**November 2015 The Compassionate Friends Volume 29● Number 11**

***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.*

**November 8 Program:**

***Remember!***

***TCF NASHVILLE***

***HAS MOVED!***

ALL MONTHLY TCF MEETINGS ARE NOW HELD AT OUR NEW HOME,

THE AMERICAN BUILDERS & CONTRACTORS (ABC) BUILDING,

1604 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210

***What’s in a Name?***

A

s grieving parents, we know that the precious sound of

our child’s name is balm to the heart. As the birth of your child

drew nigh, you probably gave careful consideration to choosing this

great gift: his or her given name.

This month, our program will consist of an open-mic session allowing

you a chance to share the choosing of your child’s name and maybe a

quick story of how it affected their life, short though it was. This program

will give life to our memories through sharing and help us know each

other’s children a little better.

Please join us for this program and our regular sharing tables to follow.

**Candlelight Memorial Service**

T

he December 13 memorial service will take place at our new regular meeting home, the ABC Building on Elm Hill Pike and will be here before we know it. It is important that **everyone** wishing to have their child’s photo in the memorial service follow very carefully the instructions on page 7 of this newsletter.  **THERE IS A SUBMISSION DEADLINE THAT MUST BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO.** We invite all of you to enjoy this opportunity to see your child on the big screen! If you have not attended the candlelight memorial service, we encourage you to do so. This is a very moving and powerful program. All family members, siblings and friends are invited.

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.

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National Office P. O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696—Phone 630 990-0010 or Toll free: 1-877 969-0010

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

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Detour of the Month – Thanksgiving

W

ell, here it is--detour time again! And just when you were about headed back to the main road after Halloween. Some out there think of the four months of October, November, December and January as the holiday season, but we know better, don’t we? We know they’re really the detour season, and I don’t have to tell you why, do I?

About this time last year I had a really good laugh when I received a letter from a member of the Atlanta Chapter where she told me, among other things, that she and her husband and their two young boys were heading for Florida over Thanksgiving. “We are not,” she said “going to sit around a turkey and pretend to be thankful.” Now, that “ain’t” observing that day in a traditional way. Do whatever it is that you need to do this year, if Thanksgiving is a problem. Explain to those who really care about you that this year will, by necessity, be different. Hope they will understand, but if they don’t, let it be their problem, for your needs are paramount right now.

I’m happy to report that I look forward to our traditional day now. (Let me tell you, there was a time I didn’t!) I hope you will soon reach that place, if you haven’t already. I just want to assure you that nowhere is it carved in stone that you must sit around a turkey pretending.

Mary Cleckley

TCF Atlanta, GA

**The Little Things**

O

ften, even the simple tasks of everyday living seem to drain every ounce of one’s energy. Remember going to the grocery store even months after your child’s death and the feelings you had as you passed up his or her favorite cereal? Or watching another child the same age as yours in a restaurant and trying to swallow your food--you probably didn’t even taste it. Or hearing a certain song in public and fighting back the tears? Sometimes even getting through the day in your own home makes you feel like you’ve run a marathon and leaves you in worse shape. You probably never dreamed that doing the family laundry could make you cry or that getting a piece of mail in your child’s name could suck your breath away.

Even the best of friends and families can’t possibly know the strength you must summon day after day after day. We shouldn’t expect them to understand completely, but it does get lonely. Perhaps this quote puts it in a nutshell:

*One sad thing about this world is that the acts that take the most out of you are usually the ones that other people will never know about.*

Anne Tyler

TCF, Sacramento Valley, CA

**But it Hurts Differently**

T

here is no way to predict how you will feel. The reactions to grief are not like recipes with different ingredients and certain results. Each person mourns in a different way. You may cry hysterically or you may remain outwardly controlled, showing little emotion. You may lash out in anger against your family and friends, or you may express your gratitude for their concern and dedication. You may be calm one moment--in turmoil the next. Reactions are varied and contradictory. Grief is universal. At the same time it is extremely personal.

Rabbi Earl Grollmon

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**Sibling Grief:**

I

was 12 and my brother was 15 when he died. At the time, my mother and I were in Massachusetts, while my brother stayed in town with my father to attend summer school.

I remember my mother telling me about it; it had been an accident. She took me around to the back of the house so we could be in private. I was very glad of this. I felt like I should cry since she was crying, even though I had to fake it. I also remember the funeral and my brother lying in the coffin. That’s when the tears were real. If I had to give anyone advice, it would be to see the body because that’s when I could finally come to my senses about the reality.

After that I have forgotten mostly everything. I believe that’s how I dealt with my grief, by forgetting most everything. I do remember one thing that helped me and my parents. We would talk a lot. It also helped me especially when I cried with my mother.

Jenny Pittman (sibling)

TCF, Tuscaloosa, AL **Kind Little Deeds**

*The kind little deeds*

*so thoughtfully done.*

*The favors of friends*

*and the love that someone*

*Unselfishly gives us*

*in a myriad of ways,*

*Expecting no payment*

*and no words of praise –*

*Oh, great is our loss*

*when we no longer find*

*A thankful response*

*to things of this kind.*

*For the joy of enjoying*

*and the fullness of living*

*Are found in the heart*

*that is filled with Thanksgiving.*

Helen Steiner Rice

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**HEY…TCF Nashville! Let’s get together!**

New! Watch our website and Facebook page, ‘The Compassionate Friends, Nashville TN’ for the location of upcoming Social Events.

We will have something different each month and will try to find locations all around middle Tennessee to accommodate everyone.

***Block your calendars for the 4th Sunday***

***of each month, 3:00 to 5:00PM.***

**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

bd06374_

bd06374_Friends are angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly.

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**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

***Silent Visit***

*I’m going to your grave today.*

*With flowers, orange, yellow and red.*

*I’ll throw the faded ones away*

*And leave fresh ones instead.*

*I’ll kneel beside the place you lie*

*Placed there a year ago,*

*And once again my heart will break*

*And unchecked tears will flow.*

*With gentle fingers I’ll caress*

*Your name carved in the stone*

*And brush away the fallen leaves,*

*November winds have blown.*

*Then I’ll dry my eyes, I’ll say a prayer*

*And as I raise my head*

*Another grieving mother*

*Just tucked her child in bed.*

Alice C. Osborn

TCF, So. Central Missouri

**One Week Young**

Seven long and lonely days have passed

Since you were born

It is the anniversary of the day

You lay on my lap breathless.

And in your quiet beauty

I shall always remember

How perfect you were.

And those few treasured moments

Of joy and pride

In knowing

That you would always be my son

No matter what…

Bonnie Rabic

TCF, Jasper, GA

## *Ghost Story*

*“Daddy, Daddy, come go with me, please.”*

*To others it’s only the wind in the trees,*

*But in the soft haze of dusk when the mind runs free,*

*The ghost in the woods is calling to me.*

*He’s spoken often since we’ve been apart,*

*In a voice heard not with my ears but my heart.*

*Down familiar, overgrown pathways he leads*

*Me to the creek where wood ducks nest in the weeds.*

*“Over here. Over here.” By the ghost I’m drawn*

*Into the thicket where he once found a fawn,*

*White spots on brown in a thick bed of leaves,*

*Had he not shown me I would have believed*

*It was bare. “Look up, Daddy, look. It’s still there.”*

*The frayed end of the rope swings high in the air*

*Dangles, unused since he left. Just beyond,*

*Past the spring and the meadows lies the pond.*

*“Come. Come.” Running ahead, he leads me there*

*To the sunken log in the corner where*

*He caught his first fish. I stand, now alone,*

*While darkness deepens, then slowly head home,*

*Hearing his voice fade into the haunting call*

*Of the owl. I stroll through the dark and with hope recall*

*How a few past times before my walk was done,*

*I experienced something beyond belief,*

*As, wholly engulfed by memories and love, for a brief*

*Magic moment, I and the ghost became one.*

*From* Rachel’s Cry—A Journey Through Grief

By Richard A. Dew, M.D., TCF, Knoxville, TN

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**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 in their newsletter 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). or emailing davidg14@bellsouth.net.

**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.

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**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 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. See www.nationalshare.org.

**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:615%20963-4732) or email [griefsupport@alivehospice.org](mailto: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](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) and click on chapter locator.

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**CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE—December 13, 2015**

R

egardless of past participation, **EVERY FAMILY WISHING TO TAKE PART IN THE MEMORIAL SERVICE MUST RETURN THIS FORM.** We need to receive it no later than Saturday, December 4, 2015.

**Do NOT send photos to the TCF P.O. box—they might get bent or damaged.**

**Mail to:**

**Steve & Paige Czirr**

**1623 Fair House Road**

**Spring Hill, TN 37174**

**Instructions:** A computerized process (Power Point) is being used to display our children’s pictures on the big screen. An original 5x7 photo (no copies, please) may be used. If a 5x7 is not available, any size will do; however, the 5x7 or larger is easier to process. The original photo will be returned to you at the memorial service while the image will be stored for use next year.

**Place a sticky note on the back of the photo with the child’s name clearly printed. Do not write on the photo itself.**

**Child’s name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Please print the name as you wish it to be read at the service along with phonetic pronunciation, if needed.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend and am enclosing an original photo of my child. (First time in the memorial service.)**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend and am enclosing a different photo of my child to be used in place of the photo you have from last year’s service.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend and would like for you to use the photo you have saved from last year.**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_ I will attend and would like for my child’s name to be called and I’ll light a candle, but I will not have a picture shown.**

**Your name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**You may alternatively e-mail your child’s picture to Steve Czirr at** [**sczirr@att.net**](mailto:sczirr@att.net)**.**

**Be sure to include your child’s name in the e-mail.**

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**Holiday Gifts for Children Needed**

E

ach year, our chapter donates holiday gifts to children at a worthy establishment that works with children who are not living at home and are under care for the holidays. Since things went so well with Youth Villages in years past, it has been decided to provide gifts for them again this year. The children range in age from 6 to 18. For many of these children, these will be the only gifts they receive this holiday season. If you would like to help, you may participate by bringing new UNWRAPPED gifts to the TCF December 14 Memorial Service. Below is a list of the most requested items.

**Most Requested Items:**

Art supplies

Toys from the movie Frozen

Pre-paid Cell Phones (and minutes)

DVD’s (PG-13 and Under)

DVD players

MP3 Player

Gift cards such as Game Stop, Wal-Mart, Target, Amazon

I tunes gift cards

Current Rap/ Pop CD’s

CD Players/ Boom Box

Gameboy Games (Teen Rated)

Xbox Play Station Games (Teen Rated)

Digital cameras

Remote Control Cars, Trucks or Planes

Girlie things like journals, gel pens, scrap booking items

Board Games (Monopoly, Life, Mouse Trap, Jenga, Uno etc.)

Barbie Dolls & Accessories for Barbie Matchbox/ Hot Wheels car playsets

Lego Sets

Books (Twilight, Harry Potter, Narnia, and current top sellers

Fashion Bracelets or kits

Action Figure Toys

Watches (Girls & Boys)

Puzzles for teenagers

Winter coats for teenagers

Hats/Gloves/Scarves

Hair accessories

Skateboards/helmets

Footballs, Basketballs, Soccer balls etc.

Nerf toys

Anything Spiderman or Spongebob

**Stocking Stuffers:**

Matchbox cars

Small notepads , Pens and pencils

Candy

Decks of Cards

Jewelry

Hygiene products

Billfolds and wallets, Cute little change purses for girls

Makeup items/nail polish

Socks

Gift cards for fast food restaurants

***Gift wrapping supplies appreciated, but please,***

***DO NOT WRAP THE GIFTS***