



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Jan / Feb / Mar 2023

I WILL BE

If you think of me as gone forever,
I will be.
If you think of me as sadness and tears,
I will be.
If you think of me as your broken heart,
I will be.
That's not what I want to be, but
I will be.
If you think of me as memories to cherish,
I will be.
If you think of me as laughter and joy,
I will be.
If you think of me as your healing heart,
I will be.
That's what I want to be, please, let me be.

Rob Anderson

"WE NEED NOT WALK
ALONE", autumn 2003

A HEART WEEPS

This is a level of loss
That numbs every part of my being
My heart is bound so tightly
That it cannot even weep.
Will this ever end?

The ground lies bare and brown
Covered with last year's leaves.
The earth is cold and hard
As desolate as my heart.
Sustain me in this hour!

Today, from that barren earth
A clump of green appeared
White snowdrops clustered there.
And I saw, once again, a fragment of beauty!

I weep with thanksgiving
For this beauty that has warmed me.

For this heart that leapt, and now knows
That joy can enter once again.

Marie Andrews
TCF Aurora, Colorado

THE EVERLASTING LIGHT

Those we love must someday
Pass beyond our present sight...
Must leave us and the world we know
Without their radiant light.

But we know that like a candle
Their lovely light will shine
To brighten up another place,
More perfect...more divine.

And in the realm of Heaven
Where they shine so warm and bright,
Our loved ones live forevermore
In God's eternal light.

Hilda McLeod
TCF Augusta, GA



Monthly Meetings

Thursday, January 5

Thursday, February 2

Thursday, March 2

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

MISSING YOU

I just can't believe it...
The sun still rises and sets,
The moon and stars still shine.
The flowers still bloom, the birds still sing.
I expected a change in everything.

I just can't believe it...
It still gets dark and light,
The ocean still has waves,
The rain still rains, the wind still blows.
Is it because they do not know?

I just can't believe it...
I thought the world would stop
When in my house I found
An empty chair, a missing smile
I thought it would stop for just a
while.

I just can't believe it...

Gretta Viney
TCF Yakima, WA

IN MARCH

The year moves on
between the weeks and days
are spaces filled
with more than only time.

Those minutes, moments,
when your life stands still
and aches in memory...

And part of you
needs to endure the dark,
because it means
to have love again.

And part of you
prays for forgiveness,
because your mind
may break, remembering.

Between the weeks and days
are spaces filled
with more than only time...

Sascha Wagner
TCF Des Moines, IA

THE FIRST SNOW

The first snow since you left
Fell on the coldest day of the year,
Settling onto rooftops and heights,
Onto the ground, drifts of white.

I drift in thought to past winters
To silhouettes against white,
Rosy-cheeked children crunching snow
In woolen paws for a snowball fight.



Shrieks of delight streak the air
Like rising steam from warm breath.
As memories frozen in mind
Thaw like snow in the morning sun.

I don a coat against the wind,
Remembering when past snows
Encased snub footprints in white
And angels fell blinking in the light.

Years have passed since that winter scene
Yet those images move my heart still
As memories like angels' wings
Disturb the silence, and the chill,
And the murmur of the wind protests
The coldness of unmarred snow.

Peggy Walls
TCF Alexander City, AL

REMEMBERING

Friends may think we have forgotten
When at times they see us smile.
Little do they know the heartache
That our smile hides all the while.

Beautiful memories are wonderful
They last till the longest day.
They never wear out, they never
get lost and can never be given away.

To some you may be forgotten,
To others a part of the past.
But to those who loved and lost you,
Your memory will always last.

Author unknown

I WILL LOVE YOU

As long as I can dream,
As long as I can think,
As long as I have a
memory...
I will love you.

As long as I have eyes to see
and ears to hear
and lips to speak...
I will love you.

As long as I have a heart to feel,
A soul stirring within me,
An imagination to hold you...
I will love you.

As long as there is time,
As long as there is love,
As long as I have a breath
to speak your name...
I will love you.

Because I love you more than anything
in all the world.

Daniel Haughian
TCF Massillon, OH

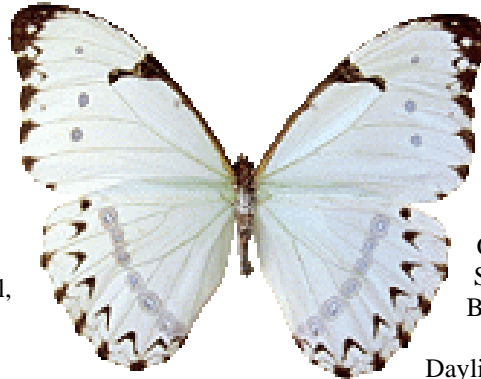
A SPECIAL VALENTINE

A touch of your hand;
A smile on your face
Another time, another place.

You were my girl
I was your Mom
Together we met the world head on.

Death cannot dim
the memories so fine
Your place is there

this world is mine.
But you will always be
My SPECIAL VALENTINE!



Arlene Burroughs
TCF Pikes Peak, CO

THE PROMISE

Cold winds blow across the frozen pond.
Snow lies deep upon the fields.
But the change has begun.

Daylight hours increase slowly.
With each passing day later sunsets are more
apparent
Winter is ending.

For bereaved parents
The change is awfully slow
The progress is not always apparent
But the promise is the same.

Winter will end.
Spring will return.

Betty Stevens,
TCF Baltimore, MD
TCF Niles, OH

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

FOR THE NEW YEAR

Instead of the old kind of New Year's resolutions we use to make and break, let's make some this year and really try to keep them.

1. Let's not try to imagine the future – take one day at a time.
2. Allow yourself time to cry, both alone, and with your loved ones.
3. Don't shut out other family members from your thoughts and feelings. Share these difficult times. You may all become closer for it.
4. Try to be realistic about your expectations – of yourself, your spouse, other family members and friends. Each of us is an entity, therefore different. So how can there be perfect understanding?
5. When a good day comes, relish it; don't feel guilty and don't be discouraged because it doesn't last. It **WILL** come again and multiply.
6. Take care of your health. Even though the mind might not care, a sick body will only compound your troubles. Drink lots of water and take stress-type multivitamins, rest (even if you don't sleep), and get moderate exercise. Help your body heal, as well as your mind.
7. Share your feelings with other Compassionate Friends and let them share with you. As you find you are caring about the pain of others, you are starting to come out of your shell – a very healthy sign.

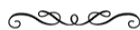
I know following these won't be easy but what has been? It's worth a try. Don't you think? Nothing to lose and perhaps much to gain.

Mary Ehmann
TCF Valley Forge, PA

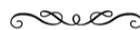
THE PROMISE OF SPRING

When February comes, there is finally an end in sight to the long winter. Sometimes melting snow reveal green tips of an early crocus or even the exquisite blossom itself, a soft flower of hope invading a harsh landscape of graying snow and biting wind and ominous sky—a small promise of new life to come. My heart, grieving for my son who died, was like that image of winter. For somehow, even during the darkest, coldest moments, an unexpected sign of hope would intrude. And as the hours and months dragged on, my heart finally learned once again to be open to the promise of new life. Painful memories melted into loving ones. Life that seemed forever dormant once again sprang forth from my heart. In living hopefully and lovingly, the season of the heart can change. The loving memories of your child, like the flower in the snow, can be the beginning of the end of winter.

Maryann Kramer
TCF Arlington Heights, IL



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
Luke Moses	01/09/09	Amy & David Moses
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 Loflin	01/18/71	Katye Loflin
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
Maaliyanh 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 Matejowsky
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	01/31/17	Deborah & Waler Springfield

OUR CHILDREN'S FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Keyeria Haynes	02/09/90	Lorraine Haynes
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
Luke Moses	02/03/23	Amy & David Moses
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
Sean Grebinger	02/21/20	JoAnn Tullos
Alyssa Neitz	02/23/18	Jennifer & Joey Neitz
Jayden Ward	02/23/14	Alicia Hill
Derek Wallace	02/25/22	Sandy & Donnie Wallace
Cedrick Hotard	02/28/07	Sharon & Stephen Hotard
Adam McKenzie	02/28/03	Cheryl & Jerome McKenzie

Our Children Always Loved and Remembered



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
Brian Barfield	03/18/75	Gloria Barfield
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 Barfield	03/10/20	Gloria Barfield
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
Raeleigh Hunter	03/28/22	Donna Evans
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