**January 2017 The Compassionate Friends Volume 31● Number 1**

 ***THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS***

 **P. O. Box 50833 • Nashville, TN 37205 • (615) 356-4TCF(4823) •Nashville Website: www.tcfnashville.org**

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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.

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*Welcome: The Nashville chapter meets at 3:00 p.m. on the second Sunday of each month in the American Builders & Contractors (ABC) Building, 1604 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210 . Park and enter at the rear of the building.*

*We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.*

***January 8: TCF Video To Be Shown***

**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**………….…………..…….……KrisThompson

 931-486-9088

**Suicide**…….……………….Ron and Darlene Henson

 615-789-3613

**Small Child**….……........Kenneth and Kathy Hensley

 615-237-9972

**Alcohol/Drug Overdose**......…...............……Ed Pyle

 615-712-3245

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he Compassionate Friends helps us to cope with

the death of a child. It is a place where one can

turn for support when the devastation of the loss

seems overwhelming. The Compassionate Friends has

produced a short video in which bereaved parents and

siblings discuss their own grief experiences and what

helped them. Among those who speak are the TCF

national executive director, members of the board,

chapter leaders and siblings. This video will be shown

at this month’s meeting, and regular sharing groups will

follow. Please join us.



**A Note from our Chapter Leaders:**

A

s we turn yet another page into a new year, we wanted to share a few thoughts with our compassionate friends.  In a recent conversation, someone shared with us that New Year's Day sometimes seems harder than Christmas.  To many “civilians” the New Year signifies an opportunity to put another year behind us and to start fresh.  But to us soldiers of grief, it feels like we are moving even farther away from our loved ones.  There will be no fresh start.  On the contrary, we cling to every precious moment in the past and don’t want to move on.

We feel so blessed to have found The Compassionate Friends.  Like many others, we feel safe and understood in our circle of soldiers.  None of us chose this path but the choice to be a part of this organization has changed our lives.

The Steering Committee has graciously extended our tour as chapter leaders for another two years.  We are honored to accept this responsibility and look forward to all of the positive things the New Year will bring to all of us.

                                                                           Roy and Barbara Davies

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TCF Website: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) National Office email:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

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***Ecclesiasticus***

*In life there is an ebb and flow,*

*A time to come, a time to go.*

*A need to turn loose and hold on*

*To memories of times long since gone.*

*An urge to leave the past, and yet*

*A fear of moving lest we forget.*

*An interchange of joy and tears,*

*Acceptance of both cribs and biers.*

*A sense of triumph and defeat*

*In knowing life is both bitter and sweet.*

 From Rachel’s Cry, by Richard Dew

 TCF, Knoxville, TN

**A Time Past**

I

 remember the first time I had the courage to look at old photographs of Kara—as a little girl, a young girl, a young teenager. How I dreaded it, but at the time was compelled to do it. To my surprise, the negative impact of “past, past, those days are all gone,” wasn’t nearly as acutely painful as I had expected since I had already looked at those same pictures before her death in terms of “a time past.” Of course it didn’t bother me then because I knew she had a future.

Truly, it helped me focus more accurately on the reality of my grief: I had lost Kara’s future with us, not her past. Now, I am freer to enjoy those past photographs of a life we shared. I hold them dearly to my heart with all my other memories. My next goal? To work up the courage to look at old movies! This will take time, but I will do it eventually.

Marcia Olson

TCF, Hinsdale, IL

Sorrow is Not Forever—Love is

S

o often one attempts to face the whole future at once. But we will not live that period all at once, only day by day. Don’t try to face twenty years. Face today. When that has been achieved, face tomorrow. You will find more and more ways in which to you can cope. The Chinese have a saying that a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. There is no way you can take the fifteen or the two hundredth step before you have taken the first.

It can be difficult to face going out again and resuming your regular activities. It can take more courage to face little things than the big things in life.

Going out shopping for groceries for the first time can become an ordeal. Making the change more complete could help. Try a different store, a different day or time, and go with a friend. When it seems very hard what to decide to do first, maybe it’s not very important where you start as long as you start. Choose a simple task and get started.

Once you‘ve begun it will be far easier to set your priorities and you will have gained confidence for already having achieved something.

 From *The facts of Death* by Michael A. Simpson

There is a kind of release that comes

directly to those who have undergone

an ordeal and who know, having survived it,

that they are equal to all of life’s occasions.

 Lewis Mumford

 TCF, Northern NY Chapter

Grief is normal, grief is OK

Grief is the way your body has to say

that you love the son, daughter, brother, sister,

even a friend that died;

But sometimes it makes you cry.

Steve Horn, Age 10

TCF Hinsdale, IL

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**Death is Nothing at all**

D

eath is nothing at all. I have only slipped away into the next room. I am I and you are you. Whatever we were to each other that we are still.

 Call me by my old familiar name, speak to me in the easy tone; wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow. Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together.

 Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.

 Let my name be ever the household word that it always was, let it be spoke without an effort, without trace of shadow in it.

 Life means all that it ever meant; it is the same as it ever was; there is absolutely unbroken continuity.

 What is this death but a negligible accident? Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight? I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near, just around the corner.

 All is well.

Canon Henry Scott Holland

 (1847-1918)

###### Tenses

*The past tense does not suit her.*

*We speak of her in the tense of current time.*

*She dwells in the present.*

*She is beautiful.*

*She is smiling.*

*She is loved.*

*She is of action,*

*Is of the moment,*

*Is of living now, and here.*

*The past tense does not suit her.*

*The past tense does not suit her,*

*But we cannot speak of her in only now.*

*She wears the future well.*

*She will always be beautiful.*

*She will ever be smiling.*

*She will never be without love.*

*She will live her life to its fullest,*

*Because she will always know*

*That she cannot know what the future holds.*

*The past tense does not suit her.*

*The past tense does not suit her,*

*But now we have no choice in diction.*

*She is held out of now forever, without consent.*

*She was beautiful.*

*She was always smiling.*

*She was loved.*

*She has lost all her possibilities*

*Of present*

*Or future, but*

*The past tense does not suit her.*

*The past tense does not suit her,*

*But we cannot lose her in “would be” and “was.”
She must be kept in “is” and “will.”*

*She is beautiful.*

*She is smiling.*

*She is loved,*

*If only in memories.*

*She will always be beautiful,*

*She will always be smiling,*

*She will always be loved,*

*As long as those memories*

*Do not fade into the past.*

*The past tense does not suit her.*

Whitney Reynolds

TCF, Nashville, TN

January 5

It is children’s day in Japan today—

For you, is it children’s day every day, and again, and always, now?

Let us send love to the children wherever they are.

Wherever they are held in a father’s arms, or in a mother’s memory…every day and again and always.

Sascha

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# Here’s Something to Look Forward to in 2017:

# https://www.compassionatefriends.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2017-conference-bg-800x533.jpg

# THE 40TH TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

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he Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Orlando, Florida, will be the site of the 40th TCF National Conference on July 28-30, 2017. “Rays of Sunshine, Oceans of Hope” is the theme of this year’s event. The 2017 Conference will be held at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek. Details will be updated on the national website, www.compassionatefriends.org , as well as on our TCF/USA Facebook Page as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

####  *Journey*

##### *I lived awhile like one who dwells*

*Always in that dark world apart*

*Where loneliness and pain rule all*

*And memories can pierce the heart.*

*It is an awesome place, and vast;*

*Anger and guilt are mountains there*

*I’ve climbed, and struggled on through seas*

*of tears, loss and despair.*

*Although I thought I came alone,*

*Love followed even there, I learned.*

*Time, too, became my friend until*

*Hope, faith, and at last—joy returned.*

*The world of grief had much to teach*

*In recompense for what I lost*

*I value all those lessons, but*

*You must not ask how high their cost.*

Mary W. Helms

 TCF, Morris, NJ

**Life’s Bargain**

L

ife made us a bargain when we first came into this world: That as surely as we live, someday we will die; as surely as we laugh, someday we will cry. All of the assets that life and health and joy bring are balanced on earth by hate, disease, and sorrow. Our sorrow is the price we pay for all the love and joy we took so freely. We wouldn’t weep such bitter tears if our laughter had not been so sweet for years. If the price I pay for loving David is the pain and sorrow I now have, I still think I got a bargain to have had him for thirteen years. If the only way to avoid the pain is to also avoid the pleasure of loving someone, then love with all your heart and soul, and mourn their loss the same, and count your life a bargain for having loved.

Dale Trevathan

TCF, Tulsa OK



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**CHAPTER INFORMATION**

**Are you Moving?**

Each time a newsletter is returned to us with an incorrect address, we pay to retrieve it in order to find out where you’ve moved; then we pay again to mail it back to you. This is in addition to the original bulk mail cost. It would help a great deal in both time and money if you would notify us immediately of any address change so your newsletter can reach you right away. You may call, write or email the chapter leaders or the newsletter editor. Thanks for your help.

**The “Children Remembered” Listings**

At your first TCF meeting you are asked to sign a registration card that gives us permission to add your child to the We Remember Them list on pages 2 and 3 in the monthly newsletter. If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed, 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. You may call the database manager at 615 356-1351, drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205, or email us at davidg14@bellsouth.net, We’ll be glad to include them. You need to contact us only once, unless any of your information changes.

**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. There will be no harassment, no phone calls, and no demands made upon the parents, and the information you provide is strictly confidential.

**The Birthday Table**

In the month of your child’s birthday, a table will be provided at our meeting where you can share photographs, mementos, your child’s favorite snack or a birthday cake, a bouquet of flowers—anything you’d like to bring. We want to know your child better, so please take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful day of your child’s birth and for us to become better acquainted.

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**BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES**

**Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents**

For general information about Grief Support Services at Alive Hospice, please call the main number: 615 963-4732 or email griefsupport@alivehospice.org. Diane Castellano, LCSW is a grief counselor there for children and their families. Call her at 615-346-8554. Contact John Baker at 615-346-8364 for bereaved parent support or individual counseling.

**Sharing**

SHARING is a community organization interested in helping parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a newborn infant. Call 615 342-8899 to confirm dates and times of meetings. Visit www.nationalshare.org

**Survivors of Suicide**

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings, you may call 615 244-7444, 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](http://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. Check it out.

***Remember Me***

*Remember me in quiet days*

*When raindrops whisper on your pane,*

*But in your memories have not grief*

*Let just the joy we know remain.*

*Remember me when evening stars*

*Look down on you with steadfast eyes;*

*And when your thoughts do turn to me,*

*Know that I would not have you cry;*

*But live for me and laugh for me —*

*When you are happy, so am I.*

*Remember an old joke we shared;*

*Remember me when spring walks by;*

*Think of me when you are glad,*

*And while you live, I shall not die.*

Lyn Bryant, Sibling

 TCF, Baytown, TX

 **A**ttending your first TCF meeting can be difficult. Feelings can be overwhelming. We have all

 experienced them and know how important it is to take that first step. Please attend two or three

 meetings before deciding if TCF is right for you. There are no dues or fees. If you choose, you

 need not speak a word at a meeting. We are an international, non-denominational group,

 offering support and information to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents.

*We Need Not Walk Alone.*