

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.

Candlelight Memorial Service

December 10, 2017— 3:00 p.m.

(Please arrive by 2:30)



All family members are cordially invited to join us as we honor our children during this beautiful candlelight service.

Each family is asked to bring a picture 5"x7" or smaller, or other small memento of your child to place on tables at the front of the auditorium. This will be in addition to the picture you have already sent in for the big screen. (See the form on page 7.)

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

The birthday table will be set up for all those who wish to share their child's December birthday.

The service will be held in our regular meeting place the ABC Building, 1604 Elm Hill Pike.

May the memories of this season

Come on gentle wings

To bring you love and peace.

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. **YOUR FORM MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 2, 2017.**

*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—

Jonathan Michael Bourne December 29 Son of John and Patricia Bourne Grandson of Robert and Anne Bourne	Chad Flatt December 7 Son of James Flatt and Ann Flatt	Briana Leigh Kulesza December 5 Daughter of Larry and Donna Kulesza	Lauren Paige Moore December 30 Daughter of Mac and Polly Moore Granddaughter of Paul Trainor
Adam Blake Brooks December 7 Son of Danny Brooks and Dawn Armstrong	Jennifer Lee Friedmann (Jena) December 25 Daughter of John and Mignon Friedmann Sister of Dr. John Friedmann	Jeremy Seth Lunceford December 15 Son of Jane Lunceford	Mary Catherine Nicholson December 2010 Daughter of John and Suzanne Nicholson
Clayton Lee Chitwood December 28 Son of Jim and Connie Chitwood Grandson of Margaret Chitwood-Watkins	Jeffrey Hampton December 28 Son of Jimmy Hampton	SSG James Andrew Maum December 21 Son of Michael and Charlotte Margolis	Philip G. Sanders December 8 Son of Jean Porch
Matthew Lance Chitwood December 10 Son of Jim and Connie Chitwood Grandson of Margaret Chitwood-Watkins	Daniel Lee Henson December 13 Son of Ron and Darlene Henson	Lindsay Carole Miller December 19 Daughter of David and Rebecca Miller Granddaughter of Roy and Carole Renfro	Stephanie Hardy Stephens December 29 Daughter of George and Thelma Hardy
Taylor Davies December 14 Son of Roy and Barbara Davies	Rob Jarrett December 15 Son of Joyce Butler	Arianna Marie Mitchell December 27 Daughter of Christopher Mitchell and Heather Evans Granddaughter of Frank and Brenda L. Nelson	John David Warren (Johnny) December 13 Son of John and Georgia Warren
Darby Felts December 10 Son of Deanie Gregory Nephew of Jean Porch	Houston Scott Johnson December 28 Son of Scott and Erin Johnson	Matthew Denniston Williams December 11 Son of Brad and Kathleen Williams	
	Michael David Lair Kissiar December 17 Son of Amy Kissiar		

And in the month of their deaths—



Jared Ensley Banta December 26 Grandson of V. G. and Karen Banta	Jeremy George Hardy December 31 Son of George and Thelma Hardy	Tate Ramsden December 26 Son of Bruce and Amy Ramsden	Daniel Wayne Vick December 14 Son of Wayne and Marsha Vick
Robert Irl Bourne, III (Bobby) December 18 Son of Robert and Anne Bourne	Jack Tolbert Johnson December 3 Son of Ben and Jill Johnson	Mark Elliott Reischman December 23 Son of Bill and Jean Reischman	Janessa Dian Wellman December 19 Daughter of Timothy Pharris and Debra Wellman Granddaughter of Glen and Dian Wellman
Clayton Lee Chitwood December 28 Son of Jim and Connie Chitwood Grandson of Margaret Chitwood-Watkins	Brooklyn McIntosh December 21 Daughter of Joe and Shelita McIntosh	Jacob Federman Smiley December 9 Son of Troy and Susan Smiley	Heather Ann Willis December 13 Daughter of Tom and Margaret Loose
Gary Dale Hamilton December 14 Son of Emma Mathis	Mary Catherine Nicholson December 2010 Daughter of John and Suzanne Nicholson	Carson Justice Thompson December 25 Son of Hunter Kready and Kris Thompson	

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.

*Rose Bartlett
In loving memory of
her grandson,
Chase Lee Harris,
Son of*

*Kirk and Shayne Harris,
And Paul and Stacey Fish*

*Janice Birdsong
In loving memory of
her son,
Preston Chauncey Birdsong*

*Margaret Chitwood-Watkins
In loving memory of
her grandsons,
Clayton Lee Chitwood
and
Matthew Lance Chitwood,
Sons of
Jim and Connie Chitwood*

*John and Mignon Friedmann
Dr. John Friedmann, Jr.
In loving memory of
their daughter and sister,
Jennifer L. Friedmann (Jena)*

*Diana Kulas
In loving memory of
her son,
Sean Ashley McKitrick*

*Emma Mathis
In loving memory of
her son,
Gary Dale Hamilton*

*Sandra Merkel
In loving memory of her son,
Kevin Moncrief*

*Wayne and Cassandra Pack
In loving memory of
their son,
Andrew Morris Pack*

*John and Georgia Warren
In loving memory of
their son,
John David Warren (Johnny)*

*Jerry and Loretta Winters
In loving memory of
their son,
Don Bruce Winters*

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



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.

Kroger Plus Community Rewards Program

Kroger will donate real dollars to TCF Nashville through the Kroger Community Rewards program every time you shop there! To create an account to benefit TCF, go to the Kroger website and click on "Community Rewards," then follow the instructions on that page. After that, all you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Plus Card. It's an easy way to support our chapter.



The Perfect Gift

Last year as I was admiring the Hummel plate and bell that my husband and I had purchased to celebrate the births of our two children, it occurred to me that we had nothing to commemorate the birth of our first child, whom we had lost in October of 1979. My husband and I decided that we would purchase a Hummel for our daughter, Kelly Ann, for Christmas.

The clerk in the store said that the Hummel for 1979 was a bell, and that it was on sale that day for half price. We were prepared to spend whatever was necessary, but thought it quite a coincidence that only THAT particular piece was on sale.

Every Hummel figurine has a title. When the clerk took the bell out of the box, on it was a picture of a little girl waving goodbye. The title said: "Farewell."

Candles in December

*My sadness seems reflected in the music that I hear...
Every young one's glowing face reminds me you're not here.
Shoppers crowd the festive stores; emotions all run high.
This world I was a part of once, before that sad July.*

*This season's meant for happy times; for love, warm hearts,
and cheer.
But grieving families 'round the world remember those not
here.*

*We struggle through the season, lighting candles to proclaim
Our children aren't forgotten, 'round the world our candles
flame.*

*I slowly pass through gates thrown wide one Christmas Day.
No toys or playthings do I bring - those gifts of yesterday.
I carry with me just a polished heart of granite made.
And walk with grief to where she lies in a silent, silvered
glade.*

*"Merry Christmas, love," I whisper — the quiet words seem
so forlorn.
"I've brought my heart for you to keep, my gift this Christmas
morn.
It is filled with all my love, though this one's carved of stone...
I'll place it here — it will be near — you'll never be alone."*

*We parents don't forget, my love; this month we will unite
To honor all we'll light a wall of candles through the night.
The world will know our memories glow with love that's deep
and true
We'll stand as one, and 'fore it's done the Heavens will know,
too.*

*Please keep my gift, beloved child, close to where you lie,
And know my love surrounds you 'til the day I too shall die.
On the tenth of December my candle's flame will light
I pray you'll see the love we'll free into the starry night.*

Sally Migliaccio

Holiday Poems from Sascha Wagner, TCF Poet Laureat:

At Christmas

*I reach for the laughter of Christmas,
around me are music and light.
The air arches clear into heaven,
a mirror of gold and of white.*

*I touch it, the laughter of Christmas.
The stars are as near as my eyes.
I find in the laughter of Christmas
your voice,
and too many good-byes.*

Christmas

*In this season of love
when we know
more than ever
that we have forgotten nothing—
in this season of love
let us also give thanks
for knowing love.*

Hanukah

*Hanukah is our
Festival of Lights.
Let your light shine,
so that their light
may shine*



About Kwanzaa

A celebration of family, community, and culture.

*Kwanzaa is a 7-day festival celebrating the African-American people,
their culture and their history. It is a time of celebration, community gathering,
and reflection. A time of endings and beginnings. Kwanzaa begins on
December 26th and continues until New Year's Day, January 1.*

Choice

How many stomachs churn when you see store shelves already stocked with the colors of the upcoming holidays? How high does your blood pressure rise when relatives throw hints around about “Your house or mine?” How many turn away with leaded feet and ask the question, “How am I gonna do this?”

Like every day you have lived since your child’s death you will do this holiday season, “one moment at a time.” You will search for what is important, what you want to save, what you want to throw out, what others can do for you, what you want to do for yourself. You may stay in town or leave; you may cook or go out. Whatever you do, it is your choice. But before you take the first step you have to give yourself permission to have that choice.

The first holiday season, after our son Chad died, I didn’t know I had a choice. I was numb, in a powerful lot of pain, and feeling abjectly distracted. Therefore, when asked about Thanksgiving, I just went right along with the old traditions and said yes to the familiar family dinner.

Thanksgiving Day arrived and our family drove to my aunt’s for dinner. When we walked in there was an invisible hush that descended upon the room. Then the noise level immediately resumed with an intensity I don’t ever recall hearing before. People laughed really loud. Their movements were rushed and jerky. They wanted to know where I got my earrings. They asked Roger how his favorite football team was doing. Everyone spoke to us but it wasn’t about what we needed to talk about! And then, they went about their routines. Mom cooked in the kitchen, Aunt made the gravy, Uncle mashed the potatoes, Cousin carved the turkey, and Dad played the guitar for the little kids.

I hadn’t been asked to bring anything. They said I wasn’t needed in the kitchen. So Roger and I sat huddled on the couch alone. Finally, dinner was ready and we were all called together to be “thankful.” The prayer before the meal was familiar, something we had all learned in grade school, and then we sat down to eat. No one mentioned Chad’s name, no one asked us how we were doing, and nothing was done to mark the saddest holiday of my life. We managed to eat something, keep our broken hearts and tears in check, until we could get our coats on and leave. We both cried all the way

home, angry, sad, frustrated, and mad. Never again, we agreed, would we go to a gathering where Chad was not welcome.

The days passed, as they somehow do when we are grieving, and soon the orange and brown colors of the stores changed to red, green, silver, and gold. We were looking another holiday square in the face. But this time we had a choice. We had a plan! We were going to buy a special candle, Chad’s candle, and we were going to let the family know that we wanted to talk about him, that we wanted to honor him. Melinda, my daughter, and I went shopping and we went in and out of stores trying to find the perfect candle to no avail. My heart was beginning to wonder if it could continue this search when I reached down and saw the “perfect candle.” It was a light rose color with a simple raised cross. I smiled, picked it up and turned to show Melinda who by now was at the other end of the store. Much to my glee, she was holding the exact same candle!

That Christmas Day, we waited until most everyone arrived and then showed them the candle. We told them the story of finding it and then we lit it and put it in the middle of the floor where we were sitting. We then asked everyone to write a note about Chad and we passed around his Christmas stocking and asked that they put their notes in it. As the family was doing this my “always late” Aunt arrived. As she threw open the door the candle flickered and went out, the family as a unit looked up at her with such shock that when I picture it today, I still laugh. We filled her in about what we were doing and re-lit the candle, gave her a chance to write her note, and then moved it to a table and went about the rest of the day with the candle burning. I know there were some uncomfortable people that Christmas, but they all went along and I am forever thankful.

Those notes and that candle lighting were a comfort to my family and me. We still read the messages that were put in his stocking and light his candle.

You may choose to do what we did, or you may think of something else. The most important message is that you have a choice to make the holiday for your family and yourself something that will be helpful and healing. There will be time in the future to “go back” to tradition. Right now is what is important and you have a choice. Take care of you.



Supplication

*December, you force false gaiety upon our world,
celebrations, parties, the holiday habits of cheer.*

*December, you shroud us in old memories,
pain and sadness so consistently each year.*

*I would forgive you, December, for the magic of the past
that you try every year to bring back.*

*But your coming ends another year without her.
In your demands, we feel so sharply who we lack.*

*Please help me, dear December, to forgive you;
maybe in this way the pain will ease.*

*In forgiving you, December, may I open to your gifts
and the lovely, soaring promise of your peace.*

Sue Anderson, Chapter Leader
Eastside TCF, Kirkland, WA

From *Stars In The Deepest Night*
Genessee Bourdeau Gentry



The 21st Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting will be held this year on Sunday, December 10, 2017. This is a very special and moving event as bereaved families join together around the world in memory of all children gone too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon. Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 21st Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

On a Night in December

*As days moved on towards winter,
and trees were going bare,
we were faced with shopping malls
where carols filled the air.*

*And thoughts all turned to loved ones,
those present, and those not.
For us, whose lives were drained of light,
it was solace that we sought.*

*And so began a journey
of candles round the earth
bringing light to darkness
and honoring the worth*

*of children held so dear to us
but never to grow old,
whose lives filled our life tapestries,*

*with threads of finest gold.
Now we gather on this night
and watch the candles burn
see their pictures, say their names
one by one, in turn.*

*And our children, brothers, sisters,
for whom we gather here,
let us know, in the candles glow,
that they are always near.*

*Their light will still surround us;
their love will always flow.
As we leave may we remember,
that this is ever so.*

*From Catching the Light – Coming Back to Life
after the Death of a Child
by Genesse Bourdeau Gentry*

TCF “ONLINE SUPPORT COMMUNITY”

The Compassionate Friends national website offers “virtual chapters” through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you’re experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit www.compassionatefriends.org and click “Online Support” listed under the Find Support menu.

Right now...

take a moment,

close your eyes

and remember the smile of your child!

Sascha

CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE—December 10, 2017

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 2, 2017.** Do not send photos to the TCF P.O. box—they might get 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.

ATTENTION: Please note—in the October Newsletter, Tom Mitchell's addresses were incorrectly printed. The addresses to the left are the correct ones. If you used either of those incorrect addresses to send your form in, it will probably be returned to you. Please resend your form to the corrected address to the left..

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 _____



Holiday Gifts for Children Needed

Each 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 this year, you may participate by bringing new UNWRAPPED gifts to the TCF December 10 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 (Teen Rated)
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 play sets
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 Batman, Star Wars, Spiderman, Spongebob or current popular items

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***

The Compassionate Friends

P.O. Box 50833

Nashville, TN 37205



Return Service Requested

December 2017

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The Eighth Year of Chanukah

The first year of Chanukah was extremely difficult. Linda died on February 1st so by the time Chanukah arrived, the shock and numbness had disappeared. We could no longer pretend that she was on a business trip or visiting friends. We knew that she wasn't coming back

Chanukah had been an important part of our family life. In addition to the lighting of the candles, we had created our own traditions and rituals. Chanukah is mostly a children's holiday but my family continued these observances even when my daughters became adults. The tears streamed down my face as I lit the ritual candles that first year. We decided to discontinue the parties, singing, special foods, and all of our other observances. They were too painful.

We've become snowbirds and spend Chanukah in Florida. I still light the candles - usually by myself - but otherwise keep the holiday very low key and skip the rest of the festivities. Since I

don't have young children or grandchildren to think about, this doesn't create any problems. There's always a pang, but it has softened over the years. As a veteran bereaved parent, I am resigned to the fact that I will never celebrate with my entire family again.

Therefore, I didn't expect the eighth year of Chanukah to be unusual. I thought I had come to terms with the holiday. So why was the eighth year so difficult? Was it the fact that the eighth anniversary was approaching? Was it the symbolism of eight nights of candles and eight years?

Or was it just a coincidence or the blind siding that sometimes occurs without warning to those who have grieved for a long time? I probably will never know the answer and have decided that, as with many other things, it's just the way grief is. I'm just glad that, after eight years, the grief and pain usually are softer than they were in the early years.

Stephanie Hesse
TCF Rockland County, NY
TCF North Palm Beach County, FL
In Memory of Linda