

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

June 12th Meeting:

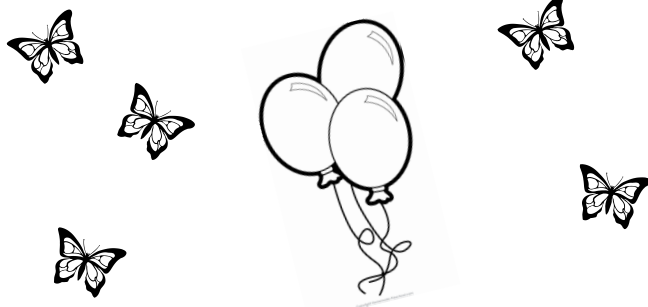
Annual Balloon Release and Picnic

Location:

Citipointe Church,
7533 Lords Chapel Drive, Nashville 37211

Our June gathering is a very special time—our Annual Balloon Release and Picnic -and now butterflies too! This is a very popular event between Mother’s Day and Father’s Day each year and we encourage you to bring your family members. All ages are invited to come to remember and celebrate the life of your child.

Please see details on page 4.



One Balloon

Our family moved from Andrews, Texas to Houston, Texas in 1983. In February of 1984, I was working in my backyard, when I found a deflated balloon. There was a note on the balloon. The note was from a mother, expressing her love for her daughter. The way the note was written, I knew that the daughter had died. The note expressed so much love that it penetrated through my heart. Little did I know that my own son would die in 1995, and I would be sending him notes.

Niecy Moss,
TCF, Houston-West, Texas

Phone Friends

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child. We understand and would like to listen. If you can’t reach one of us, feel free to call another person on this list.

Accidental Death	Mike and Paula Childers	615-646-1333
AIDS	Joyce Soward	615-754-5210
Illness	David and Peggy Gibson	615-356-1351
Infant	Jayne Head	615-264-8184
SIDS	Kris Thompson	931-486-9088
Suicide	Ron Henson	615-789-3613
Alcohol/Drug Overdose	Ed Pyle	615-712-3245

Happiness is like a butterfly. The more you chase it, the more it eludes you.

But if you turn your attention to other things, it comes and sits softly on your shoulder.

Nathaniel Hawthorne



*We remember our children with love and gratitude. We miss their faces,
their voices and their smiles. And we do not forget--*

In the month of their births—

Laura Abigail Czirr (Abby) June 22 Daughter of Steve and Paige Czirr Granddaughter of John and JoAnn Czirr And Robert and Cynthia Daugherty	Jeffery Glenn Eakes June 26 Son of Justin and Tracy Brewer Grandson of Don and Sherry Eakes And Penny Waters	Stephen Joseph Fay June 6 Son of Tommy Fay and Pennie Fay	Christopher Miller Harris June 19 Son of Bill Harris and Judy Harris
Stephen Joseph Donlon June 16 Son of Pat and Ellen Donlon Brother of David, Katy, John and Elizabeth	Charles Courtney Edwards June 14 Son of Charles and Ruth Edwards	Chase Lee Harris June 27 Son of Kirk and Shayne Harris, Paul and Stacey Fish Grandson of Rose H. Bartlett	Allen Glenn Mays June 3 Son-in-law of Roy and Carole Renfro
			Ryan James Tropauer Son of David and Debbie Tropauer

And in the month of their deaths—

Lisa Allgood June 30 Daughter of Harold and Betty Allgood	Jamison Michael Duncan (Jamie) June 13 Son of Mike and Kay Duncan Brother of Jon	Tristan Ray Fillpot June 9 Son of Lorenzo and Floy Wilson	Matthew James Truman June 7 Son of Cathy McMorrow
Misty Whitney Ambrose June 18 Daughter of Michael and Treva Ambrose	Stephen Joseph Fay June 5 Son of Tommy Fay and Pennie Fay	Jennifer Lee Friedmann (Jena) June 9 Daughter of John and Mignon Friedmann Sister of Dr. John Friedmann	Cole Hansen Kilgore June 5 Son of Henry and Kathy Beeler Nephew of Kacey Gant
Eric DeWayne Brown June 8 Son of Sharon Brown			Nathan Young June 22 Son of Dana Young



A Compassionate Friend

*A compassionate friend will take your hand,
They will sit, and listen, and understand.
You don't have to hold back and pretend,
They know your thoughts and can comprehend.*

*A compassionate friend lets you open your heart,
With them you don't have to play a part.
You can talk, or cry, or even complain,
But, with them, you never have to explain.*

A compassionate friend will help you to live,

*Whatever you say, or do, they will forgive.
They, too, know your hurt will never go away,
So they will listen and let you have your say.*

*They have been down this endless path,
So somehow they can help your wrath.
If anyone can help your heart to mend,
It has to be a compassionate friend.*

Kathryn A. Pelky
TCF, Traverse City, MI



GIFTS OF LOVE AND REMEMBRANCE



We are deeply grateful for the voluntary gifts of love that make it possible for The Compassionate Friends to offer comfort to those families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

*John R. and Nancy Cheadle
In loving memory of their son,
John Roaten Cheadle, III (Ro)*

*Robert and Cynthia Daugherty
In loving memory of their
granddaughter,
Laura Abigail Czirr (Abby)
Daughter of Steve and Paige Czirr*

*Barbara Davies
Through Nationwide
Workplace Giving Program
In loving memory of
her stepsons,
Roy James Davies and
Taylor Davies,
Sons of Roy Davies*

*Mike and Kay Duncan
In loving memory of their sons,
Ashley Duncan and Jamison
Duncan (Jamie)*

*Don and Sherry Eakes
In loving memory of
their grandson,
Taylor Christian Brewer,
Son of
Justin and Tracy Brewer*

*John and Mignon Friedmann
Dr. John Friedmann, Jr.
In loving memory of
their daughter and sister,
Jennifer Lee Friedmann (Jena)*

*Ginger Graves
In loving memory of
her daughter,
Morgan Priscilla Graves*

*Peter and Patti van Eys
In loving memory of
their son,
Jan David van Eys*

*Thanks to you,
Kroger shoppers,
we have received from
The Kroger Plus Community
Rewards Program
\$120.53 on 4/7/2022
(see below)**

**To benefit TCF, go to the [Kroger website](#) and click on “Community Rewards”; then follow the instructions on that page. After that, when you shop at Kroger, swipe your Plus Card or key in your phone number when you check out, and Kroger will donate dollars to TCF. It’s a free and easy way to support your chapter.*

Each month, Allegra Marketing (615 360-3339) donates the printing of this newsletter as a gift to the families of TCF. Deanna Brown and her family assemble, label, sort and mail the newsletter in loving memory of her son, Marcus Dean Brown. We appreciate so much these people and their generosity to all of us.

Summer Soon...

*Sunlight dancing in the branches
of the birch tree at my door.
Meadow stretching smug and lazy,
darker, greener than before.
Wind as warm as hugging children,
clouds so round and very close—
and on one small grave there trembles
lovingly an early rose.*

Sascha

Summerwind

*The one who owns this summer is not here,
Not here to know the tender summerwind,
Not here to share the glowing and the song.*

*The one who owns this summer did not live,
Not live to touch the richness of this day,
This day in summer when you are alone.*

*Weep to the summerwind,
Weep and love again
The one you remember.*

Sascha



June 12 Meeting: Annual Balloon (and Butterfly) Release and Family Picnic

Citipointe Church, 7533 Lords Chapel Drive, Nashville 37211

We will gather at Citipointe Church for this event. The location is off Nolensville Road (Highway 31A) about a mile south of where Bell Road (Old Hickory Boulevard) crosses Nolensville Road. Family members and siblings of all ages are encouraged to attend. **Plan to arrive before 3:00 pm.**

New this year: along with our usual beautiful helium balloons, we will have 50 live butterflies to release as well! One balloon per family OR 1 butterfly per FAMILY until we run out. We will have a short ceremony when we will release our butterflies and balloons with notes for or about our children, then immediately begin our picnic. This is a beautiful and moving ceremony as well as a time to get to know one another better.

This is an all-outdoor event and picnic tables will NOT be available.

The birthday table will be set up as usual.



Suggested items to bring: a picnic blanket, outdoor chairs, and outdoor games, soda or tea if desired.

We ask that each family bring a dish large enough to serve eight, according to the starting letter of your last name, as follows:



A-G: Cole slaw, baked beans, salad or other side

H-M: Dessert or chips

N-Z: Main dish other than barbecue, which will be provided by the chapter.



Water and paper goods will be provided by the chapter. Please dress for the weather and plan to stay as long as you like.

We hope to see you there!

A Balloon Tribute

*A balloon is a symbol,
A reminder of our own childhood past,
A reminder that we were all children once.*

*A balloon changes and grows as it is blown up.
Childhood is also a time for change and growth,
Although for us, part of that time is a frozen memory.*

*A balloon suspended in air between heaven and earth,
Kept here only by the ribbon in our hand.
Another reminder that life is the ribbon
that binds our spirits to earth.
How tightly we cling to that ribbon at times.*

*The time we hold the balloon is short.
Painfully, we remember the time we held our children
was too short.*

*The balloon will be gone before we really have time
To enjoy it.
And for some of our children,
life was over before it really began.*



*The act of letting the balloon go is symbolic, too.
This time, a deliberate and conscious act.
Quite unlike those circumstances past
That made us struggle with letting go
of our precious children.*

*As the balloon rises swiftly and sails out of sight,
Another reminder that one day, we too, like the
balloon
Will pass to another place—our new destination.
A place more beautiful and perfect than any of us
can imagine.
And that hope gives us courage to face a new day.*

*So, from outstretched arms that ache to hold you
once again
And a broken heart that knows this side of heaven,
they never will
We send you this symbol of our undying love and
affection.
Because you were, and will always be
Our precious children.*

The feelings bereaved parents share have not changed over the centuries. A month after he lost his daughter, Tullia, in February, 45 B.C., Cicero wrote his friend, Atticus:

“It is like you to want me to recover from my grief, but you are my witness that I have not been remiss on my own behalf. Nothing has been written by any author on the alleviation of grief which I did not read. But my sorrow is stronger than any consolation. I have even done something which I imagine no one has ever done before, consoled myself in a literary composition. I can assure you there is no consolation as effective as this. I write all day long, not that I do myself any real good, but just for the time being it distracts me—not indeed enough, for grief is powerful and importunate; still it brings a respite. And I try all I know to bring my face if not my heart back to composure...you will not be able to feel towards me as in the past. The things you liked in me are gone for good.”

The Healing Aspect of Writing

After my little Jenny died, writing helped me to hold onto my sanity and work toward recovery....

Journaling is the first step. First get a notebook. Common scribblers will do. I find I relax more with ordinary scribblers than with fancy journals, but you choose what's best for you. You can even use scrap paper and rip it up afterwards if you're afraid of people finding what you write.

The main thing is to make writing a regular part of your day. Either write for a certain length of time or try to fill a set number of pages. Let your feelings pour onto the pages. Be as honest as you can. Don't worry about making sense, being grammatically correct or cheerful. Start where you are—even if it's cranky, grouchy, weepy or vengeful. I've had to admit murderous rage sometimes, but it's better that the page absorbs my anger, so I get a chance to think it through.

“Clustering” is an excellent way to get ideas for your writing. Put your child's name in a circle in the middle of the page. If you could only use one word to describe your child, what would that be? Put that word in the circle with the name. Now think of physical attributes, incidents, and personal characteristics to group around the center circle. When you have put enough ideas down, write a paragraph or two about your child. For more details about clustering, look for *Writing the Natural Way* by Gabrielle Rico, (you can order it from bookstores.)

If you're wanting to write a booklet—or even a book—about your child's life and death, may I suggest a way to get going? Try asking yourself, “What incident or experience or memory do I feel like writing about today?” and do it. The next time you sit down to write, ask the same question. This “write-what-you-feel-like-writing” method is the opposite of making an outline. Many people are intimidated if they think they have to make a formal outline and stick to it. If you use the spontaneous method, then at least you get started. You can make an outline later on, or simply put your pieces in some kind of order and fill in the gaps to make your book.

Anna Olson
TCF, Winnipeg

What Might Have Been ... What Is

I want what might have been...

And I want what is.

I want the child I do not have,

And I want the child that has come after.

I cannot choose

One or the other,

My heart wants both.

What might have been,

A sturdy lad,

Baseball bats,

Football helmets,

Squiggly worms on hooks

Dirt and mud and

Burps and booms.

What is now,

A charming girl,

Raggedy Anne,

Stuffed bears,

Curls and ribbons on hair

Tea and cookies and

Squeals and giggles.

How can I choose

From two blessings,

One gone too soon,

One here by a miracle?

I cannot ...

But if I could...

I would want both ...

What might have been ...

And what is.

Lisa Sculley
TCF Jacksonville/Orange Park, FL

Two planted in the rich soil of compassion & companionship; has good soil to water.

Pamela Hagens
TCF, Nashville TN

A Father Writes

As I read the articles published in this paper, I have come to a greater understanding of myself. For as I pour over them, I find that almost all are submitted by women, most of them mothers who have lost a child. I believe that we fathers still wish to hold on to the notion that we are the stronger gender. Though we would have the world believe that we are as quicksand, caught in our own trap. And we will not admit that when God removed the rib from Adam and made Eve, He improved upon His first attempt.

No one has told me that it is all right to hurt and to cry; for, just as many believe house work is women's work and men must not engage in it, so too, a man must not readily admit to weakness.

On January 12, 1990 our oldest son was murdered by an inmate at the prison where our son was a correctional officer. When my wife, our oldest daughter, and I walked into the hospital where they had taken him after he was stabbed, someone met us at the door and told us he was dead.

I became completely unglued. My spirit left my body with his. I no longer had control of my emotions. Anger, remorse, and frustration took control of my body. The anguish that I felt was so surprising to me; no one had told me that a father could hurt this way. I was supposed to be the strong one. I was supposed to comfort my wife and our other children.

I felt guilty because I hurt this way. I had known other men who had lost a child, but they had not told me how much it hurt. Or maybe they had told me and I did not listen. Mothers are supposed to hurt and cry; they carried this child in their womb for nine months and went through great pain to bring him into the world. But I thought a father was supposed to wipe his eyes, and say, "What's for supper?"

I marvel at my wife for I know she has surely hurt more than I. And I know that she still cries often, secretly.

And I still have days when tears roll down my cheeks. And I turn my head and wipe my eyes on the sleeve of my shirt. And I try to keep anyone from seeing. Because I am only the father, and fathers are not supposed to cry.

Ronald E. Donaldson
TCF, Birmingham AL

Father's Day

As the day approaches, I wonder how I will react.

Am I still a father?

I will sit quietly, never allowing friends and family to see how I feel.

I miss my son, but I can't allow myself to "break."

I must remain strong and always be the "rock."

I wish I could just let someone know how much I miss my little angel.

How much I cry and how much I miss hearing, "Dad, I love you."



I am a father, but I wonder, "Will I just pretend, as usual, that it doesn't bother me?"

Remember me, for I hurt, too, on this special day.

TCF, Tampa, FL

CHAPTER INFORMATION

The “Children Remembered” Listings

If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed on pages 2 and 3 in The Children Remembered list, please let us know, printing the exact way you'd like the child's name to appear, the child's birth and death dates, and the parents' names as they should be listed. Drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205. We'll be glad to include them. You need to contact us only once, unless any of your information changes.

Corporate Donations to TCF

To benefit TCF, go to the Kroger website and click on “Community Rewards”; then follow the instructions on that page and designate The Compassionate Friends Nashville Chapter. After that, when you shop at Kroger, swipe your Plus Card or key in your phone number when you check out, and Kroger will donate dollars to our chapter. Also, when going to Amazon, type in “Amazon Smile” and designate The Compassionate Friends; then, each time you go on Amazon Smile a small contribution will be made by Amazon to our organization—It's a free and easy way to support TCF.

We Need Your Help

If you know a family outside the immediate Nashville area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you have access to the address (and phone number) of the parents, it would be most helpful if you would call us with that information. Our mission is to reach every bereaved family in Middle Tennessee, but we have to know about them in order to give them the support we ourselves have received. If you know the child's name, birth date, date of death and cause of death, so much the better. Our outreach chairperson will send a warm letter of sympathy and information about TCF along with appropriate brochures and articles. We do not phone the family and all information you provide is confidential.

TCF Nashville Sibling Support

We encourage siblings from teens to adults to come support one another at our monthly chapter meetings. Siblings face a unique and complicated grief journey and are finding hope and healing through our sharing groups.



BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

Alive Alone

Alive Alone is an organization to benefit parents whose only child or all children have died. Visit their website at www.alivealone.org.

Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents

For general information about grief support services and groups at Alive, please call the Grief Line at: 615-963-4732 or email griefsupport@alivehospice.org. They offer eight-week groups, ongoing monthly groups, family group and Little Hearts Club for children who have experienced the death of a sibling. Services are in Franklin, Nashville, Hendersonville, Lebanon, and Murfreesboro.

Sharing

SHARING is a community organization for parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of an infant. The website is sharingmiddletn.org.

Survivors of Suicide

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings, you may call [615 244-7444](tel:6152447444), or go to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at TSPN.org, and you will find a list of all Tennessee SOS locations.

TCF Web site —A Treasure for You

When you log onto the TCF Web site at www.compassionatefriends.org you will find a wealth of information about TCF and grief—poetry and articles, chat rooms, grief in the news, other chapter Web sites and numerous other resources.

The Compassionate Friends

**P.O. BOX 50833
Nashville, TN
37205**

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June 2022

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TCF 45th National Conference
Houston, TX • August 5-7, 2022

TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

We are pleased to announce that registration is open for the 45th TCF National Conference. After two years of not being able to meet in person, we are really looking forward to being together! Our conference is a place for bereaved families to find community and hope, while learning and sharing with others. Lifelong friendships are often made at the conference through meeting others who truly understand the painful loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. This eagerly anticipated event will take place in Houston, Texas, during the weekend of August 5-7, 2022. This year's conference will be held at the Marriott Marquis Houston. Reservations can now be made online at TCF's dedicated reservation link. For more information and to register go online to www.compassionatefriends.org.

