

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NEW MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. Box 8283 • Hermitage, TN 37076 • (615) 356-4TCF(4823) •

Nashville Website: <http://tcfnashville.com/home.aspx>



Chapter Leaders: Justin and Tracy Brewer, (615) 812-1504, e-mail: tbrewer395@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Melanie Bell, (615) 513-5913, email: melaniebell2210@gmail.com

Treasurer: Ed Pyle, (615) 712-3245, email: edpyletaxlaw@gmail.com

Regional Coordinators: Polly Moore, (931) 962-0458, email: lolly39@aol.com

Dana Gall (931) 581-7090



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

June 9th 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.



Life is eternal, and love is immortal, and death is only a horizon;
and a horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.

Rossiter W. Raymond

ALWAYS WITH LOVE, WE REMEMBER THEM--**In the month of their births****Jaden A. Clark**June 12
Son of
Tricia Clark**Stephen Joseph Donlon**June 16
Son of
Pat and Ellen Donlon
Brother of
Katy, David, John, and
Elizabeth**Laura Abigail Czirr
(Abby)**June 22
Daughter of
Steve and Paige Czirr
Granddaughter of
Robert and Cynthia
Daugherty,
John and JoAnn Czirr**Jeffrey Glenn Eakes**June 26
Son of
Don and Sherry Eakes**Chase Lee Harris**June 27
Son of
Kirk and Shayne
Harris
and
Paul and Stacey Fish**Charles Courtney Edwards**June 14
Son of
Charles and Ruth Edwards**Stephen Joseph Fay**June 6
Son of
Tommy and Pennie Fay**Tyler Ross Jeanneret**June 14
Son of
D.J. and Pamela
Jeanneret**Lia Usman**June 6
Daughter of
Zafar and Sana
Usman**Christopher Miller Harris**June 19
Son of
Bill Harris and Judy Harris**Allen Glenn Mays**June 3
Son-in-law of
Roy and Carole Renfro**Ryan James Tropauer**June 25
Son of
David and Debbie
Tropauer**Zackery Tyler Lewis Allen**June 5
Son of
Stephanie Willis**Evan Barrett Williamson**June 25
Son of
Beverly Williamson**Christopher Michael Swayze**June 6
Son of
Michael and Carole Swayze

Why?After a while
you reduce
all of your tortures
to one simple question:
why!You no longer say
“what if”You no longer say
“how could it happen”
you only ask
why!Until one day
you find yourself
sobbing the truth:
no one can ever know.

Sascha

And in the month of their deaths

<p>Lisa Allgood June 30 Daughter of Harold and Betty Allgood</p>	<p>Misty Whitney Ambrose June 18 Daughter of Michael and Treva Ambrose</p>	<p>Eric DeWayne Brown June 8 Son of Sharon Brown</p>	<p>Jamison Michael Duncan (Jamie) June 13 Son of Mike and Kay Duncan Brother of Jon</p>
<p>Stephen Joseph Fay June 5 Son of Tommy and Pennie Fay</p> <p></p>	<p>Jennifer Lee Friedmann (Jena) June 9 Daughter of John and Mignon Friedmann Sister of Dr. John Friedmann</p>	<p>Tristan Ray Fillpot June 9 Son of Lorenzo and Floy Wilson</p> <p></p>	<p>Cole Hansen Kilgore June 5 Son of Henry and Kathy Beeler Nephew of Kacey Gant</p>
<p>David Kremer, Jr. June 26 Son of David & Connie Kremer</p>	<p>Briana Leigh Kulesza June 19 Daughter of Larry and Donna Kulesza</p>	<p>Jaxon Leasure June 8 Son of Trip and Darcy Leasure</p>	<p>Lisa Michelle Lombardo June 14 Daughter of Frank and Stacy Lombardo</p>
<p>Travis David Pate June 16 Son of Melanie Pate</p> <p></p>	<p>Danny Wayne Phillips, Jr. (Red) June 8 Son of Janie Totty</p>	<p>Dustin Scott Reigel June 17 Son of Rebecca Powell</p>	<p>David Brenden Spelta June 5 Son of Jeff and Lisa Spelta</p>
<p>Cody Turner June 21 Son of Teresa Crutcher</p>	<p>Matthew James Truman June 7 Son of Cathy McMorrow</p>	<p></p>	<p>Nathan Young June 22 Son of Dana Young Gall</p>

Plan Now for TCF National Conference:

New Orleans, LA July 12 – 14, 2024

We are very pleased to announce The Compassionate Friends (TCF) 47th Annual National Conference in New Orleans! 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.

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.

*Terri Holsapple
in Loving Memory
of her daughter,
Cindy Marie Gabrysiak*



*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*

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, Price Printing, 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.

June 9th 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.

Rain or Shine!

The birthday table will be set up as usual.

Suggested items to bring: a picnic blanket, outdoor chairs, outdoor games, and 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: *Dessert or chips*

H-M: *Main dish other than barbecue, which will be provided by the chapter.*

N-Z: *Cole slaw, baked beans, salad, or other side*



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!

Father's Day

*Warm and sunny day in June,
Father's day.
Children, small and grown
Give gifts to father
Say thanks to father
Say I love you.*

*But there are fathers
Whose children are not here
To give gifts and say thanks
And say I love you.*

*Remember the fathers
Whose children are gone,
Because all too often
They grieve in heartbreak silence.*

Sascha



School's Out

*That time of year again,
when children move
from classroom to reality.*

*And deeper even than before
your heart recalls the child
who left this life
to move from here
to ultimate reality.*

*Give blessing to that journey,
when you can.*

Sascha



Please Ask

*Someone asked me about you today.
It's been so long since anyone has done that.
It felt so good to talk about you,
To share my memories of you,
To simply say your name out loud.
She asked me if I minded talking about
What happened to you...
Or would it be too painful to speak of it.
I told her I think of it every day
And speaking about it helps me to release
The tormented thoughts whirling around in my head.
She said she never realized the pain
Would last this long...
She apologized for not asking sooner.
I told her, "Thanks for asking."
I don't know if it was curiosity
Or concern that made her ask,
But told her, "Please do it again sometime...
Soon."*

Barbara Taylor Hudson
Kansas City Chapter, Parents of Murdered Children

People Think

*People think we're fine, you know.
They say, "Oh, siblings heal so fast."
But they don't know the empty feelings
Of our longing for the past.*

*People think we're fine, you know.
"Look how they've resumed their lives," they say.
But they don't know of our troubled heart
Or the loneliness from day to day.*

*People think we're fine, you know.
"See how they're getting over it?" they surmise.
But they don't know that we've
Learned to laugh and smile
Only to complete our broken heart's disguise.*

Mary Matthews
TCF, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Everything is Still Here

I still walk the sidewalks around the neighborhood where I took you out in the stroller, son, and later when we walked hand in hand. You were so excited seeing the rabbits in their backyard pen, and the flurry of the birds and the squirrels. Your trombone is still here where you practiced for the concert band in middle school. And I can still see you onstage at the piano playing recitals of Bach and the scores of your favorite movies back in high school. How talented and smart you were.

And here is your electric guitar still hanging on the wall, waiting for you to get with your buddies and fire it up for a rock jam. And I still love looking through all your drawings and cartoons from those school years, and your essays and poems too. So creative.

I've kept a few of your favorite toys, including the Hot Wheels Motorcycles! How we both loved racing them together when you were five, with me down on the floor and you laughing and running after them as they flew down the hall, and you coming back with, "Let's do it again Daddy!"

It's all here--the photographs, the videos, the never-ending memories, right up until after your 20th birthday when your illness overtook you.

Yes, everything is still here,

except you.



Mike Bell
TCF, Nashville, TN

A Dad Shares

It was one of those gray October days when my wife and I climbed into the car. There was an air of nervous, excited anticipation as we drove off to the hospital to give birth and welcome our third child home. We were blissfully unaware of the tragedy that would unfold before us.

Moments later in a cold, sterile delivery room, our beautiful son was born. He did not move. He did not cry. His tiny heart was still. "STILLBORN." Very few words registered after that. "Prolapsed cord; unfortunate accident; did all we could." I barely heard any of this, the shock was just too great. I couldn't cry, I just stood there, holding my wife while she sobbed. All I could feel was a kind of numb feeling.

My instinct and conditioning was to protect my wife. I was brought up to believe that big boys DON'T cry, and they are supposed to protect their families. I felt so helpless. I couldn't protect my wife from this pain, and I couldn't protect my son from death. I had failed.

When the shock finally gave way I was angry at the whole world. I found that somehow people around me could readily accept my anger, but not my grief. I needed to cry, but simply refused to give myself permission.

The grief I needed to express for my son began to eat away at my insides. I held the lid down tighter and tighter which took a tremendous amount of energy. My health began to deteriorate. From month to month I was always coming down

with colds, backaches and bouts of influenza. My personality took a downward plunge as well. I would lash out at people for the silliest reasons, sometimes for no reason at all. My work habits began to suffer and I couldn't do my job properly. This past year was so bad that I felt like the thin thread I was hanging onto was going to snap, and that really frightened me.

The turning point came when my wife and friends encouraged me to attend an Elisabeth Kubler-Ross "Life, Death and Transition" workshop. Elisabeth provided us with a safe place to get in touch with our emotions and enabled us to "let it out." When I started to cry, it was like someone opened up a tap. I cried out four and a half years of unshed tears. After this pool was emptied I felt very different. Somehow I felt lighter. I am no longer carrying around all of this grief. My life is very different now. My relationships with those I love are much more meaningful. I have learned the hard way that it's okay to cry and be emotional. We are given emotions to make our lives richer and fuller, but we can turn them into monsters if we don't provide for their healthy release. This is our free choice.

My message to other dads is this: if you can't cry and you find yourself saying over and over again that you've dealt with it, maybe you really haven't! Find a safe place to face your tears and let them come. Each tear shed is one less to carry around inside.

Len Fraser
TCF, Winnipeg, Canada

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 out 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 groups 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 Website —A Treasure for You

When you log onto the TCF Website 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 2024

For Dads



What I can't understand is how we men will run to someone else to get a small splinter out of our finger but will refuse to ask directions when we are driving and will drive and swear for hours before asking for assistance. The biggest splinter I ever had was when my daughter died. I needed help. Ministers, funeral directors, friends, fellow workers, doctors, psychologists and psychiatrists couldn't help—they didn't know what I was going through. One friend, whose son had been murdered said, "Go to a Compassionate Friends meeting." He knew! I went to a TCF meeting. No one took the splinter out. No one offered any "how to's." No one told me "You should...." No one could, or tried to take away all the pain. But they had been there. They knew, and because they knew, and I knew that they knew, it helped. What I had gone through and will go through in my grief, someone had been there before me. This knowledge has assisted me in my travel through pain. I still have that big hole in my gut. My eyes still fill with tears at odd times. But I know that I'm not crazy. I know that I am not alone. I know that others have gone through these same things—and for some dumb reason, this helps.

Tom Crouthamel
TCF, Sarasota, FL