



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

## NORTHERN NEVADA CHAPTER

Carson City, NV

December 2010

### Chapter Leader's Message

December is a busy month for The Compassionate Friends. On December 12<sup>th</sup>, a 24-hour wave of light will honor our children. Please join us for the lighting of candles at 7:00 p.m. at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

This month's regular meeting has been changed to December 21<sup>st</sup>. We will have an ornament exchange and delicious desserts, appetizers, etc. Please bring a wrapped ornament to exchange with a Compassionate Friend. Write your child's name and 2010 on the ornament. Everyone will have an ornament to take home in memory of our children. In my many years at TCF, I have a lot of fond memories of our children on my tree. Please bring a picture of your child or sibling to share at both ceremonies.

Be gentle with yourself during this stressful month. Take time for reflection and rest. Listen to your heart and to an inner wisdom. I'd love to see you at both ceremonies.

*Our Children Forever in our hearts,  
Delores*

### Newsletter Editor's Message

Christmas was always a high point of the year for my family, and as my two younger brothers and I grew from toy-catalog loving kids, to label conscious teens, to adults with families of our own, change has been inevitable. Since my brother Tom's death, however, change has meant a roller coaster of emotions. As I struggle to find a balance between treasured traditions and new normals, Christmas is still a celebration for me, but one I can sneak away from for a few minutes and cry in a corner if I feel I have to.

Wishing you peace this upcoming holiday season, and each day in the new year.

~GRR

### SPECIAL DATES

**December 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Worldwide Candle Lighting**

7:00 - 8:30pm

**Bring a picture of your child.  
Candles and refreshments will  
be provided.**

St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
1201 N Saliman Rd  
Carson City, NV

**December 21<sup>st</sup>**

**Carson City Meeting**

*Potluck/Ornament Exchange*

7:00 - 8:30pm

Carson Tahoe Cancer  
Research Center  
1535 Medical Parkway

**January 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Carson City Meeting**

7:00 - 8:30pm

Carson Tahoe Cancer  
Research Center  
1535 Medical Parkway

### STEERING COMMITTEE

#### Chapter Leader

Delores Sherman

#### Treasurer

Kathy Schultz

#### Mailing List/Memorial Page

Kathy Schultz

#### Newsletter Editor

Georgette Riley

#### Regional Coordinator

Gene Caligari

#### Members

Betty Kalicki

Jo Saulisberry

Cathy Silva, Delegate

Sonja Strom

Reynese Wilson

*Hawthorne contact:*

Petra Wilson

*Fallon contact:*

Judy Dunning

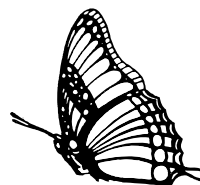
#### The National Office

PO Box 3696

Oaks Brook, IL 60522-3696

(877) 969-0010

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)



## ***Our Children Loved, Missed & Remembered***

### ***December Birthdays***

***Tomoah Khalif Jon Anderson***

Parents: Tansey & Xavier Anderson

***David Manual Fulghum "Festus"***

Mother: Vivian Casey

***Erin Hackman***

Parents: Rick & Cecilia Hackman

***Adina Jacoboni***

Parents: Ron & Judy Jacoboni

***Kara Lee Kalicki***

Mother: Betty Kalicki

***Lori Beth Mangnall***

Parents: Dorothy Mangnall

***Ryan "T.J." Marich***

Parents: Richard & Jill Marich

***JonPaul C. Martens***

Parents: Amber-Rose / Paul Turner / Martens

***Jeff Martin***

Mother: Suzanne Fox

***Michelle Shaw***

Parents: Sylvia & Jim Shaw

***Special Child***

Mother: Tammy Anstedt

***Corey Wetenkamp***

Mother: Joyce Wetenkamp

***Kelly Williams***

Parents: Gary & Judy Williams

### ***December Anniversaries***

***Tomoah Khalif Jon Anderson***

Parents: Tansey & Xavier Anderson

***James (Jimmy) Davis***

Mother: Gayla Davis McDonald

***Eric D. Eisele***

Parents: Don & Darlene Eisele

Brother: Steve & Marianne Eisele

***Joshua Raymond Farler***

Parents: Jim & Brenda Farler

***Bryan Harding***

Mother: Sandra Harding

***Ethan Harmon***

Parents: Ken & Duana Harmon

Grandparents: Chuck & Shirley Evans

***Knox Justin Johnson Kolbe***

Mother: Helen Johnson

***Tim Lane***

Father: Don Lane

***Brent A. Lauderbaugh***

Mother: Myra Lauderbaugh

***Jason Marshall***

Parents: Jean & Phil Marshall

***JonPaul C. Martens***

Parents: Amber-Rose Turner & Paul Martens

***Joshua Parker***

Mother: Amanda Chilcott

***Jeff Poy***

Parents: Myrna & Robert Poy

***Julie Rodriguez***

Mother: Sonja Strom

***K. Manley Vaughan***

Grandmother: Judy Dunning

***Leoma N. Vaughan***

Mother: Judy Dunning

***Richard Young***

Mother: Karen Young

***Special Child***

Mother: Tammy Anstedt

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***The passage of time alone does not  
cause our grief to end,  
but its softening touch helps us to  
survive.***

*Wayne Loder*

*This is YOUR newsletter. Email your poems, essays, artwork or quotes to [editor@tcfcarsoncity.org](mailto:editor@tcfcarsoncity.org).*

## **10 Tips for Living with the Holidays this Year**

1. Remind yourself that you will survive. You will.
2. Think about what will bring you the most peace this holiday season.
  - a. Keeping all traditions intact?
  - b. Tweaking some traditions a bit and adding new ones?
  - c. Throwing out all the old traditions and starting new ones?
  - d. Flying to the Caribbean and completely skipping the holidays this year? It's okay to do that.
3. Don't expect anyone to mention your child by name. Believe it or not, that's your job. People will look to you to determine whether or not it's safe to talk about the person that died. A few subtle ways to do that:
  - a. Serve/bring your child's favorite dish to the holiday get-together – talk about it!
  - b. Bring a favorite picture – pass it around. Work it into the dining table centerpiece.
  - c. Bring a favorite memento – a book, a poem, a toy, a video, an article of clothing - share it after dinner.
  - d. Have your child's favorite music playing in the background – tell the story!
4. Plan a special evening for close family and friends when you REMEMBER. Ask everyone to bring a favorite photo and write down a special memory. Set time aside to sit in a circle and share the photos and memories.
5. Remember that it's okay – it's even healthy – to cry.
6. It's okay to stay in bed...you will get out, when you are ready and able.
7. It's also okay to smile or even laugh, a bit. You're not being disloyal.
8. Buy yourself a gift. Wrap it. Write a note – to you – from your beloved child.
9. Buy someone less fortunate than you a gift.
10. Light a candle.

*Used with permission from the author, Tom Zuba, twice bereaved parent, author, speaker, and workshop presenter.  
www.tomzuba.com*

## **PLEASE ASK**

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

*Barbara Taylor Hudson, TCF*



## **Circle**

How do you bear it all?  
The cry came from a mother  
Whose son had died only weeks before.  
We were in a circle, looking at her,  
Looking around, looking away,  
Tears in our hearts, in our eyes.  
How do we bear it?  
I don't know,  
But the circle helps.

*Eva Lager  
TCF/Western Australia  
(Eve's daughter Milya Claudia Lager died by suicide  
on 4 March 1990.)*

## **What Are We Waiting For?**

My brother-in-law opened the bottom drawer of my sister's bureau and lifted out a tissue-wrapped package. "This," he said, "is not a slip. This is lingerie." He discarded the tissue and handed me the slip. It was exquisite: silk, handmade, and trimmed with a cobweb of lace. The price tag with an astronomical figure was still attached. "Jan bought it the first time we went to New York eight or nine years ago. She never wore it. She was saving it for a special occasion. Well, I guess this is the special occasion."

He took the slip from me and put it on the bed with the other clothes we were taking to the funeral home. His hands lingered on the soft material for a moment. He slammed the drawer shut and turned to me. "Don't ever save anything for a special occasion. Every day you're alive is a special occasion."

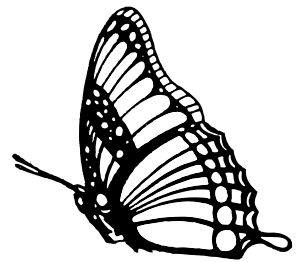
I remembered those words through the funeral and the days that followed when I helped him attend to all the sad chores that follow an unexpected death. I thought about them on the plane returning home. I thought about all the things she hadn't seen or heard or done. I thought about the things that she had done without realizing that they were special.

I still think about his words and how they've changed my life. I read more and dust less. I sit on the deck and admire the view without fussing about the weed in the garden. I spend more time with my family and friends and less time in committee meetings. Whenever possible, life should be a pattern of experience to savor, not endure. I try to recognize those moments now and cherish them. I don't save anything. We use our good china for every special event—such as losing a pound, getting the sink unstopped, or discovering the first camellia blossom. I wear my good blazer to the market if I feel like it. I don't save my good perfume for special parties. "Someday" and "one of these days" are losing their grip on my vocabulary. If it's worth seeing, hearing, or doing, I want to see, hear, and do it now.



I am not sure what my sister would have done had she known that she wouldn't be here for the tomorrows we all take for granted. I think she would have called family members and a few close friends. She might have called a few former friends to apologize and mend fences for past squabbles. It's these little things left undone that would make me angry if I knew my hours were limited—angry because I put off seeing good friends, angry because I hadn't written certain letters that I intend to write, angry and sorry that I didn't tell my husband and daughter often enough how much I truly love them. I am trying not to put off, hold back, or save anything that would add laughter and luster to our lives. Every morning when I open my eyes, I tell myself that it's a special day.

*Ann Wells  
TCF Laguna Niguel, CA*



### **A tribute to my brother, Cody:**

I shed a single tear today.

I shamefully admit: this is all I can do

For a Cheshire cat smile that was lost in his youth

...

... I have forgotten his voice.

Today didn't go the way it was supposed to, but at least today is here.

Love the people around you, and live life to the fullest;  
live life like a 14 year old boy.

So, instead of mourning your death, I'm going to  
celebrate your life.

I raise my glass to you; as you raise your wings.

Thank you.

*Brenon Tyzbir on his brother's birthday, November 1st  
in honor of his brother Cody Tyzbir who died in 2004 and  
would have been 21 this year.*

## **Sometimes**

Sometimes in the middle of the night as I read, wash dishes, fold clothes, or sit quietly and pontificate about this or that, I hear your voice. The sound is so clear. "Mom," you say.

Sometimes I answer back in an automatic response. I wait for a brief moment and then your voice is gone. I am startled and I freeze in place, not moving, not breathing, not blinking, just listening.

Sometimes I think I see you in a store or on the street, walking that unique walk that was yours alone. I look twice and realize it is not you. But it was a brief moment of joy to see that special walk.

Sometimes I think I have lost my mind. But most of the time I am thankful for these little reminders. Perhaps it is my mind giving me a sense of you. Perhaps the keeping of you in my heart brings this peace to me.

Sometimes when I come home from work, I find something on the counter that wasn't there that morning. A sock, a small socket wrench, a matchbox car. I ask my husband if he came home during the day. He didn't, of course. I wonder about these things, but then I also get comfort from them.

Sometimes I wish I could talk to you just one more time. I would simply listen to your voice, your excitement, your disappointment, your happiness, your enthusiasm, your concern....whatever you might be feeling. That would be enough. I don't need great revelations, just a conversation, just your voice.

***He that conceals his grief  
finds no remedy for it.***

*Turkish Proverb*

Sometimes I could just scream at the inequity of your death. You, my only child, the one who gave purpose and meaning to my life, are gone forever from this plane. But then, I get a grip on my sanity and stop thinking negatively.

Sometimes I meet a newly bereaved mother and I see myself. I know her heart, I understand her torment, and I feel the pain that has wrapped her in its horrible, crushing grip. I listen to this mother whose world has been gnarled into a grotesque shell of life, and I ask about her child.

Sometimes I accept my reality, sometimes I don't. But I always keep you in my heart, taking you into the future as far as I, myself, will go. And that has to be enough. I cannot change the past. I can only live today and plan for tomorrow.

Sometimes, though, I am glad that my mind allows me these little forays into a parallel reality. These give me peace. In this world, peace is as ethereal as a fine mist near a waterfall.

Sometimes, reality is just too harsh.

*Annette Mennen Baldwin  
TCF Katy, TX  
In memory of her son, Todd Mennen*

## **TO MY SISTER**

You touched us all, you loved us all,  
Forever giving, forever caring,  
Forever forgiving.  
Never wanting in return.  
Blessed are those who shared your life  
Rich are those who carry your memories.  
Please rest now; your chores we will finish.  
'Til we meet again ...

*Cindy Keltz  
TCF Arlington Heights, IL*

## ***Butterfly Wings, Bricks and Lead***

When I saw her load of grief, it looked to me to be merely a light load of butterfly wings, as compared to my full load of heavy bricks. Then I saw another man, and he seemed to be carrying a small load of lead.

But as I watched her step on the scales bearing her load of butterfly wings, the scales read "one ton." When he stepped on the scales with his load of lead, the scales also read "one ton." I knew my grief-load of bricks would weigh more, but those scales read for me, "one ton." Our loads of butterfly wings, lead and bricks weighed exactly the same to the one carrying that particular load of grief.

We bereaved parents often feel resentment when a non-bereaved person speaks about our child's death. HOW can THAT PERSON know or even dream of how I feel or what I am going through?

These feelings may be justified. But when we begin to feel resentment toward another bereaved parent "That child's death was easy compared to my child's death," "I have suffered more than she/he ever did" —we should remember that each of our grief-loads weights two thousand pounds to the one under it. Compared to Rose Kennedy, who had one child in a mental institution, and lost one daughter and three sons in violent deaths, my grief-load begins to look as if it were made of gossamer soap bubbles, but when I again step on that scale, it still reads, "one ton."

Our grief-loads may appear to weigh less because we who are under them have grown stronger through time and grief process maturation. The load actually weighs no less; it is we who have grown stronger and can carry it more easily. Sometimes we can even completely ignore the weight that is still there. Always be careful in judging another's grief-load. Remember the lead, butterfly wings and those bricks, and how they all weigh the same to the one under that load of grief.

*Tom Crouthame  
TCF Sarasota, FL*



## ***Love Gifts***

Carl and Kelly Harris in memory of  
their daughter, ***Samantha***

Betty Kalicki in memory of her daughter, ***Kara***

***"... in memory of the children we love,  
miss and remember every day."***

*This is YOUR newsletter. Email your poems, essays, artwork or quotes to editor@tcfcarsoncity.org.*

## ***A Christmas Story***

When I was just a little girl  
Around the age of three  
I remember a Christmas  
When Santa came to see me

A doll wrapped up  
In a pretty bright red bow  
Long golden hair to stroke  
Oh my, how my heart glowed

And then came a Christmas  
Later on in time  
When I shared my first Christmas  
With a son that was all mine

A few years later down the road  
When he was only five  
I didn't know it would be  
The last Christmas in my life

Now on Christmas  
As many in all these years  
I spend my days at a grave  
Shedding many tears

The Holidays come every year  
That, I cannot change  
But through all my memories  
My memories I can rearrange

I can remember all the good years  
That he and I had shared  
I can still here the giggles  
When he got that talking teddy bear

I can remember the hugs and squeals of "OH MOM"  
As each gift he opened on that day  
I can sit back and smile remembering  
Before the angels took him away

Now I am older than I once used to be  
But my mind drifts back  
To what once was on Christmas  
When my son was on earth with me

I tuck my head to fight the snow  
As I wade through the fenced in graves  
I've got my gift to give to him  
On this years' Christmas Day

*Sharon Bryant*

*In Memory of Andrew Frank Dunbar 1-22-72 - 10-24-77*

*Reprinted by permission of author*

## ***REINVESTMENTS***

### ***What Has Helped me in my Grief Journey***

Newly bereaved parents are always asking me if "it" will ever get better. I know from my journey through grief that the road is always changing. Sometimes it looks smooth and straight when all of a sudden a hairpin curve leaps in front of me without warning. Sometimes I have to maneuver through pothole after pothole.

Now I feel that I am at a fork in the road. I have choices to make on how I am going to travel this grief journey. For me the answer was obvious. With the death of my only child, I felt limited recourse. I was no longer a "practicing" parent. I would never be a grandparent. The only thing left for me to do was to help other parents who found themselves in this perilous situation.

I remember the first evening at the funeral home where my precious child was in state. The first person I went up to and hugged was a high school friend's mother, whose own child had died eighteen years ago. I remember saying to her, "Now I know what you went through." It is true. Only another parent whose child has died can truly understand the magnitude of the pain we all go through as bereaved parents.

The road is different for each parent. Every one will deal with their grief in a different manner. There are many ways that parents can reinvest in life after the death of their child.

This is what helped me.

*Liz Hodge  
TCF Southgate, MI*

***Life's unfairness is not irrevocable;  
we can help balance the scales for  
others, if not always for ourselves.***

*Hubert H. Humphrey*



## ***The Compassionate Friends Credo***

We need not walk alone.

We are The Compassionate Friends.

We reach out to each other with love, with understanding,  
and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different  
causes, but our love for them unites us.

Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different  
circumstances.

We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds,  
and relationships.

We are young, and we are old.

Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh  
and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of  
us are struggling to find answers.

Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others  
radiate an inner peace.

But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate  
Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love  
for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we  
are committed to building a future together.

We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy,  
share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts,  
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

We Need Not Walk Alone.

We Are The Compassionate Friends.