

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NEW MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. Box 8283 • Hermitage, TN 37076 • (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 at the ABC (Associated Builders and Contractors of Greater Tennessee) Building, 560 Royal Parkway, Nashville, TN 37214 (SEE NEW MAILING ADDRESS ABOVE).

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

June 11th Meeting:

Annual Balloon Release and Picnic

Location: Citipointe Church

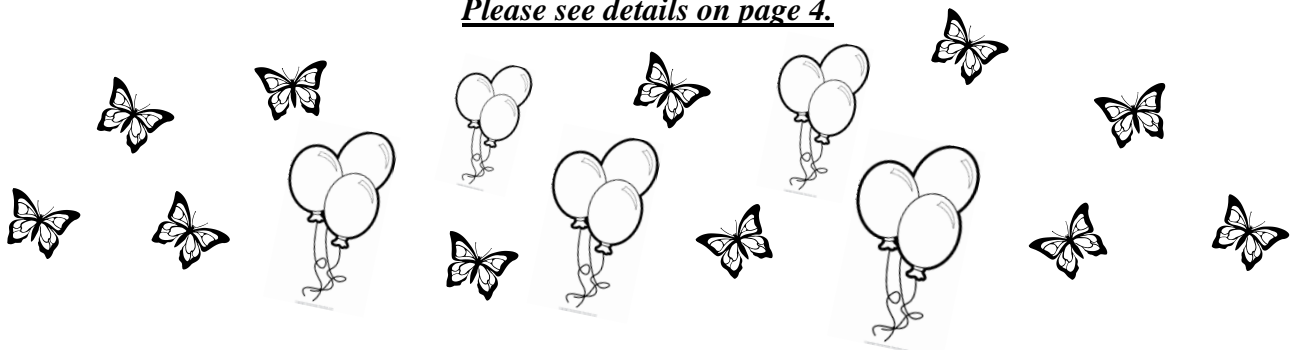
7533 Lords Chapel Drive, Nashville 37211



Our June gathering is a very special time—our Annual Balloon Release and Picnic! 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.

Meeting announcements begin at 3:00. Sharing of this month's birthday children followed by the balloon release begins around 3:30. It's a great day for getting to know each other and our families better. Hope to see you there!

Please see details on page 4.



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

*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—



Zackery Tyler Lewis Allen
June 5
Son of Stephanie Willis

Laura Abigail Czirr
(Abby)
June 22
Daughter of Steve and Paige Czirr
Granddaughter of Robert and Cynthia
Daugherty, John and JoAnn Czirr

Stephen Joseph Donlon
June 16
Son of Pat and Ellen Donlon
Brother of Katy, David,
John, and Elizabeth

Jeffrey Glenn Eakes
June 26
Son of Don and Sherry Eakes

Charles Courtney Edwards
June 14
Son of Charles and Ruth Edwards

Stephen Joseph Fay
June 6
Son of Tommy and Pennie Fay

Chase Lee Harris
June 27
Son of Kirk and Shayne Harris
and Paul and Stacey Fish
Grandson of Rose H. Bartlett

Christopher Miller Harris
June 19
Son of Bill Harris and Judy Harris

Tyler Ross Jeanneret
June 14
Son of D.J. and Pamela Jeanneret

Allen Glenn Mays
June 3
Son-in-law of Roy and Carole Renfro

Christopher Michael Swayze
June 6
Son of Michael and Carole Swayze

Ryan James Tropauer
June 25
Son of David and Debbie Tropauer

And in the month of their deaths



Lisa Allgood
June 30
Daughter of Harold and
Betty Allgood

Misty Whitney Ambrose
June 18
Daughter of Michael and
Treva Ambrose

Eric DeWayne Brown
June 8
Son of Sharon Brown

Jamison Michael Duncan
(Jamie)
June 13
Son of Mike and Kay Duncan
Brother of Jon

Stephen Joseph Fay
June 5
Son of Tommy and
Pennie Fay

Tristan Ray Fillpot
June 9
Son of Lorenzo and
Floy Wilson

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

Briana Leigh Kulesza
June 19
Daughter of Larry and
Donna Kulesza

Lisa Michelle Lombardo
June 14
Daughter of Frank and
Stacy Lombardo

Travis David Pate
June 16
Son of Melanie Pate

David Brenden Spelta
June 5
Son of Jeff and Lisa Spelta

Matthew James Truman
June 7
Son of Cathy McMorrow

Nathan Young
June 22
Son of Dana Young



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.

*Martha Davenport
in Loving Memory
of the children killed
at the Covenant School*

*Ruth Edwards in Loving Memory
of her sons, Marvin Edwards and
Courtney Edwards, and her
daughter in law, Susan Edwards*

*Ann Flatt in Loving Memory
of her daughter
Sherry Hooton,
and her son Chad Flatt*

*Don & Vickie Garner
in Loving Memory of their son,
Aaron Garner*

*Sandra Chaiken
in Loving Memory of
Pamela Sue Chaiken,
daughter of Lionel and Sandra
Chaiken sister of Stephanie*

*John and Mignon Friedmann,
Dr. John Friedmann Jr.
in Loving Memory
of their daughter and sister,
Jennifer Lee Friedmann (Jena)*

*John R and Nancy Cheadle
in Loving Memory
of their son
John R. "Ro" Cheadle, III*



*John and Mary Hodsdon
in Loving Memory
of their daughter
Mary Grace Hodsdon*

Each month, Allegra Print & Imaging, 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.

It's My Choice:* **To Be a Survivor** **Or** **Be a Victim*

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| To seek out people and resources who will listen and care when I need support | OR | retreat from life and isolate myself from sources of support. |
| To search for meaningful things to give my life a sense of purpose | OR | decide I have no hope or purpose in life and that I have nothing to live for. |
| To realize that loss is only one of the many factors in my life | OR | see myself only as a bereaved parent and allow this to blacken and disrupt all aspects of my life. |
| To communicate with family and friends when I need information and help | OR | wait for others to discover what I need, getting angry and pitying myself when they don't. |
| To accept what is gone and out of my control and act on what I can do | OR | constantly pity myself over what has changed and what I can't do. |
| To try to understand how my family feels—they hurt too | OR | feel that absolutely no one can understand me and what I am going through. |
| To look for ways to fight back against negative feelings | OR | feel that I am helpless and at the mercy of fate. |
| To talk about fears with someone I trust | OR | bottle up fears and horrors that are unexpressed and let them have power over me. |
| To accept my grief as a healing process in my recovery from loss | OR | be ashamed of my grief and pretend all is well to protect others' discomfort. |
| To be angry at the circumstances of the death and seek comfort and strength from God or others | OR | blame God for my circumstances and become angry, bitter and alienated from Him. |

Adapted from *Positive Patterns of Survival*, A segment of the *I Can Cope* course
TCF, Australia



June 11 Meeting: Annual Balloon 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.**

We will have a short ceremony when we will release our 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:** Main dish other than barbecue, which will be provided by the chapter.*
***H-M:** Cole slaw, baked beans, salad or other side*
***N-Z:** Dessert or chips*



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!



We are very pleased to announce The Compassionate Friends (TCF) 46th Annual National Conference in Denver! TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief, all while making friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed and rekindled each year at TCF conferences.

Register online at www.compassionatefriends.org.

Unique and cherished highlights of our conference include our heartfelt Saturday evening Candle Lighting Program, Sharing Sessions, Keynote Addresses, Healing Haven, Butterfly Boutique, Crafty Corner, and Silent Auction. Our weekend of inspiration, sharing, and learning is followed by the Walk to Remember on Sunday morning.

This year's conference will be held at the Sheraton Denver Downtown. **Reservations can now be made online at TCF's dedicated reservation link available at www.compassionatefriends.org.** Our discounted room rate with the Sheraton is \$159 per night plus tax. Please note that each attendee can reserve a maximum of two rooms. Many attendees arrive on Thursday since the conference begins early on Friday morning. We also have pre-conference activities that are offered on Thursday evening, that attendees find beneficial. We look forward to seeing you in Denver!

Father's Day

I just finished watching another miserable cologne commercial on TV. For some reason these are the first signs of the upcoming holiday, commercials that are only shown at Christmas and Father's Day to give wives and kids some idea of what to get Dad to celebrate a gift-oriented holiday.

Like the other fathers who read this newsletter, I know the gift I'd like to get this Father's Day, just as I know there is no way that it will happen. My son's life. An opportunity not to hurt when I see boys who are the age my son should be now. A chance to dream those dreams for that little boy again. But that's not going to happen. Instead, I will get up on that day, having called and wished my father a happy day the night before, and go to the florist for the flowers I will place on my son's grave. I will stand alone and cry for a time, then return home to my wife and our infant son. This year will have a greater measure of peace due to young Dan's arrival, but I shall always have that Alex-sized hole in my soul, a longing that I know I will have until I too die.

Like many bereaved fathers I have felt the lack of understanding of the non-bereaved on how a father should mourn his child's death, and for how long. I do not understand how a society can have such belief in the strength of maternal love, and do such a good job of ignoring the intensity of paternal love. From the people whose only question at Alex's memorial service was on how my wife was dealing with this tragedy, to the long-time friend who didn't understand my choking up after watching a Hallmark Card commercial last year, the majority of people around us seem to have difficulty with the thought that a father may need to grieve for his deceased child just as much as a mother might.

So that is where some support and love is needed, and needed badly. Of course, we have Compassionate Friends, but something more personal and closer to home is needed. In a recent newsletter there was a note from a bereaved mother from New Jersey asking fathers and siblings to be understanding of a grieving mother's needs on Mother's Day. I agree, but I would also hope that you ladies will not forget your husbands this Father's Day as well. It is frequently said that we males don't often talk of our emotional needs, and are reluctant to show our pain, but we need love and "warm fuzzies" when we hurt also. Please remember us on June 18 [Father's Day], and please remember also that those cute little sentimental commercials that hurt you in May, take their toll on us in June. There are definitely times when I can do without Old Spice, McDonalds, Hallmark, and AT&T.

Brothers, I wish you peace, comfort, and love.

Doug Hughes
TCF Cincinnati, OH

One evening at a gathering of men, Sir Harry Lauder was speaking of the influence of a human life. He told of his boyhood memories of the lamplighter in London who moved down his street each night with a long taper.

"I could not see the old man himself; it was entirely dark at the foot of the lamp posts; but I knew where he was by the row of lights he left behind him.

In their own way, each child leaves behind a light to shine, although we can see them no more...."

TCF, Abilene TX



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
615-294-4959
- AIDS**..... Joyce Soward
615-754-5210
- Illness**..... David and Peggy Gibson
615-308-2520 or 615-504-4307
- 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

You have memories – don't crowd them out

Think about them – Treasure them

*And let them bring you solace
and a measure of joy.*

TCF, Louisville, KY

Loving expressions from three of our Nashville TCF dads:*Dreams*

*If I could have dreamed anything,
I couldn't have dreamed you.
A smile blazingly radiant,
A kind soul through and through.*

*From the day you arrived,
My heart skipped a beat,
A girl, it's a girl they said!
My life is now complete.*

*A reader, a runner,
No way! It can't be true!
And my own sense of humor?
God, how can I thank you?*

*A beautiful smile,
With flaxen hair of gold,
You are just so amazing,
A wonder to behold.*

*If I could now dream anything,
You know what it would be?
Today's dream for anything ...
s you still here with me.*

Stephen Aud
TCF, Nashville, TN

*When Lost in Grief*

*Let's let love lead the way when we're lost
It'll build us a bridge for our hearts to cross
Our love is stronger than a physical loss
Let's let love lead the way when we're lost*

Mike Bell
TCF, Nashville, TN

*How*

*It seems so long ago and yet,
Like yesterday we won't forget,
That our beautiful child passed away.
How did we make it to this day?*

*The love we have for that special one,
The hope, the fear and having fun,
With our child we miss so very strong.
How could we have survived this long?*

*We speak to her each and every day
With longing and loving we often say,
We miss you and don't want you to see us cry.
How is it possible for this much time to go by?*

*We cry more times than we thought we could
And know that it is healing, and also good,
To express our never-ending love for you.
How hard it has been to make it through.*

*We are healing a little as time moves past
Because of the life we shared, that didn't last
As long as we wanted, of that, we are sure.
How many more years must we endure?*

*We share your life with those who care
And try to help others who may not be aware
Of the time that will pass without their child.
How do we explain this ride that is so wild?*

*Each anniversary that we manage to reach
Is part of the healing and helps us teach
Those around us that are just getting started.
How long it has been since our child departed.*

*The years seem endless, once in a while,
And yet we still find it possible to manage a smile
When we think of the life we shared so lovingly.
How then, do we make it to the next anniversary?*

*We miss her still and after all these years,
Some healing has come through so many tears,
Shed because we love her, that is for sure!
How else could we have come so far, but for her?*

Twenty-Five Years ago, today 3/24/2023

We are that much closer to seeing her again.

Dan Gardner
TCF, Nashville, TN



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

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 8283, Hermitage, TN 37076. 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

How You Can Help

Most people who attend TCF meetings never heard of TCF before they lost a child, and many bereaved parents still have not heard that there is an organization that exists to help them navigate their grief journey. If you know a family in the middle Tennessee area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you think they would benefit from finding about TCF and possibly attending a TCF meeting, we will be happy to send you some information that you may share with them about what TCF is and what we do to support bereaved parents. If you have attended a TCF meeting, it might be helpful if you would invite them to attend their first TCF meeting with you. We also have a monthly newsletter that they can receive free of charge simply by asking for it.



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, 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

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June 2023

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 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 life, we become one in our grief which mourns this death. I think I understand, 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. Oh, God, help me to communicate my deepest and most sensitive feelings to my wife so we may become whole together.

Norman Hagley
TCF, Palestine, TX

Strength and Courage

*It takes strength to be firm
It takes courage to be gentle
It takes strength to stand guard
It takes courage to let down your guard*

*It takes strength to conquer
It takes courage to surrender
It takes strength to be certain
It takes courage to have doubt*

*It takes strength to feel a friend's pain
It takes courage to feel your own pain
It takes strength to hide feelings
It takes courage to show them*

*It takes strength to endure abuse
It takes courage to stop it
It takes strength to stand alone
It takes courage to lean on another*

*It takes strength to love
It takes courage to be loved
It takes strength to survive
It takes courage to live.*



John G. Young
Mississaiya, Ont. Canada

