

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.

October 14 Meeting:

Tips for Handling the Holidays

End of the year Holidays can be a traumatic time following the loss of a child. Much of the focus of these holidays is on children, family, and giving, and many times one's sense of loss is so overwhelming that the joy of the season is lost. Some parents have said, "I would just rather do without the holidays, but I don't have that option." Others have said, "I just want some way to survive the holidays."

So, how do grieving parents cope with the holidays? Join us at 3:00 for a panel discussion on tips for handling what can be a very difficult time of the year for grieving parents.



Siblings, you are welcome here. The Nashville Chapter welcomes bereaved siblings to monthly meetings, where you will have a separate small group for sharing and support in a private space. Sibling loss is unique and those of us navigating the loss of someone we planned to spend a long lifetime alongside understand the heaviness and complex nature of this grief. Your fellow bereaved siblings are here for you. You need not walk alone.

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.

Candlelight Memorial Service Scheduled for December 9 at the ABC Building

This is a very moving and powerful program. All family members, siblings and friends are invited to join us. Following the service, we invite you to remain for fellowship and refreshments.

It would be most appreciated if you would bring a pickup snack to share. Be sure to put your name on your container.

It is important that **everyone** wishing to have their child's photo in the memorial service follow very carefully the instructions on page 4 of this newsletter.

THERE IS A SUBMISSION DEADLINE THAT MUST BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO.

We would like for 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.

**Information and Photo Submission
Form are on Page 4.**

*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—



Alexander Beatty (Alex) October 23 Son of Yarnell and Liz Beatty	Geoffrey Edward deZevallos October 16 Son of George and Anne deZevallos	Gary Dale Hamilton October 16 Son of Emma Mathis Stepson of Dallas Mathis	Lynette Loyd October 6 Daughter of Janette Pearson
Preston Chauncey Birdsong October 13 Son of Preston Birdsong and Janice Birdsong	Laura Paige Gibson October 16 Daughter of David and Peggy Gibson Sister of Claire Gibson and Kay Howard	Scott Graham Hartman October 12 Son of Kay Hartman	Madison Allen Mayes October 31 Son of Allen and Rachel Mayes Grandson of Roy and Carole Renfro
Roy James Davies October 19 Son of Roy and Barbara Davies	Zachary Gray Goodpaster (Zac) October 16 Son of David and Lauren Goodpaster Grandson of Morris and Martha Smith	Valerie Ingham October 8 Daughter of Ron and Marci Lance	Jessica Jo Milom October 25 Daughter of Judy Kenner
Marieke de Jager October 6 Daughter of Jan and Betsy de Jager		Benjamin Bedell Koomen (Ben) October 9 Son of John and Betsy Koomen	Jason William Rice October 26 Son of Rosemarie Moore

And in the month of their deaths—



Brian Tyler Brown October 24 Son of Carl and Shannon Brown	Buck Allen Dawson October 26 Son of Bill and Genevia Graham	Chase Lee Harris October 25 Son of Kirk and Shayne Harris and Paul and Stacey Fish Grandson of Rose H. Bartlett	Lynette Loyd October 14 Daughter of Janette Pearson
Emily Michelle Childers October 31 Daughter of Mike and Paula Childers Sister of Sarah Childers Wills and Julie Childers Young	Jon Ashley Duncan October 6 Son of Mike and Kay Duncan	Charles Alan Head October 11 Son of Scot and Jayne Head	Darren Robert Mayes October 13 Son of Jack and Joy Williams
Carolyn Belle Ula Craighead (Belle) October 20 Daughter of Michael and Marty Craighead	Blake William Eshenroder October 18 Son of Bill and Stacie Eshenroder	Allie Johnson October 3 Daughter of Jill Neely	Christopher James Pewitt October 29 Son of Mike Pewitt
	Jonathan Charles Gay October 23 Son of Howard and Lynn Gay	Grant Taylor Kennedy October 19 Son of James R. Kennedy and Jennifer Corbin	Matthew H. Woods October 22 Son of Vaughn and Mickie Woods



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.

*Bob and Debbie Fitzhugh
In loving memory of their daughter,
Allison Ann Fitzhugh*



*John and Betsy Koomen
In loving memory of their son,
Benjamin Bedell Koomen (Ben)*

*David and Peggy Gibson
Kay Gibson Howard and Claire Gibson
In loving memory of their daughter and sister,
Laura Paige Gibson*

*Roger and Deborah Wiseman
In loving memory of their son,
Ryan Lee Wiseman*

*Jimmy and Barbara Hayes
In loving memory of their son,
Garry Lee Durichek*

*Morris and Martha Smith
In loving memory of their grandson,
Zachary Gray Goodpaster (Zac)
Son of David and Lauren Goodpaster*

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.

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

Serenity

*When a day ends,
There is a beautiful sunset
and evening begins,
When a night ends,
There is a beautiful sunrise
and the morning begins.
When a storm ends,
There is a beautiful calm
and the rainbow begins.
When a life ends,
There is a beautiful glow
and eternity begins...*

James Meddleton
TCF, Dallas, TX



Falling for you....

....while leaves fall, the river drifts by and friends sit, speaking of loved ones lost to suicide. Like the river, conversation drifts. Some smile at memories shared. Others cry tears of regret, anger, guilt, despair; tears for what could have been, but is no more. Through the years, this group of friends has learned that words fall short of describing sorrow. And so we sit silently, watching the....

....falling leaves....falling tears....falling for you....

....until the time comes to fall in line and drift toward a table adorned with recently fired clay shapes. At an earlier gathering, I molded soft gray clay then impressed it with words and symbols of your life. Although I don't speak of it, I know that yours is not the only life interrupted. My life is also damaged, diminished, in danger of falling apart in oh so many ways. This small group shares space with those we miss and love, both living and dead; in this, my child's birth and death season. How I long to see you float free with the....

....falling leaves....falling tears....falling for you....

....and I long to connect again with you but my plea falls on deaf ears. I'm left with the task of creating your wind chime. A year ago, on your birthday, leaves fell as I stamped the soft clay heart with musical notes, falling stars, hovering doves and the words "treasured memories." Now the clay has cured and along the holes in the edge of the stamped heart, I tie other clay shapes with lengths of string – my heartstrings. I add an anchor, a porcelain leaf inscribed with the words "falling in love." The pieces fall in place like....

....falling leaves....falling tears....falling for you....

....and then I playfully brush my fingers through your wind chime; fingers that long to run through your hair. The chime whispers your name but its music can never fill my heart like the sound of your voice.

Fall – a time for friends to make wind chimes and memories. A time for

....falling leaves....falling tears....falling eternally for you.

Carol Clum
TCF Medford Oregon

CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE—December 9, 2018

Regardless 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 1, 2017. Do not send photos to the TCF P.O. box—they might get bent or damaged.**

MAIL TO:
Tom Mitchell
829 Cranberry Lane
Nolensville, TN 37135

or

**You may e-mail your child's picture to tjmitchell68@gmail.com.
Be sure to include your child's name in the e-mail.**

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** _____

Remember

*Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you planned:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far that you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.*

Christina Georgina Rossetti
(1830-1894)

**There's something about October
Bittersweet is in the air,
It's not the scent of exotic spice,
Just a feeling that strips me bare.**

Arleen Simmonds
TCF, Kamloops, BC

Forgetting

I have had some bereaved parents tell me they reach a point after awhile they are afraid they will not remember what their child looked like. This happened to me, I believe around the sixth month; and for a short time, I was in a state of panic. I think this may happen after the period of shock wears off; when acceptance of the death and the fact that your child is not coming back starts to take hold.

This, for me, was a very difficult time, and occasionally I would have to look at pictures to reassure myself that I would not forget. That period was transitory, and now, even after five and a half years, I can easily remember what my son looked like. But at the time it happens, I must admit, it is a very frightening experience. At the time I also had an uncontrollable, agonizing urge not only to want to see his face in front of me, but I wanted to reach out and physically touch him. But that, too, with the fear of not being able to visualize him and to hear his voice, in time passed. Not all bereaved parents may feel this way, but this was my own personal reaction.

I think we are forever embodied and endowed with the soul and spirit, as well as with the physical aspects, of our children. These memories will never leave me, even though the *missing* is a daily part of my life and will always be a part of me. And I even keep a mental message of his voice, even though I have no recording or tape of it. I can still remember his sentences, his words and the inflections of his voice from the last day. I treasure these memories and am grateful that they stay with me. We do not and will not forget.

Dave Ziv
TCF, Bucks Mont, PA

What is the Answer?

Hope is the thing I most often get asked about. What do you mean, "hope"? Many tell me that they do not want hope. What is there to hope for? The grief they feel blocks any thought about finding happiness ever again. Others tell me that hope is absurd, when one wants to die anyway. In other words, hope is just so much talk. One bereaved mother put it this way: "I don't care," she said, "whether things will get better or worse. I don't want to be here any more." That is the voice of early grief speaking. For some bereaved parents, early grief stretches on for months and years. There are also a few who believe that hoping for anything better is disloyal to the person who died. What to do? I have tried to answer questions about hope, but I am usually not quite satisfied with my answers.

The secret of finding hope may be, first, to WANT to find it. In early grief, we often reject hope as an almost disloyal, undesirable idea ... but there are many reasons for turning to hope after the early stages of pain begin to diminish. Sometimes we may decide not to give up, because other people, other children, depend on us. Or we need to reach for hope in honor of our child's memory. Many of us find a mandate for hope in our faith. Whatever the reason, try to feel better, try to discover what would make you a little happier, what would make your absent child proud of you. In time, you will find a name for your hope, for the meaning of life without your child, for the awareness of emotional treasures beyond the tragedy of your loss.

Sis

From the day you were born, we had each other. We looked out for each other, annoyed each other, fought with each other, encouraged each other and loved each other. Each a piece of a sibling puzzle in our family, there is nobody else who could ever fill our places. To say I miss you is like saying I miss a piece of myself. How do I hold onto the shared memories, the things only you and I experienced, when you aren't here to talk about them anymore? There are rarely other relationships in life in which two people can boldly argue, reprimand each other, laugh until they cry and end the conversation with, "I love you." What was supposed to be a lifelong relationship has been cut short, but our conversation continues on in a new way. I love you, Jer. I can still almost hear your reply, "I love you too, sis."

Aubrey Dickerson
TCF, Nashville, TN

My Sister, My Friend

*Within our hearts
You will always be.
Our minds will be filled
With sweet memories.*

*Your spirit and love
Will be never gone,
For each life you touched
Will carry them on.*

Catherine Hall
TCF, Hinsdale, IL

Rest, My Brother

*Rest, my brother
You now have peace.
The wars within you
All have ceased.
And the rising sun
Each day,
Upon the heaven
You will play.
Until that day
We meet again,
Know I love you,
My brother,
My friend.*

Sandra Evens
TCF, Kearsarge, NH

A Family Copes With Tragedy

Most people think that after a reasonable period of mourning, families pick up the pieces of their lives and go on. I remember a friend asking me, three months after my son's death, if everything was back to normal. Those who haven't been through this experience cannot comprehend that life as we know it will never exist again. There won't be "normal" years for parents whose world has been devastated. Their dreams of raising children have vanished forever. Our surviving children have lost a part of themselves—the part they shared with their sibling. One daughter said to me, "I don't want him to stop living. I don't want to go on with my life without him being part of it and growing along with me. I don't want to leave him behind. I need his caring and sharing."

How would we live? How would we manage? Nothing could ever replace what we have lost. Since my son's death, I don't make long-range plans anymore or take anything for granted. I live each day as it unfolds, for I have learned that everything I know or have known can be shattered in an instant. We did seek help in different ways, through counseling, writing and group therapy. As a result of our tragedy, our family is closer than we have ever been. Any anger or frustration we harbored about one another has disappeared because of its comparative triviality. We've shared feelings never before expressed and emphasized our love for each other, over and over again. This we will do forever more.

Nancy Doss
TCF, Houston, TX

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.

Kroger Rewards

It is time to renew your Kroger Community Rewards account and keep the contributions coming to our chapter as you shop. Go to the Kroger website and click on "Community Rewards," then follow the instructions to update. If you need to create a new account, follow instructions on the same page.

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.

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: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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**Return Service
Requested**

October 2018

Halloween Memories

Most children enjoy Halloween, the costumes, the candy, the parties, trick or treat, the decorations and so much more. My son looked forward to Halloween with great anticipation. Until he reached the fourth grade, Todd was happy to pick out a costume at the discount store...usually the current movie or television monster.

He came home from school in fourth grade and told me that there was going to be a costume contest and he really wanted to have a unique costume. I asked him what he wanted to be, and I will never forget his response: "I want to be a vampire, Mom. A really cool vampire." So, I talked to a friend of mine who was into stage production, and we went to her house the night before the contest.

She had a vampire cape, a vampire body suit, a vampire collar and great makeup. Todd loved it. My friend stopped at the house early the next morning and applied the makeup and did the finishing touches on Todd's costume. He looked just like the vampires in the movies, He was so pleased. He really wanted to win first place in his class. I dropped him at school and told him to have a wonderful time. He was elated.

As the day progressed, I wondered how he was doing. He called me at 3:30 to let me know he was home. I could hear excitement in his voice,

"Mom, you won't believe this", he said in a serious, low toned voice. "What happened?", I asked, now wondering about the day's events. "I won first place, Mom. First place in the whole school. I can't wait for Halloween. I even got a certificate for first place. I'm putting it up in my room." I was so happy that tears welled in my eyes. My son had tried his best, and he had won. He had put himself out there and he wasn't disappointed, disillusioned or discouraged.

That was the first of many accomplishments in my son's life. He went on to win in track in high school, restore a 1965 GTO from the ground up and receive numerous trophies and awards. He attained his BS and MBA and was successful and respected in business. He was a great father to his children, and his love for them was very deep. He never hesitated to tell them he loved them and how proud he was of them. He was a wonderful parent. He was always an amazing son. His death left a scar on my soul and a hole in my heart.

But his first success is forever in my mind. The little certificate which he brought home and hung on his bedroom wall is a treasure of his wonderful childhood. Halloween is still a happy holiday, and it is one of the few which I enjoy. I thank my son for that and for all the joy he gave me in his short 35 years of life.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
TCF, Katy, TX

