

# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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

## September 9 Meeting:

### Grief Is Not An Emotion

Hear from Michael Burcham, author of *The Mask, A Father's Reflection of Loss*, about how he considers grief to be a cocktail of emotions, rather than one single emotion. He will give an inside view of his personal journey of grief after the loss of his son Ryan and how this journey and the "cocktail of emotions" are shared by so many other grieving parents.



*Give sorrow words.  
The grief that does not speak  
Whispers the o'erfraught heart  
and bids it break.*

Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

### 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.

<b>Accidental Death</b> .....	Mike and Paula Childers 615-646-1333
<b>AIDS</b> .....	Joyce Soward 615-754-5210
<b>Illness</b> .....	David and Peggy Gibson 615-356-1351
<b>Infant</b> .....	Jayne Head 615-264-8184
<b>SIDS</b> .....	Kris Thompson 931-486-9088
<b>Suicide</b> .....	Ron Henson 615-789-3613
<b>Small Child</b> .....	Kenneth and Kathy Hensley 615-237-9972
<b>Alcohol/Drug Overdose</b> .....	Ed Pyle 615-712-3245

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—*

**Glenn Thomas Allen, Jr.**  
(Tommy)  
September 2  
Son of Ann McKee  
Stepson of Wilson McKee

**Daniel Bowen Bishop**  
September 16  
Son of  
Kevin and Molly Bishop

**Bonnie Elizabeth Brandon**  
September 19  
Daughter of  
Ricky and Lisa Wales

**Charles Michael Brown**  
(Charlie)  
September 15  
Son of Dan and June Brown

**Caleb Pruett Buchanan**  
September 7  
Son of Randy Buchanan  
Grandson of Jeanette P.  
Buchanan

Brother of Debbie Hamilton and  
Keith Buchanan

**Emily Michelle Childers**  
September 30  
Daughter of  
Mike and Paula Childers  
Sister of  
Sarah Childers Wills and  
Julie Childers Young



**Jon Ashley Duncan**  
September 11  
Son of Mike and Kay Duncan

**Garry Lee Durichek**  
September 2  
Son of Jimmy and Barbara Hayes

**Blake William Eshenroder**  
September 25  
Son of Bill and Stacie Eshenroder

**Jonathan Charles Gay**  
September 5  
Son of Howard and Lynn Gay



**Jeremy George Hardy**  
September 16  
Son of George and Thelma Hardy

**Andrew Morris Pack**  
September 8  
Son of  
Wayne and Kassandra Pack

**Bert Rich**  
September 11  
Son of  
Shirley Rich-Brinegar

**Loren Carnell Ross**  
September 18  
Son of Lorita Ross  
Brother of  
Rita Phillips and Vershon Ross

*And in the month of their deaths—*

**James Michael Bolton (Mikey)**  
September 11  
Son of Jim and Loretta Bolton

**Pamela Sue Chaiken**  
September 29  
Daughter of  
Lionel and Sandra Chaiken

**Kaitlyn Kimberly Cook**  
September 15  
Daughter of  
Jim Cook and Sylvia Bosma

**Jared Todd Eubanks**  
September 7  
Son of Todd and Pam Eubanks

**Darby Felts**  
September 9  
Son of Deanie Gregory  
Nephew of Jean Porch

**Christopher Miller Harris**  
September 11  
Son of  
Bill Harris and Judy Harris

**Michael Scott Jones**  
September 16  
Son of Warren and Donna Jones  
and Betty D. Jones  
Brother of  
David, Jennifer, and Becky

**Lindsay Carole Miller**  
And her "other half"  
Maxim Siesov  
September 11  
Daughter of  
David and Rebecca Miller  
Granddaughter of  
Roy and Carole Renfro

**Andrew Mitchell (Drew)**  
September 24  
Son of  
Tom and Alice Mitchell

**Alicia P. Shaia**  
September 30  
Daughter of  
Cheryl Petrilli

**Michael Anthony Sewell**  
September 8  
Son of  
Mark Sewell and Tracy Ball

**Marisa Ann Wade**  
September 25  
Daughter of  
David Roark and  
Alicia Wade

**Brandon Frederick Weller**  
September 27  
Son of  
Freddy and Pippy Weller

**Don Bruce Winters**  
September 8  
Son of  
Jerry and Loretta Winters

**Ryan Lee Wiseman**  
September 5  
Son of  
Roger and Deborah Wiseman

**Christopher Adonis Wright**  
September 18  
Son of  
Aaron and Mary Corley



## 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.

*Michael and Treva Ambrose*

*In loving memory of  
their daughter,  
Misty Whitney Ambrose*

*Mike and Paula Childers*

*Sarah Childers Wills*

*And*

*Julie Childers Young*

*In loving memory of their daughter  
and sister,*

*Emily Michelle Childers*

*Martha Davenport*

*In loving memory of her  
granddaughter,*

*Lauren Kristina O'Saile*

*Daughter of*

*Don Davenport*



*Barbara Davies  
Through Nationwide  
workplace giving program*

*In loving memory of  
her stepsons,*

*Roy James Davies and*

*Taylor Davies*

*Sons of Roy Davies*

*Dan and June Brown*

*In loving memory of  
their son,*

*Charles Michael Brown (Charlie)*

*Bernita Lockett Honeysucker*

*In loving memory of her son,*

*Vontrekus Keon Lockett*



*Wayne and Cassandra Pack*

*In loving memory of their son,  
Andrew Morris Pack*

*Jennifer Phill*

*In loving memory of her son,  
Nigel Randolph Phill*

*An anonymous donor*

*In loving memory of*

*William John Shelburne (Will)*

*Claire Aven Shelburne*

*and their mother,*

*Laura Shelburne,*

*All of whom died together*

*Jerry and Loretta Winters*

*In loving memory of*

*their son, Don Bruce Winters*

*Each month, Allegra Print & Imaging, 601 Grassmere Park, 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.*

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## Reflections

**W**ith the death of my sister came some painful realizations: that life isn't always fair or predictable; that sometimes even my best still isn't good enough; and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable lessons and precious gifts. As a result of my sister's death, I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater compassion for those who hurt. I have learned to be a survivor and to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all, I have been given the gift of time – time to heal and time to replace those painful memories of death with priceless memories of my sister's life.

Cathy Schanberger  
from *This Healing Journey – An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings*  
©The Compassionate Friends

*There is no death. Only a change of worlds.*

Chief Seattle, 1855

## Helping Someone Survive

A death by suicide triggers great amounts of anger and guilt. However, some of those feelings can be balanced by struggling to see that the suicide was not so much a deliberate, hostile act, but a gesture of utter hopelessness and despair. Reminders that a person was so driven by emotional whirlwinds that it was impossible to sense any ray of hope, can temper considerably the emotional impact of a death by suicide.

One of the best responses to a suicide that I have ever heard came through a sermon delivered by a pastor of a young man who shot himself. With great eloquence, his pastor was able to convey tremendous hope through these words: "Our friend died on his own battlefield. He was killed in action fighting a civil war. He fought against adversaries that were as real to him as his casket is real to us. They were powerful adversaries. They took toll of his energies and endurance. They exhausted the last vestiges of his courage, and only God knows how this child of His suffered in the silent skirmishes that took place in his soul."



Victor Passchin

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### *Raining Days*

*It is raining inside my heart just now.  
The thunderstorms  
Of my grief have passed.  
The sun of love and friendship  
Break through the rain of my grief.  
On the very distant horizon,  
I see the dawn of hope and healing.*

*The beginning signs of new life are more apparent.  
Acceptance and growth are seeds  
Sprouting from the rain of my grief.  
Life renewed  
Will be at my hand one day.  
For right now, day to day, it is  
Raining inside my heart.*

Eloise Cole

TCF, Phoenix Area Chapter

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### School Starts

Strange things happen to you when your child dies. You'll fail if you try to make sense of most of it. Both my children had finished high school when my son died, yet I found the beginning of school—especially that first year—to be difficult. The bus stops in front of my home for the neighborhood children. Suddenly, as they all gathered to wait for the bus, I found myself reliving those simpler, happier days of old; longing for them actually. It was a painful time.

Now, if I, whose children were grown and gone, had a problem with school starting, those of you who do have school age children must know that your pain is normal. It's another reminder that life goes on—with or without our children—and acknowledging that hurts! I came to the conclusion that it was all right to pine for happier times and it was nothing to get upset about. As with many remnants of grief, I recognize it, allow it and then get on with my life.

Maybe you're like me, you'll always be a little nostalgic about school starting. That would probably have been true even if my son had lived. Maybe you, too?

Mary Cleckley

TCF, Stone Mountain, GA

*"The road to recovery from grief...is to take time to do things which will enable us to give a renewed meaning to our lives. That's when our journey through grief becomes a journey of discovering ourselves, our potential, and our resources in the encounter with life.*

*That's when we become BETTER PEOPLE rather than BITTER PEOPLE.*

*In grief, no one can take away our love.  
That call of life is to learn to love again."*

Father Arnaldo Pangrazze  
*Overcoming Grief*

## *I Saw You*

*I saw you today in the morning dew  
 As brilliant as a sea of shimmering diamonds  
 I shared the most amazing sunrise with you today  
 A million shades of red so random in their perfection  
 I heard you today in the laugh of my children  
 An enchanting melody a thousand angels strong  
 I walked with you today and we talked about everything  
 . . . and nothing all at once  
 I saw you today in the changing of the leaves  
 The colors of your life, the close of one season  
 And the ushering in of another  
 I sat beside a stream with you today  
 The peaceful flow, steady and constant  
 I saw you today . . . and you were perfect  
 And rest assured . . . I shall see you again*

Avery Smith  
 TCF Ada Area Chapter

## *Gather 'Round Me Broken Things*

*Soldiers without arms and shattered rocks;  
 Sea urchins, broken by the fall; and blocks,  
 Chipped and splintered in play.  
 Bring me games with pieces gone,  
 Guitars without strings, and clarinets,  
 Silent now, bereft of breath.  
 Bring me pictures,  
 scratched and torn,  
 Books without covers;  
 sandals worn.  
 Bring these treasures.  
 Then from me,  
 Take this heart and set it free.*

Stan Denny  
 TCF, Austin,,TX

## *A Day*

*A laugh a day keeps the heart pumping.  
 A tear a day keeps the mind clear.  
 A smile a day gives joy to others.  
 A hug a day gives the hopeless  
 hope.  
 A thought a day brings loved ones near.  
 A memory a day brings you closer to me.  
 Laughs, tears, smiles, hugs stitched with thoughts  
 and memories--  
 They're all in my days without you.*

Pam Burden  
 TCF, Augusta, GA



*The name of your dead child  
 is a magic word.*

*Did you Know?*

*At any given moment—  
 Whether busy or still—  
 Stop.  
 And think or say that name:*

*Something will happen  
 And whatever that something is,  
 Let it happen—  
 Even if it be tears.*

*The name of your child  
 is a magic word  
 To heal your heart.*

Sascha Wagner  
 TCF, Des Moines, IA

After my brother's funeral, someone told me I was handling my grief well. "No," I responded. "I am not doing well at all. If I were, I would crumple up on the floor and let my grief flood this room. As it is, I am stoically holding it all in because there's no one here who could be comfortable if I let it out."

Doug Manning  
 From *Don't Take My Grief Away*

## Hurrying Healing

I don't remember when the words first began to echo in the hollow aftermath of loss. But now it seems that every public or private death, every moment of mourning is followed by a call for "healing," a cry for "closure."

Last month, driving home in my car just 24 hours after three Kentucky students were shot to death in a school prayer meeting, I heard a Paducah minister talk about "healing." The three teenagers had yet to be buried, and he said it was time to begin the healing process, as if there were an antibiotic to be applied at the first sign of pain among the survivors.

Weeks later, at a Christmas party, a man offered up a worried sigh about a widowed mutual friend. "It's been two years," he said, "and she still hasn't achieved closure." The words pegged her as an underachiever who failed the required course in Mourning 201, who wouldn't graduate with her grief class.

This vocabulary of "healing" and "closure" has spread across the post-mortem landscape like a nail across my blackboard. It comes with an intonation of sympathy but an accent of impatience. It suggests after all, that death is something to be dealt with, that loss is something to get over – according to a prescribed emotional timetable.

It happened again when the Terry Nichols verdict came down. No sooner had the mixed counts of guilty and innocent been announced, than the usually jargon free Peter Jennings asked how it would help the "healing" for Oklahoma City. Assorted commentators and reporters asked the families whether they felt a sense of "closure."

The implicit expectation, even demand, was that the survivors of 168 deaths would traverse a similar emotional terrain and come to the finish line at the same designated time. Were two-and-a-half years too long to mourn a child blown up in a building?

It was the families themselves who set us straight with responses as persona and diverse as one young mother who said, "It's time to move on," and another who described her heart this way: "Sometimes I feel like it's bleeding."

In the Nichols sentencing trial last week, we got another rare sampling of raw grief. Laura Kennedy testified that in the wake of her son's death in 1995, "I have an emptiness inside of me that's there all the time." Diane Leonard said that since her husband's death her life "has a huge hole that can't be mended."

By the second day, however, the cameras had turned away, the microphones had turned a deaf ear, as if they had heard enough keening. Again, observers asked what effect a life-or-death sentence would have on, of course, "healing" and "closure."

I do not mean to suggest that the people who testified were "typical" mourners or the Oklahoma bombing a "typical" way of death. I mean to suggest that grief is always atypical – as individual as the death and the mourner.

The American way of dealing with it however has turned grieving into a set process with rules, stages, and of course deadlines. We have, in essence, tried to make a science of grief, to tuck messy emotions under neat clinical labels – like "survivor guilt" or "detachment." Sometimes, we confuse sadness with depression, replace comfort with Prozac. We expect, maybe insist upon an end to grief. Trauma, pain, detachment, acceptance in a year – time's up.

But in real lives, grief is a train that doesn't run on anyone else's schedule. Jimmie Holland at New York's Sloan-Kettering Hospital, who has studied the subject, knows that "normal grief may often be an ongoing lifelong process." Indeed, she says, "The expectation of healing becomes an added burden. We create a sense of failure. We hear people say, 'I can't seem to reach closure; I'm not doing it fast enough.'"

Surely it is our own anxiety in the presence of pain, our own fear of loss and death that makes us wish away another's grief or hide our own. But in every life, losses will accumulate like stones in a backpack. We will all be caught at times between remembrance and resilience.

So whatever our national passion for emotional efficiency, for quality-time parents and one-minute managers, there simply are no one-minute mourners. Hearts heal faster from surgery than from loss. And when the center of someone's life has been blown out like the core of a building, is it any wonder if it takes so long even to find a door to close?

Ellen Goodman

*This timeless column appeared originally in the January 4, 1998 issue of The Boston Globe. Ellen Goodman is a Globe columnist. © Copyright 1998 Globe Newspaper Company.*



*Hope is the child  
of sorrow and patience.*

Sascha



## **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, will 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**

In order to meet printing deadlines, all donations and original poems or articles must be received by the meeting day of the preceding month to be published in the next issue of the TCF Nashville newsletter. All donations and submissions are greatly appreciated.



## **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](http://www.alivealone.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](http://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](http://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:6159634732) 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.

# *The Compassionate Friends*

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**September 2018**

## **Those Anniversaries – What Do I Do?**

**T**he anniversary of a child's death often is anticipated with the fear of having to relive the horrors of that day when it happened. Birthdays remind us of happier days, of hopes and dreams and aspirations—now moot. What do we do with these days? How can we make them meaningful? Members of our TCF chapter were asked what they do to commemorate their children's special days. Perhaps their responses will give you some helpful ideas.

1. I donate a book, written by my son's favorite author, to the public library.
2. For our son's last birthday, we took him to Gatlinburg. Now the whole family returns there each year on his birthday.
3. We release balloons (biodegradable, of course) with messages to him.
4. We have a special family dinner with her favorite food and cake and share memories of her with each other.
5. We make a donation to TCF or another charity in his memory.
6. My husband and I spend the day together just talking about his birth—remembering the small things.
7. We send flowers for our church altar in our child's memory. (Also, lilies at Easter and a poinsettia at Christmas.)
8. We eat at her favorite restaurant.
9. We take flowers to the cemetery.
10. We plant flowers at his grave.
11. We light a candle and let it burn all day beside his picture.
12. Chicken Nuggets (her term—actually Chicken Nuggets are at a different fast food chain) at Burger King were her special birthday treat, so we go there each year on her birthday.
13. Since we can't give our little boy a toy, we give one to another child—preferably a stranger.
14. We write letters to her and read what each other has written
15. I publish a poem in my local paper.
16. We put a memorial in the paper.
17. I watch a video of my child, look at photographs—and remember, with love.