

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.

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.

July 8 Meeting:

Preserving Mementos: Tangible and Digital

Tom Mitchell will make a presentation on Preserving Memories, Digital and Tangible. Many of us treasure things like voice mail messages, videos, pictures and artwork that can never be replaced and help keep the memory of our children, grandchildren or siblings alive. Tom will show us how to preserve these precious mementos and share them with others. Bring your questions on this topic too. Our regular sharing groups will follow Tom's program. Come join us and support one another on this long journey.



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 and Darlene Henson
615-789-3613
- Small Child**.....Kenneth and Kathy Hensley
615-237-9972
- Alcohol/Drug Overdose**.....Ed Pyle
615-712-3245

*Life's unfairness is not irrevocable;
we can help balance the scales for others,
if not always for ourselves.*

Hubert H. Humphrey

Attending 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.

*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—

**Christopher Matthew
Anderson**
July 20
Son of Suzy Anderson

Daniel Matthew Bledsoe
July 26
Son of
Dan and Barbara Bledsoe
Brother of Jason and Kaci

Amy Kathryn Conforti
July 28
Daughter of
Robert and Gail Conforti

**Kelsee Nicole Corbitt
(Princess Kelsee)**
July 26
Granddaughter of
Cheryl Carney

Stephen Gould
July 20
Son of
Herb and Susan Gould

Heidi Kathleen Hedstrom
July 20
Daughter of
Charlie and Kris Foust

Michael Scott Jones
July 4
Son of Warren and Donna Jones
and Betty D. Jones
Brother of
David, Jennifer and Becky



Everett Louie Shuai Kelley
July 29
Son of
Josh and Laura Kelley

Christian Lewis
July 25
Son of
Christian Harrison and
Paschale Lewis

Steven James Martens
July 19
Son of
Jim and Debbie Martens



James Nathan Matheson
July 15
Son of
Jack and Deborah Matheson

David George Shriver
July 15
Son of
Warren and Donna Jones
and George Shriver
Brother of
Bekki, Laurie, and Bonnie

Amanda Jo White
July 18
Daughter of
Jerry and Peggy Nolan

Lauren Whitney
July 29
Daughter of
Brad and Karen Rogers

And in the month of their deaths—

Jacob Taylor Akers
July 7
Son of Jim and Carol Akers

Christopher William Black
July 8
Son of Ray and Linda Black

Dan Michael Bland, Jr.
July 13
Son of Dan and Martha Bland

Jonathan Michael Bourne
July 20
Son of
John and Patricia Bourne
Grandson of
Robert and Anne Bourne

Adam Blake Brooks
July 19
Son of Danny Brooks and
Dawn Armstrong

Jonathan Lee Collins
July 31
Son of Charity Collins
Grandson of Jennie Reeves
Brother of Kristanna

Lucas Dawson (Luke)
July 8
Son of
Bob and Genevia Graham

Allison Ann Fitzhugh
July 24
Daughter of
Bob and Debbie Fitzhugh

Patrick Eli Froehling
July 15
Son of
Keith and Erin Froehling



Zachary Gray Goodpaster
July 31
Son of
David and Laura Goodpaster
Grandson of
Morris and Martha Smith

Samuel Christopher Hagens
July 5
Son of Christopher and Pamela
Hagens
Brother of Luke and Caleb

Eva Renée Hartman
July 14
Daughter of Kay Hartman

Justin Scott Heath
July 28
Son of
Earl and Betsy Branson

Matthew Kent Hensley
July 15
Son of
Kenneth and Kathy Hensley

Daniel Lee Henson
July 21
Son of
Ronnie and Darlene Henson

John Charles Hicks
July 9
Son of Jenni Hicks

Houston Scott Johnson
July 22
Son of
Scott and Erin Johnson

Everett Louie Shuai Kelley
July 8
Son of Josh and Laura Kelley



Continued on page 3

Children Remembered, continued

James Thomas King (J.T.) July 14 Son of Tom and Jere King	Steven James Martens July 20 Son of Jim and Debbie Martens	Madison Allen Mays July 8 Son of Allen and Rachel Mays Grandson of \\ Roy and Carole Renfro	Jeremy Russell Powers July 13 Son of Phillip and Linda King and Ricky Powers, Sr.
Christopher Lincoln Kingsborough July 20 Son of Paul and Lydia Kingsborough	SSG James Andrew Maum July 11 Son of Michael and Charlotte Margolis	Allen Glenn Mays July 8 Son-in-law of Roy and Carole Renfro	Loren Carnell Ross July 31 Son of Lorita Ross Brother of Rita and Vershon

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.

Linda Sue Black
In loving memory of
her son,
Christopher William Black

Dan and Barbara Bledsoe
In loving memory of their son,
Daniel Matthew Bledsoe (Matt)

Bob and Cynthia Daugherty
In loving memory of
Their granddaughter,
Abby Czirr
Daughter of
Steve and Paige Czirr

Barbara Davies
Through Nationwide's
Workplace Giving Program
In loving memory of
Roy James Davies and
Taylor Davies

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



Ron Henson
In loving memory of his wife,
Darlene Henson
And their son,
Daniel Lee Henson

Wayne and Cassandra Pack
In loving memory of
their son,
Andrew Morris Pack

Elisabeth Small
In loving memory of
her daughter,
Jessica Bloom

Each month, Allegra Print & Imaging, 601 Grassmere Park, donates the printing of this newsletter as a gift to the families of TCF. Then 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.

An Opportunity To Honor Your Child

Thousands of helpful TCF brochures are used throughout the country. They address the many aspects of grief following the death of a child. As these TCF brochures need reprinting, families are given the opportunity to sponsor a brochure in memory of their child, for a \$500 donation.

The names of the sponsoring parents and their child's name are printed on the brochure. To learn which brochures need sponsors now, contact Sara Zeigler at the National office at sara@compassionatefriends.org or call her at 1-877-969-0010.

Independence Day

The Fourth of July, Independence Day, Our Nation's Birthday. Whatever you call it, we celebrate America's Independence from England on July 4th each year. As a nation, we have endured for 200+ years to become a significant independent and powerful force in the world. We were founded on the principles of equality and religious tolerance, of equity and opportunity, and of rights and responsibilities. Several generations of men and women have defended our precious freedom with their lives. As we celebrate this year, let's take a moment to remember those who paid the ultimate price for freedom – and to remember their families. It is sometimes easy to think only of the glory of their sacrifices, and to overlook the sacrifice of their families. War is never glorious, no matter how romantic the notion created by Hollywood. War has casualties that go farther and deeper into the fabric of our nation than we may realize. Those who died are buried with fanfare, as befits a nation's fallen valiants. And their families learn to go on, just as we have, in spite of their loss. But think for a moment of those who were declared missing in action, or who were prisoners of war. Their families must endure, often for years, and sometimes without an end to their pain and loss. Remember all of our nation's fallen when you celebrate this year. Remember those ceremoniously laid to rest; remember those who were captured, imprisoned, even tortured; remember those whose fate remains unknown. And remember, too, the families of all of them. Death, no matter how noble, is never easy for those left behind. We send our thanks to the veterans – living, dead, and missing – and their families.

Tom and Sondra Wright
TCF Tucker, GA

Epilogue

*Beyond the history of grand events,
behind the memory of battles fought,
of freedoms lost and won,
there stand the silent legends of this earth,
the monuments of human joy and sorrow,
a sky of laughter on a sea of tears.*

*And they who cried the tears
—their children fallen,
sisters, brothers dead—
with lives washed over by relentless grief;
they fought the battles seldom writ in stone.*

*And they who cried the tears
and laughed the laughter
(though we may not be told
their name and place),
they share with us the history of coping,
of courage tested and enduring hope.*

*And they who cried the tears
and laughed the laughter
are history, as much as swords at war,
as much as grand events and freedoms won.*

*And all who ever mourned
—the whole world over—
are quietly with you and me today,
to walk with us
through grief to hope and healing.*

From *The Sorrow and the Light*
by Sascha Wagner

We Who Were Left Behind

*We who were left behind
To know the shadows,
We who were left behind
To touch the night,
We who were left behind
To find each other,
To heal the darkness and
To share this day*

*We who have turned once more
To hope and loving
Though we were given graves
And lifeless children—*

*We hear them now
These children and their song
Reminding us
Reminding us again
That we must fill the time
We spend in life
With understanding
Tenderness and peace.*

Sascha Wagner
TCF Des Moines, IA

The Butterfly, My Son

*Every time I see a butterfly,
I think of you, my son.
Colors so bright and yet subdued,
I think of you, my son.*

*From small to the largest Monarch,
I think of you, my son.
Flight so irregular, yet so purposeful,
I think of you, my son.*

*So quiet and majestic,
I think of you, my son.
And then you take flight and are gone,
I think of you, my son.*

*From cocoon to the end, God has purpose,
I think of you, my son.
Every time I see a butterfly,
I think of you, my son.*

C. Gordon Jones
TCF, Knoxville, TN

Like the Butterfly

*It fluttered above my head
Weightless in the soft breeze.
I reached up my hand
It lit upon my finger.*

*Waving glistening wings gently,
It looked at me for timeless moments.
I smiled, reaching deep and
finding all those cherished memories.*

*As it flitted off through the sunlit morn,
I knew we had said hello once more.*

Leslie Langford, sibling
TCF, North Platte, NE



A Simple Thing

“**Y**ou don’t know how much I miss having someone to throw the football with...” Isn’t it odd how the simple things we say to one another can trigger deep, deep sadness, how our whole world can seem to come to a complete stop, when we have lost someone very important to our lives? Or is it? Actually, it is a natural response. It has been six and one-half years since our son died, and we have spent that time studying and actively working through our grief. We knew instinctively from the beginning that we must face it squarely. We discussed that day he died how we must deal as best we could with each problem, each emotion, when they arose, no matter how strange it may be or how difficult.

Right away we purchased all the books we could find on grief. Our desire to learn about these strange feelings we were having was strong, our appetites insatiable. And we have come far in these years and in our dedication to know what was happening to us and why. We have only recently discussed that we felt that we are no longer actively grieving for our son. We feel we have recovered from grief. Intellectually we know there will be periods of sadness sparked by memories. Our studies have taught us this. We feel we can not only deal with this but welcome it as a reminder of him and his value to us. For his death represents so much more than merely a person leaving our lives. The shock waves of loss will probably go on forever when we have moments of need of him. Perhaps the simple things caused us to miss him the most—like preparing for homecoming at our university and having no one to toss a football with...

I often think of throwing the ball away—it often needs air even though it’s only handled occasionally by my husband—but I know it would be a fruitless act because there are so many other reminders—musical instruments lying mute, the brown fedora collecting dust. We have learned to laugh again. To participate in life again. But today, oh today! How sad I felt. How quickly the tears came when my husband said, so sincerely, so quietly, you don’t know how much I miss having someone to throw the football around with...” I felt my heart break again.

Tomorrow we will teach the dog to catch a Frisbee, but it will never be the same. It won’t ever be the same again.

Fay Harden
TCF Tuscaloosa, AL

Closure, Is It a Reality?

The use of the word “closure” is often heard in public circles or in the media especially after a tragedy and implies finality. The word comes with the sense that there will be a time, day or event like a funeral, that marks when a grieving person will be “healed” or “over it,” as though it were a disease and you could magically take a pill to be cured. There is an expectation that when the eulogies are said and the casseroles gone, magically the grief somehow goes away. *The truth is that those of us who are in TCF realize that the death of a child or sibling changes our lives forever, and we will never really truly “be over it.”* Yes, we will not have the intensity of the pain and sorrow we had at the beginning of our grief. We will go on with life and find a new normal for us, but life will never be as it was before the death, and we will not ever be fully “healed.” Sometimes those around us have attempted to comfort us by pointing to deadlines, replacements or “at least’s.” We have heard it said, “at least you have other kids,” or “you can have another baby,” or “hasn’t it been 6 months?” Many see “comfort giving” as a short term support effort, and soon we will be “over it” as we are kept busy returning to the tasks of daily living and focusing on our blessings. These comments hurt rather than provide the comfort meant to provide.

Grief follows no plan, no stages, timetable, formula, or schedule. There are no road maps; there are no absolutes. We learn in TCF that everyone grieves differently. Grief is like being lost. The familiar things we relied on to live each day are gone. We must find new anchors or stabilizers along the way and learn a new way of relating to the world and people around us. We are forced to learn to live without our child or sibling. The reality of our loss often far outweighs what we have remaining. Grief is all consuming, distorts reality, and we begin to mark time in “before or after our loved one died.” No one can hurry the process of grief; no one can do it for us. Not even our spouses, parents or other children can help us in those early days. The truth is that when our grief is new, we feel exhausted physically, emotionally and spiritually. We barely have enough energy to breathe. We feel as though we have no control over our lives any more, nor do we care. We realize on some level we are helpless. We might even feel hopeless or purposeless. Some of us feel isolated, lonely and misunderstood. Some feel like everything is trivia compared to the loss we have experienced. Some feel like the world is spinning on around us, and nobody really cares that our child, sibling or grandchild died. All of these feelings are normal and

part of the grieving process. *And yes, we also need to realize it is a process—a very long, gradual and difficult process.* Time does not heal all wounds, but time softens the intensity of the grief. What helps is finding those who will listen with their hearts and give us hope and understanding. Those who will spend hours, days and months with us as we retell our story over and over so we can somehow believe it ourselves. What helps is to surround ourselves with those patient people and meaningful activities that comfort and support.

Gradually the cold darkness of grief begins to give way to the warmth of the memories, acceptance, purpose, and reinvestment in life. We learn to speak of our loved one without crying and we begin to accept that whatever time we had with him or her, we would have taken even if just but a moment. We learn that grief is the price we pay for loving our child or sibling so much, and we wouldn’t want it any other way. Our relationships with family, friends and yes, even God can be strengthened or challenged as we look for new ways to connect with them. We may lose old friends who don’t really understand. We learn that problems in life are not overwhelming. We are handling the worst thing that can happen to us; what else can happen? We learn to more deeply cherish those we love. We help others in grief without batting an eye. Sometimes we pick up “gifts” along the way by becoming more caring, compassionate toward others, and appreciative for what is important in life. New strengths can develop as we find our new selves along the way. Life will be different as we learn to cope, but still have meaning.

For those of you who are new in your loss, we hope that you will continue to share your sorrow with us and learn from those further ahead on the path of grief. Someday it won’t hurt as much as it does, and you won’t always feel “this elephant on your chest.” We encourage you to ask the family and friends around you for what you need and tell them when their expectations for you are too high. We hope you will explain to them that your grief is not on a timetable and will probably not ever reach what society calls “closure.” Explain to them that you will always miss your child or sibling but you will learn to live with a broken heart. We hope you will inform them that the mention of your child’s name is music to your ears and it’s OK to talk about him or her. Your TCF friends will be with you and hold your hand every step of the way.

Carole Dyck
TCF Verdugo Hills, CA

...if you have a memory of someone who has died, give it freely to those who are left behind...
in the sharing of memories is born the beginnings of hope and healing.

Darcie Sims

CHAPTER INFORMATION

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.

What is the Yellow Slip?

Please return your yellow renewal slip. After a year on the newsletter mailing list, those names that were added in that month of a previous year, may receive a yellow half-sheet asking that their subscription be renewed. This is simply to keep our mailing list and the information in it current. If you do not send the yellow slip back, we must assume that you no longer want the newsletter. Although you are given an opportunity to make a voluntary donation, there is no cost involved in your subscription. The newsletter is our gift to you for as long as you wish to receive it. You may request that your name be returned to the active list at any time simply by calling 615-356-4TCF (4823).

Religion and TCF

The Principles of The Compassionate Friends state that TCF reaches out to all bereaved parents across the artificial barriers of religion, race, economic class, or ethnic group. Further, TCF espouses no specific religious or philosophical ideology. Despite our nondenominational status, many writers indicate that they have found comfort in their faith, and some have shared their anger and loss of faith. The opinions and beliefs expressed in letters, articles and poetry are those of the contributors.

Newsletter Deadline

All donations and original poems or articles for the TCF Nashville newsletter must be received by the meeting day of the month preceding the publication month. All donations and submissions are greatly appreciated.



BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

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.

Sharing

SHARING is a community organization for parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a newborn infant. They meet at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of the month in the Administrative Board Room on the first floor at Tri-Star Centennial Women's and Children's Hospital, 2221 Murphy Avenue in Nashville. The meetings are "open" and free. You can drop by as often as you like. The website is sharingmiddletn.org. Their informative brochure is found under "Contact Us."

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](tel:6159634732) 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.

Other TCF Chapters

There are several other chapters of The Compassionate Friends you might want to know about. Anytime you are in their vicinity or feel the need to talk with other bereaved parents, feel free to attend their meetings. Also, when you personally know a newly bereaved family in one of these towns, please call the chapter number and give them the information so they can make contact with the family. To locate a chapter, you may call the TCF National Office at 1-877 969-0010, or go to www.compassionatefriends.org and click on chapter locator.

The Compassionate Friends

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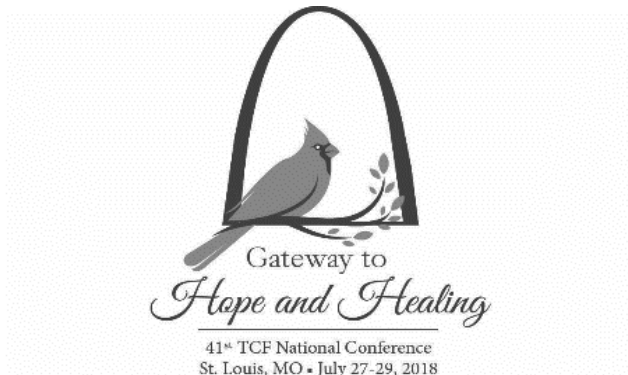
**P.O. Box 50833
Nashville, TN 37205**

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July 2018

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND:



The 41st TCF National Conference will be held in St. Louis, Missouri on July 27-29, 2018. “Gateway to Hope and Healing” is the theme of this year’s event. The 2018 Conference will be held at the Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel.

Conference registration is open. The conference schedule, workshop details, conference hotel information and registration are available online at www.compassionatefriends.org.

Plan to be a part of this heartwarming experience filled with uplifting workshops, meaningful interaction with grieving families from all over the world, banquets, an especially supportive sibling program and much more, all culminating in the meaningful ‘Walk to Remember’ on the final morning.