.
Or other times, I find that
It is in the soft twilight.

Somehow in those early hours
Or in the dusk of day-
I feel our connection soundly,
From your place so far away.

There's something very special
About soft and dim sunlight
That lets me know you're by my side
And everything's alright.

Not many would believe it's true,
For heaven is far way.
But all I know is – there you are,
With me everyday.

You walk with me and comfort me,
And somehow let me know.
You'll guide the way along my life
And meet me when I go.

Kathie Winkler
Middleburg Heights, Ohio



Monthly Meetings

Thursday, July 7

Thursday, August 4

Thursday, September 8

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

SCHOOL DAYS

Again a new school year is upon us, with it, it brings on a new feeling of our loss. Even though Steven was long out of school, it still brings on the memories. So if you are dreading the sight of the yellow buses, know I am thinking of you.

The summer is mellowing as the days grow shorter
The green on the trees seem to droop, and look a little duller.

The lazy days of summer take on a busy hustle
As families shop for school, each gets a new book satchel.

Soon the quiet streets will be filled as children gather waiting
The yellow bus to pick them up. OH! the anticipating.

Another teacher's face they greet upon their arrival
But the same old lessons to be learned, to them seems so trivial.

New friends to make, and old ones too
Make their days fly past to soon.

But back at home a mother weeps for the child that this year misses
No new clothes to buy, no more good-bye hugs and kisses.

For her this joyful time just brings on more heartache
Another school year starts, another milestone the child cannot make.

So she dries her eyes and tries to go on for the children that remain
But each new start, breaks her heart, it's hard to see the gain.

So if the yellow school bus brings on tears for you this year
Don't forget your Compassionate Friends, we are always standing near.

Sheila Simmons
TCF Atlanta

IF ONLY, ONE MORE TIME...

To hear your voice loud and clear,
To see your image as if you're here,
To feel your warmth like you are near,

If only, one more time...
To hear you call, "Mom, I'm home"
To keep me company when I'm alone,
To watch you run and grab the phone,

If only one more time...
To watch you sit quietly and read,
To buy you things you say you need,
To see you do a thoughtful deed,

If only, one more time...
To find a note written by you,
To walk upstairs and trip over your shoe,
To comfort you when you're feeling blue,

If only, one more time...
To feel your arms in a soft embrace,
To see the smile upon your face,
To understand when you needed "space"

If only, one more time...
If only, one more time...

Vicki Richey
TCF Orange County Chapter, CA

MEMORIES

Within each tear that falls is a mirror...
That reflects a special moment in our lives.
Tears trickle warmly down and land in a puddle in my heart.

Tammy Tobac
TCF Pittsburgh, PA



A FATHER'S PRAYER

I am a man, God, and I have been taught that I should be strong and show no weakness. My wife needs me to be strong; I cannot and I must not be weak and lean on her.

It is only with you that I can be honest, Lord, and even with you I am ashamed to admit it, but I want to cry. I can feel the tears securely dammed up behind eyes that want to burst. There is a voice in me that shouts, **BE STRONG! BE A MAN! SHOW NO WEAKNESS! SHED NO TEARS!** But there is another voice inside that speaks softly and somehow I feel it is your voice, Father.

Is it you who tells me that I am also a feeling human being who can cry if I need to? Is it your voice that tells me that maybe my wife needs the tenderness of my tears more than she needs the strength of my muscles?

You are right, Lord, as always. My wife needs to see my grief, she needs to feel the dampness of my tears and know the aching in my heart. Then, just as we became one to create this life, we become one in our grief which mourns this death. I think I understand now, Lord, it is in sharing the awful pain of my grief that I become an even stronger man. It is in sharing my tears that I share my true strength.

O God, help me communicate my deepest and most sensitive feeling to my wife so we may become whole together.

Norman Hagley
TCF Omaha, NE

I can complain because rose bushes have thorns or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.

Author Unknown

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 whys and if onlys 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



Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith
Luann & James Butler

Steering Committee

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

FREEDOM TO LIVE TAKES TIME

Summer vacation is traditionally a time for children. Families get together and children are almost always around. This can be difficult for bereaved parents. Seeing children at play can bring back memories of their child, now gone. It may also cause some to regret all those “kid things” our children will never experience.

The Fourth of July can be particularly difficult. Fire crackers, cotton candy, hot dogs and parades, picnics and family reunions are all a part of our Independence Day celebrations. Be we don't feel like celebrating because we are not free. We are prisoners of our grief, our memories and our lost dreams for our children.

It is important to remember that you do not have to join in these celebrations. Should you choose to join in, you do not have to be the life of the party. It takes time for your heart to heal; it will get easier. In time you will be free, free from your pain, free to enjoy life again. Until then, be gentle to yourself, and give yourself time to heal.

Lisa Sculley
TCF Orange Park, Florida

THE END OF SUMMER

On the beach, cool breezes blow across the water, but the sun's rays feel warm upon my face. The ocean laps gently at the shore. I see one golden haired lad with shovel and pail filling the moat around his carefully constructed sandcastle.

I remember another golden haired boy of years long past, wearing his bright red swimsuit, busy at his task and oblivious to all around him. Carefully, patiently, he fills and empties his pail again and again, molding and shaping the sand until he has it just right, until his perfect castle is completed. He runs to me, eyes aglow with pride, his dimpled smile stretched from ear to ear. He dances around me.

“Mommy, come see! It's finished! It's perfect!” We stand and admire it together. One bucket of sand turned upside down, a tiny trench encircling it. To us, it's a perfect sandcastle.

But then it happens. A wave, much bigger than the rest, washes away his labor of love. His green eyes fill, his lip quivers momentarily and then he squares his shoulders and announces, “Oh, well, I'll begin again tomorrow.”

And now, recalling that other sunny summer day, my own eyes fill with tears, my own lip quivers, until I remember that I, too, can square my shoulders and begin again tomorrow.

Betty Stevens
TCF Baltimore, MD



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>
Chris Springfield	07/03/75	Deborah & Walter Springfield
Don Shlosman	07/04/78	Margie Godwin
Joe David Williams	07/04/74	Dolph Williams
Michael Stephens	07/06/51	Maggie & John Stephens
Tonya Hurst	07/06/79	Pam Wimbish
Stacey Morrison		Sandy Kendrick
Amiee McIlveene	07/07/78	Rhea & Danny McIlveene
Greg Dennis	07/08/60	Camille Dennis
Jill Whitaker	07/21/02	Cynthia Machen
Fred Page	07/22/62	Gloria Roye
Randy Foote	07/25/75	Linda Foote
Misty Duchmasclo	07/29/68	Kathy Morrison
Scottie McLarrin	07/30/87	Mary McLarrin
Matthew Nolan	07/30/91	Karen Nolan

OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Heather Greer	08/01/83	Kim & Heath Greer
Robin Munholland	08/02/81	Terry Williams
Michelle Putman	08/03/83	Gaye Laing
Kim Smith	08/02/75	Jackie Bailey
Adam McKenzie	08/04/68	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Aaron McKenzie	08/04/68	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
Raeleigh Hunter	08/07/90	Donna Evans
Lisa Giovingo	08/07/59	Frances Webb
Josh Griggs	08/11/82	Joely & George Griggs
Chad Byrd	08/13/79	Janice & Randy Byrd
Shontavious Foster	08/13/87	Sarah Foster
Robert Harrison	08/15/59	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Harrison
John Bruscato	08/19/74	Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Michele Perry	08/25/66	Don & Clara Perry
Dominique Bruscato	08/28/79	Gene Bruscato
Tytianna Jenkins	08/28/98	Beverly Jenkins
Benjamin Box	08/30/63	Erlene & Jack Box

OUR CHILDREN'S JULY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Leigh Ann Carlton	07/01/01	Gail Dupuy
Allen Byrnside	07/02/19	Terri Musgrove-grandmother
Andrew Rinicker	07/03/04	Dale Rinicker
Misty Duchmasclo	07/0494	Kathy Morrison
Hunter Carr	07/08/09	Juanita Carr
Andy Smith	07/12/16	Anita Wynn
Derrick Sadberry	07/15/06	Belinda Sadberry
Steven Wisdom	07/15/06	Dee Wisdom
Mike Hayes	07/19/97	Margaret & George Hayes
Michael Hollier	07/21/09	Lyn Hollier
Allison Butler	07/30/11	LuAnn & James Butler

OUR CHILDREN'S AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Don Shlosman	08/01/00	Margie Godwin
Chad Byrd	08/01/05	Janice & Randy Byrd
Hope Johnson	08/02/05	Fran Johnson
Matthew Elliott	08/04/16	Guina Elliott
Savannah Thornton	08/07/16	Rhonda & Ronald Thornton
Joel Rundell	08/09/90	Sharon & Jim Rundell
Brittany Braxton	08/11/09	Ursula Braxton
Heather Greer	08/13/03	Kim & Heath Greer
Gavin Simmons	08/13/21	Jennifer & John Shamblyn
Paul Hayes	08/14/03	Patty & Paul Hayes
Scott Thompson	08/16/03	Tammy Thompson
Raymond Clary	09/17/21	Babs & Ray Clary
Stephen Sivils	08/19/03	Veda Sivils
Jayson C. Crawley	08/20/90	Ruby Crawley
Jeffrey Carter	08/22/10	Dianne & Tim Carter
Jason Hutts	08/22/99	Carol & Greg Hutts
Brian Perry	08/22/02	Clara & Don Perry
Greg Gilstrap	08/24/07	Jean Gilstrap
Debbie Pope	08/24/08	Jean Hamilton
Dean Keirse	08/28/11	Shirley Porter
Vince Pardue	08/29/21	Ann & Van Pardue
Brandon McGehee	08/30/02	Teddi & James McGehee
Robert Harrison	08/31/06	Dr. & Mrs. Robert Harrison

Our Children Always Loved and Remembered

OUR CHILDREN'S SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Mario Lambert	09/04/77	Helma Lambert
Fred Page	09/08/58	Charlotte Colquette
Pamela Ford	09/08/74	Leona Upton
Holly M. Robertson	09/12/70	Nancy & Joe Mulhern
Leigh Ann Carlton	09/13/83	Gail Dupuy
Daran Reeves	09/13/63	Linda & Terry Reeves
Anne Barham	09/14/77	Pat Barham
Laureen Romero	09/14/88	Lenette and Larry Romero
Rodney Hubbard	09/15/64	Claudina Vega
Jeffrey Moore	09/16/85	Tammi & David Moore
Barry Kirby	09/18/89	Lisa Kirby/Bridget Kirby
Donald Acree	09/20/64	Fran Acree
Paul Johnston	09/20/59	Gloria & Paul Johnston
Michael Woods	09/20/95	China Telano
Jayden Ward	09/21/09	Alicia Hill
Cole Brooks Hamilton	09/22/95	Laurie & Britt Hamilton
Emerson Johnson	09/23/14	Sandy Johnson
Jeffrey Carter	09/24/82	Dianne & Tim Carter
Derek Wallace	09/24/76	Sandy & Donnie Wallace
Joel Rundell	09/26/65	Sharon & Jim Rundell
Raymond Clary	09/27/66	Babs & Ray Clary
Kody Spann	09/27/84	Cindy 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
Blade Gilbreath	09/06/15	Dawn & Brandon Gilbreath
Kenneth Wall	09/06/99	Beverly & Charles Wall
Kaye Shields	09/06/04	Lila & R.L. Hargrove
Matthew Nolan	09/11/17	Karen Nolan
Savannah Gray	09/26/21	Stephanie Gray
Cole Crawford	09/22/18	Sylvia & Greg Crawford
Timothy Smith	09/25/76	Mary & Buddy Smith
Aaron McKenzie	09/29/10	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie
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.

**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