

# 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.

## TCF Video to be shown

### January 14

The Compassionate Friends helps us to cope with the death of a child. It is a place where one can turn for support when the devastation of the loss seems overwhelming. The Compassionate Friends has produced a short video in which bereaved parents and siblings discuss their own grief experiences and what helped them. Among those who speak are the TCF national executive director, members of the board, chapter leaders and siblings. This video will be shown at this month's meeting, and regular sharing groups will follow. Please join us.



*As we grieve the loss of our children and one another's, we begin to find a different kind of love than we expected to experience.*

Rosalie Baker  
TCF, Rochester, NY

### 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 and Darlene Henson  
615-789-3613
- Small Child**.....Kenneth and Kathy Hensley  
615-237-9972
- Alcohol/Drug Overdose**.....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—*

**Jacob Taylor Akers**  
January 15  
Son of Jim and Carol Akers

**Lisa Allgood**  
January 14  
Daughter of  
Harold and Betty Allgood

**Misty Whitney Ambrose**  
January 14  
Daughter of  
Michael and Treva Ambrose

**Pamela Sue Chaiken**  
January 17  
Daughter of  
Lionel and Sandra Chaiken

**Jeremy Wilson Christy**  
January 20  
Son of  
Wilson and Jenny Christy

**Jonathan Lee Collins**  
January 12  
Son of Charity Collins;  
Grandson of Jennie Reeves  
Brother of Kristanna

**Kaitlyn Kimberly Cook**  
January 30  
Daughter of  
Jim Cook and Sylvia Bosma

**Cam Mantle Davis**  
January 9  
Daughter of  
Jack Mantle and Vicki Little

**James Wesley Evans  
(Snowman)**  
January 31  
Son of Brenda L. Nelson  
Brother of Heather Evans

**Ruthie Evans**  
January 13  
Daughter of  
Norman and Diane Evans

**Samuel Christopher Hagens**  
January 14  
Son of  
Christopher and Pamela  
Hagens  
Brother of  
Luke and Caleb Hagens

**Matthew Kent Hensley**  
January 13  
Son of  
Kenneth and Kathy Hensley

**Mary Grace Hodsdon**  
January 14  
Daughter of  
John and Mary Hodsdon

**Jacquelyn Renée Kimbro**  
January 6  
Daughter of  
Billy and Cheryl Kimbro

**Kensley Caroline Miller**  
January 11  
Daughter of  
Jason and Cindy Miller

**Adrin B. Ohaekwe**  
January 3  
Son of Tamera Hawkins

**Lauren Kristina O'Saile**  
January 23  
Daughter of Don Davenport  
Granddaughter of  
Martha Davenport

**David Pringle**  
January 13  
Son of  
Jim and Margaret Pringle

**Gregg Alan Swayze**  
January 18  
Son of Michael Swayze and  
Carole Swayze

**Gavin Garrett Vaughn**  
January 8  
Son of Linda Vaughn

**Michael Ryan Williams  
(Ryan)**  
January 13  
Son of  
Danny and Kay Williams

**Christopher Adonis Wright**  
January 24  
Son of  
Aaron and Mary Corley



*And in the month of their deaths—*

**Jessica Bloom**  
January 26  
Daughter of  
Elisabeth Small

**Matthew Lance Chitwood**  
January 1  
Son of  
Jim and Connie Chitwood  
Grandson of  
Martha Chitwood-Watkins

**Jeremy Wilson Christy**  
January 4  
Son of  
Wilson and Jenny Christy

**Roy James Davies**  
January 4  
Son of  
Roy and Barbara Davies

**Cam Mantle Davis**  
January 25  
Daughter of  
Jack Mantle and Vicki Little

**Mary Clay Kenner**  
January 25  
Daughter of  
Bill Kenner and Carole Kenner

**Joseph V. Ladd, III  
(Joey)**  
January 9  
Son of  
Joe and Melanie Ladd

**Stetson Taylor McFarland**  
January 30  
Son of  
Nathan and Alisha McFarland

**Adrin B. Ohaekwe**  
January 3  
Son of Tamera Hawkins

**Anna Jo Peery**  
January 17  
Daughter of Don C. Peery and  
Mary Beth Peery

**Adam Keith Qualls**  
January 20  
Son of Keith and Becky Qualls

**Billy Gene Rosson, II**  
January 3  
Son of Bill and Elaine Rosson

**Trinity Rhodes Steagall**  
January 1  
Son of Rose Steagall

*Children Remembered, continued*

**Stephanie Hardy Stephens**

January 10

Daughter of George and Thelma Hardy



**Joe Vick**

January 10

Son of

Kay Vick-Bogle

Brother of Angie Hoffman



**Jason Brandon Warf**

January 21

Son of Ronald and Clada Warf

**Dennis D. Thompson, Jr.**

(Boomer)

January 16

Son of Dennis and Cheryl Thompson

**James Donald Warren**

(Donnie)

January 24

Son of John and Georgia Warren

## 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.**

*Ross and Libby Cheek*

*In loving memory of their daughter,  
Elizabeth Osborn Cheek*

*Herb and Susan Gould*

*In loving memory of their son,  
Stephen Gould*

*Vicki C. Little*

*In loving memory of  
her daughter,  
Cam Mantle Davis*



*Margaret Chitwood-Watkins*

*In loving memory of her grandson,  
Matthew Lance Chitwood,  
Son of*

*Jim and Connie Chitwood*

*Scot and Jayne Head*

*In loving memory of their son,  
Charles Alan Head*

*Jack and Deborah Matheson  
In loving memory of their son,  
James Nathan Matheson*

*Ronnie and Darlene Henson*

*In loving memory of their son,  
Daniel Lee Henson*

*Rosemarie Moore  
In loving memory of her son,  
Jason William Rice*

*Robert and Cynthia Daugherty*

*In loving memory of their  
granddaughter,  
Abby Czirr,  
Daughter of  
Steve and Paige Czirr*

*John and Mary Hodsdon*

*In loving memory of  
their daughter,  
Mary Grace Hodsdon*

*Shirley Rich-Brinegar*

*In loving memory of  
her son,  
Bert Rich*

*Barbara Davies*

*Through Nationwide  
workplace giving program*

*In loving memory of  
her stepsons,*

*Roy James Davies and*

*Taylor Davies*

*Sons of Roy Davies*



*Ben and Jill Johnson*

*In loving memory of their son,  
Jack T. Johnson*

*Wayne and Marsha Vick  
In loving memory of their son,  
Daniel Wayne Vick*

*Keith and Meryl Kraft*

*In loving memory of  
their daughter,  
Stacy Leigh Kraft*

*John and Georgia Warren  
In loving memory of their son,  
James Donald Warren (Donnie)*

*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.*

*“Death has no scissors  
to cut the cords of love.”*

Peter Marshall

## The New Year: A Time of Hope

Another New Year has slipped into our lives, radically changing some things and leaving other things to evolve naturally. For bereaved parents a new year marks another year on the calendar without their precious children. It is a new year, but not much has changed since the old year. Why is that?

We act as the catalysts of change for ourselves. We choose to help ourselves or we choose to stay in a specific place in our grief. We choose to reach out for hope or we choose to withdraw into the familiar and postpone facing life and hope another day. There are no set rules or specific timetables in bereavement. We are each unique in our grief.

Eventually we all find hope. We find it in different ways and in different times. There will be no one moment of epiphany for bereaved parents. Instead, there are a series of minutes, hours, weeks, months and often years until we realize that we can truly say we feel the power of hope coming alive from deep within us. This moment will come for each of us. It will come in its own time and its own way.

Even those of us who have found hope and who shine its light on the paths of newly bereaved parents, still regress and withdraw into the dark sadness of our loss. And that is as it should be. For we have lost the most precious gift of our lives...our children's presence with us and their future in this life. Our children live in our hearts and our memories and our dreams. They do not share this plane with us. It is normal and it is good to think of our children often and to shed some tears for all that has been lost. These aren't setbacks as much as sweet memories that bring cathartic tears.

The element we find in these memories is a closeness to our child and our child's life. This, too, is healthy. An often-expressed fear is that our children will be forgotten. Worry not, gentle parent, your child will be remembered for all of your days and for many days thereafter. You will never forget your child. Others who knew your child will never forget. The proof of this is in our memories, sweet memories that take us back to another time when our child was with us.

So this New Year's, whether you are a few months, a few years or many years in your grief, think about hope. You have not forsaken your child when you reach for hope. Your hope brings your child back in a positive way that will warm your heart. Reach for that hope. As you move forward in your grief in the New Year, reach for hope. Your child will still be with you. And one day you will find that your child's presence is sweeter when hope is within you.

Annette Mennen Baldwin  
TCF, Katy, TX

## Resolutions

Every time the holiday season comes to a close, I feel as if I can hear a collective sigh of relief. This year was no different except that the sigh seemed louder and longer than in past years. Some years are like that for us. This one was certainly like that for me. No matter how difficult I thought the holidays would be to get through I was wrong. In some ways they were more difficult and in other ways, surprisingly, they were less difficult. The reality is that you and I, no matter how we anticipated the holidays, did get through them. We did survive the holidays and though it may be difficult for you to believe this now, there is no reason that this new year shouldn't be better.

Which brings me to a favorite topic for this time of year, New Year's resolutions. Resolutions that I think are most helpful are those that concern our well-being. Above all else, resolve to take better care of yourself. Try to eat right and exercise. Find ways to nurture yourself—both your body and your mind. Remember all things in moderation. Seek advice from others when you need it and above all, ask for help when you need it. You won't always get the help when you ask for it, but remember, if you don't ask for it, you surely won't get it.

Another thing you can do to have a happier new year is to become more involved in our chapter of The Compassionate Friends. If you've not come to any meetings, or if it's been a while, give it a try. Commit to attending at least three meetings. If you were to attend only one, you would not necessarily get a very good idea of what our meetings are like. Join us and make your needs known to us.

This newsletter is another way you can become more involved in our chapter. Let us know what works for you and what doesn't. Consider becoming a contributor. Tell us how we might be able to better serve your needs.

Have a happier New Year!

Pat Akery  
TCF, Medford, OR

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*Remember*

*all things*

*very well—*

*even many*

*uncomfortable things*

*All memories*

*make your richer!*

Sascha

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*We need to wait patiently and the time will come and each person will know—when reaching out to others is the surest way to comfort one's self.*

Sue Catherine Holtkamp  
*Grieving with Hope*

## The Music Will Play Again

It seems everyone in the Heavilin family is musical. My husband Glen has been playing the trumpet since he was five years old when he participated in various community bands with his father. Our sons Nathan and Matthew both started playing the trumpet while they were in early elementary school.

We have fond memories of our boys playing in ensemble with their dad and grandpa on the rare occasions when we were all together since Grandpa Heavilin lives in Indiana and we live in California. At the family reunions, much of the time was spent with the entire group, which often numbered over 100, joining in singing favorite hymns. Our immediate family often sang specials at our local church.

When our older teens played in the high school marching band, Nathan, then nine or ten, marched as the mascot for the band. When we visited our oldest son Matthew at college, it was not unusual for his little brother Nathan to sit in the band with him at basketball games. When Nathan was in high school he played in the concert band, the jazz band, the pep band, and sang in the concert choir, barbershop quartet, and special ensemble. Our lives were filled with music.

On February 10, 1983 the music in our family stopped suddenly when Nathan was killed in a car crash caused by a drunk driver. The trumpets lay silent; the hymn books were closed. I wondered if I would ever hear music in my house again. Eventually we were able to sing hymns at church with only a few tears. Our son Matthew has even sung some specials with his wife at church, and Mom Heavilin has managed to sit and listen although I've gone through many tissues in the process.

It took longer for the trumpets to be retrieved from the closet. Nathan had been gone seven years when his dad finally tried to blow a few notes. After assuring himself that he could still play, he decided to join the Fourth of July Band, a volunteer group that plays in the park for all the Fourth of July functions in our city each year.

I'm sitting in the park writing this on my laptop computer while I'm listening to Glen rehearse with the band. This is his fourth year to participate with this group. The first year was really hard for all of us. While Glen practiced, I spent my time calling all our friends and inviting them to come and support Glen in this very significant performance. Now we have established a tradition. While Glen plays in the band, I

entertain our many guests. We talk, we laugh, and we remember.

We have music in our house again, but we recognize it will never be the same. Before we played and sang "with" Nate. Now we play and sing "because of" and "for" Nate. When my husband started playing the trumpet again, he gave himself an added incentive. He uses Nathan's trumpet. He is not playing only for himself. He is playing for his son Nathan.

There is music at our house again. The notes are deeper, filled with emotion, but in time it is possible to sing (and play) again.

Marilyn Heavilin  
TCF of Redlands, CA

### *Do I Have To?*

*Mom, do I have to stop loving my brother  
because he is not here?  
Will I forget all about him  
because he's not near?  
I remember all the things we did together,  
even though we were very young.  
I laugh and feel warm each time  
I think of a particularly funny one.  
Sometimes I get so angry  
that he's no longer here to share,  
But I know he knows it's only  
because of how much I still care.*

*I miss him so,  
even though at times we didn't agree,  
Just knowing he was there  
made things feel safe for me.  
He always felt he had to be my strong  
protective big brother,  
And that's a bond we'll always share  
forever with each other.*

*He tried to protect me  
even when he, too, was just scared.  
No, I won't stop loving  
that big brother of mine,  
Not now, not ever,  
not till the end of time.  
He will always be a part  
of what makes me be me.  
And that's the part of our love  
that will live eternally.*

Jackie Rosen  
TCF N. Dade/S. Broward, FL

## “Stuff”

I travel a lot and spend a great deal of time in airports. I spend most of my airport time working or reading, but sometimes it’s fun to watch the never-ending stream of humanity making its way down the walkways, heading blindly toward someplace. I also love to watch that endless human tide board aircraft, carrying all manner of “stuff” that they then try to place in the overhead compartments. I have learned a lot from these observations. Traveling is a lot like grieving. We are headed somewhere with high hopes, little preparation, and too much baggage for any single human to carry.

We have become a society that defines itself by its “stuff.” Our stuff is simply who we are and without it, we risk becoming lost, disoriented, and disconnected. This stuff simply has to come with us at all times!

Grief is part of our stuff, too. Our experiences get boiled down to a few essential memories, phrases, and images that seem to become necessary to hold on to. It would be easier if we would pick and choose which memories to keep and which to toss. We could, perhaps, get away with a smaller version of who we are if we only knew we did not have to fear forgetting anything that has happened to us and felt more comfortable carrying fewer reminders of the hurt and more symbols of the joys.

Trying to pack for a trip means assembling the vast amount of “necessary stuff” and deciding what can be taken and what can’t. Grievers are like that, too. Some seem to be able to release much of the pain and horror far sooner, while others stash it away, buried deep within themselves, only to emerge at the least convenient moment. Some try to cram a steamer trunk into the overhead compartment, having wrestled everyone else’s stuff to the floor or simply moved it to another bin. Some try to compartmentalize their hurts with the idea that hurt and grief can be dealt with in an orderly and logical fashion.

But you can’t pack away grief in the same way you can toss stuff into a suitcase and then stash it on a shelf until you are ready to deal with it. Grief simply is a part of our fabric, woven into each fiber of our being, always with us, but not always recognized or even acknowledged. It nudges us, calls us, teases us, hurts us at the least touch. Grief demands to be heard, and when we turn a deaf ear, it grows louder and more persistent until we grow weary trying to ignore it.

We can sort it out, roll it up tightly, pack it carefully, lock it away, or even carry it around with us, but we cannot

ignore it forever. It returns again and again until we learn to embrace it, wrestle with it, and adapt to its flow. If we are lucky, we learn to carry the load we have without too much guilt or anger and have found ways to release the emotions that accompany our grief.

So, pack what you truly need, give the rest away, and get going on your travels. Each breath takes you closer to your destination, even if you don’t know where that is. Learn to let some things go so you can pack lighter next time. You could let go of some of the guilt or fear or anger or hurt. How about weeding through the awful parts so you can get to the loving parts? Don’t discard it without embracing it first, but once you have examined the whole picture, let go of the “stuff” you no longer need to carry in order to define yourself. Let go of the labels and the worries.

Will it happen again? It could. Will I be able to handle it better next time? Maybe. Will I ever find love like that again? Not unless you look for it. Will I forget? Not likely. Maybe that is why we believe we need so much stuff around us all the time. Maybe we are really afraid of losing it all, not just the bad parts, but the good times as well. Do we carry too much, save too much, pack too much because we are afraid?

Just as you have never forgotten the name of the very first person you fell in love with, you will not forget your child. If we let go of that fear, we all can travel a bit lighter. Fear is a heavy burden to carry. You cannot forget love that has been given and received. You cannot forget the exchange of heart and soul. You don’t need the stuff in order to remember the love.

Love is the size of a sigh, as light as a kiss, as gentle as a whisper, and as small as a moment in time. It comes in all sizes and shapes and cannot be saved until later. Love simply IS, and you *have* been loved. So lighten up. Carry less, live more, and love a lot. Love is a good thing to carry and really the ONLY ESSENTIAL thing we need!

Darcie D. Sims

*Darcie D. Sims, PhD, CHT, CT, GMS, is a bereaved parent, a grief management specialist, a nationally, the author of several books and has served on several boards, including the National Board of Directors for The Compassionate Friends.*

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## A Promise

*The colors of life change as we go through grief.  
We begin black and white;*

*Then gray settles over us, seeping into our pores, surrounding us,*

*Smothering us for a long period of time; then slowly the colors change.*

*We may not even be aware of their changing ‘til one day we see a rainbow,*

*And know it was meant for us.*

Faye Harden  
TCF, Tuscaloosa, AL

## **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**

At your first TCF meeting you are asked to sign a registration card that gives us permission to add your child to the We Remember Them list on pages 2 and 3 in the monthly newsletter. If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed, 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. You may call the database manager at 615 356-1351, drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205, or email us at davidg14@bellsouth.net, We'll be glad to include them. You need to contact us only once, unless any of your information changes.

### **We Need Your Help**

If you know a family outside the immediate Nashville area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you have access to the address (and phone number) of the parents, it would be most helpful if you would call us with that information. Our mission is to reach every bereaved family in Middle Tennessee, but we have to know about them in order to give them the support we ourselves have received. If you know the child's name, birth date, date of death and cause of death, so much the better. Our outreach chairperson will send a warm letter of sympathy and information about TCF along with appropriate brochures and articles. There will be no harassment, no phone calls, and no demands made upon the parents, and the information you provide is strictly confidential.

### **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.



## **BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES**

### **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.

### **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. Visit [www.nationalshare.org](http://www.nationalshare.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.

### **TCF Web site —A Treasure for You**

When you log onto the TCF Web site at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://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. Check it out.

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# *The Compassionate Friends*

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**Return Service  
Requested**

**January 2018**

## **If Only They Knew**

**I**f only they knew that when I speak of him, I am not being morbid. I am not denying his death. I am proclaiming his life. I am learning to live with his absence. For twenty-six years he was a part of my life, born, nurtured, molded and loved – this cannot be put aside to please those who are uncomfortable with my grief.

If only they knew that when I sit quietly, apparently content with my own company, I am not self indulgently unhappy, dwelling on things which cannot be changed; I am with him. I am seeing his face, hearing his voice, remembering his laughter, recalling his excitement and joy in life. Please allow me this time with him, as I do not begrudge you your time with your children.

If only they knew that when I sometimes weep quietly, I do not cry in self pity for what I have lost. I weep for what he has lost, for the life he loved, for the music which filled his very being, and for all he still longed to hear, for the poetry which moved him to tears, for the beauty about him that daily fed his soul, for the exhilaration and excitement of flying the skies, of searching for his God in the vast space of the universe. For all that he loved and lost, I cry.

If only they knew the feeling of deep grief, the emptiness, the dull pain, the endlessness of death. If only they understood the insanity of the platitudes so freely spoken – that “time heals,” that “you’ll get over it,” that “it was for the best,” that “God takes only the best,” – and realize that these are more an insult than a comfort, that the warm and compassionate touch of another means so much more.

If only they knew that we will not find true peace and tranquility until we are prepared to try to stand in the shoes of others. We will not be understood until we learn to understand compassionately and we will not be heard until we learn to listen with hearts we well as minds.

Jan McNess  
TCF Victoria, Australia