



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NORTHERN NEVADA CHAPTER

Carson City, NV

May 2011

Chapter Leader's Message

This month, it will be twenty-six years since Tommy died. It doesn't seem like that long ago - I can still feel all the tears I use to shed on a daily basis. The grief was so up and down like a roller coaster. No two people grieve the same. Co-workers and some friends used to say, "I know how you feel," not knowing what the death of a child or sibling was like. Bereaved parents and siblings know and understand.

Compassionate Friends helped me so much. Now I am trying to reach out and help other families upon the death of their child, sibling or grandchild.

*Our Children loved and remembered,
Delores*

Newsletter Editor's Message

Thank you to all who have taken the time to comment on the newsletters. I appreciate your insights and am grateful for the support. And just in case you thought I was beginning to relax as snowboarding season winds down... We have a new website!

www.tfc Carson City.org is up and running. Check back often for new information, archived newsletters, and a calendar of upcoming events. The site is still a work in progress, but I would love to hear your feedback. Email your comments and suggestions to editor@tfc Carson City.org.

~Georgette

SPECIAL DATES

May 31st

Carson City Meeting

7:00 - 8:30pm
Carson Tahoe Cancer
Resource Center
1535 Medical Parkway

June 28th

Carson City Meeting & Annual Balloon Launch

7:00 - 8:30pm
Carson Tahoe Cancer
Resource Center
1535 Medical Parkway

July 26th

Carson City Meeting

7:00 - 8:30pm
Carson Tahoe Cancer
Resource 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
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Petra Wilson
Fallon contact:
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The National Office

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www.compassionatefriends.org



Our Children Loved, Missed & Remembered

Our dear children, though gone from our sight, are forever loved and will always be remembered. We remember, with compassion, the parents and families of these precious children on the birthdays and anniversary days listed below.

May Birthdays

Michael Allen
Joshua Michael Calland
Danielle Saulisberry Carpenter

Eric Daphne
Larry A. Epley
Kelsey Foley
Andrew Gene Gialy
Travis Gleason
Samantha Harris
Tim Lane
Brad E. Lauderbaugh
Leah Matlack
Christiana Eve Medina

James Reilly
Michael Riley
Tracy Ralph Saulisberry
April Schultz
Vickie Lynn Silva
Heather Youngblood

Parents: Knowles & Helen Allen
Parents: Larry & Cindy Marchant
Parents: Dan & Neva Saulisberry
Grandparents: Chuck & Jo Saulisberry
Mother: Kres Daphne
Parents: Betty & Jim Epley
Parents: Richard & Jody Foley
Mother: Mary Knapp
Mother: Debra Stewart
Parents: Carl & Kelly Harris
Father: Don Lane
Mother: Myra Lauderbaugh
Parents: David & Barbara Neddenriep
Mother: Maureen Medina, Father: Dave Medina
Sister: Natalie Leist, Aunt: Jolene Tomko
Parents: Shane & Pam Reilly
Mother: Kim Young
Parents: Chuck & Jo Saulisberry
Parents: Norris & Kathy Schultz
Mother: Reynese Peterson
Parents: Donna & Jim Schumacher

May Anniversaries

Rick Beaty

Amber Bourge

Robert Bugajski
Shara N. Capron
Danielle Saulisberry Carpenter

David Manual Fulghum "Festus"
David Lawrence Gordon
Jesse Hunton Gould
Samantha Harris
Eric Scott Jahn
Ralph Thomas (Tommy) Ricketts
Matthew Ryan Silva
Vickie Lynn Silva
Randy Tancrell
Jeremy Michael Bruce Woolman

Sister: Cathy Silva
Brother: Joe & Angie Beaty
Mother: Jeanne Hernande, Father: Kevin Bourge
Grandmother: Donna Bachstein
Parents: Andrzej & Teresa Bugajski
Grandparents: Petra & Dave Wilson
Parents: Dan & Neva Saulisberry
Grandparents: Chuck & Jo Saulisberry
Mother: Vivian Casey, Sister: O'Donna Fulghum
Mother: Arline J. Gordon
Parents: Michael & Susan Gould
Parents: Carl & Kelly Harris
Mother: Bonnie Jahn
Mother: Delores Sherman
Grandmother: Reynese Peterson
Mother: Reynese Peterson
Mother: Karin Tancrell
Mother: Andra Gail Woolman,
Grandmother: Maxine Woolman
Aunt: Darlene Hatfield, Aunt: Barbara Wood

Mothers' Day

As Mothers' Day approaches I go back to my box of memories and seek out my mementos of days past. I go back to the times when there were two cards, some homemade of construction paper with crayoned verses proclaiming me the "Greatest Mom of all." They were made at school with some S's reversed and with no semblance of order, but brought home and presented to me with great pride and accepted in the same vein.

Later, more sophisticated cards, store bought, but the message was the same and the love was still there. I accepted them, loved being made to feel special, and tucked them away, never realizing how valuable they would become.

Now there is one card. There seems to be a double portion of love in that card and I recognize and appreciate that effort. I am thankful there is one card and I value very much what I have left. My heart goes out to those of you who have no card this Mothers' Day. But even with the pain, I'll bet if you were given the choice of no child/no pain, you would, like me, gather up as many memories as your child's life span permitted and hold them close to your heart, sorry there wasn't time for more, but never for one moment willing to exchange for no pain the pleasure of his or her company for however long you had them. When all is said and done, the memories are the important thing. Relish them, but gather about you all those you have left and who love you and let them help you through this special day. Know that this day takes patience, but that you will survive and go on to better days.

I hope your Mothers' Day is a peaceful one.

*Mary Cleckley
TCF Atlanta, GA*



Love Gifts

Betty Kalicki in memory of daughter Kara

Kathy & Norris Schultz in memory of daughter April

Betty Epley in memory of son Larry Epley

Mary Knapp in memory of son Andy Gialy

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

Mothers' Day: A Father's View

In our house, as in other bereaved parents' households, Mothers' Day comes with mixed emotions. Setting aside a day to honor motherhood is only right: mothers do tend to be taken for granted. I remember the childhood joy of getting my mother a special gift, even if the gift were nothing more than a crayon drawing. As an adult, buying gifts for your mother and the mother of your children still brings back those happy childhood memories.

But this changed after Erin died. Looking through all the cards at the gift shop only reminds me of this irony. Cute, humorous, and sweetly sentimental cards await the bereaved father shopping for his grieving wife. I can't find the card that will comfort my wife on this day, and even worse, I'm afraid that I'll buy a card that will bring back only painful memories of the child she lost.

I realize this day, perhaps because it is so widely celebrated, can even years later take my wife back to grieving she thought she was "through with." I can never do enough on Mothers' Day; maybe I try to do too much. I know, of course, that all the cards, gifts, flowers and messy breakfasts in the world can't make up for the loss of our child. But I still do all these things; she deserves them.

The unfairness of our daughter's death will always be there. I know I can't change that with a card. But I can remind her she is a great mother, a loving mother, and most importantly, she is still the mother of the child we lost. If she's happy on Mothers' Day I will try my best to keep her there. If she's depressed, I'll try to cheer her up as best I can, even though I feel I'm not very good at it. This, then is the wish I have for her and for all other bereaved mothers on this day: Please be as happy (and proud) as every other mother today; no one can dispute the fact you brought your child into the world. Although that child is no longer with you, the love you had for her or him remains and can never be taken away from you. If you should be depressed, may there be family and friends there to remind you of this and comfort you.

To Chris and to you: HAPPY MOTHERS' DAY.

*Al Bots, TCF Cleveland, OH
Reprinted from Kansas City, MO Newsletter, May 1997*

The Velveteen Rabbit

The subtitle for this book is "How Toys Become Real," and for years I thought that was what this book was all about - just a nice story about a stuffed bunny that was magically transformed into a real rabbit. The wisdom of children became apparent to me when my ten-year-old daughter suggested that I read this as one of my inspirational books. She recognized that I am finally at the place where I can understand. My children have always been so much older than I.

There was once a mom, and in the beginning she was Really splendid. She read all the books on parenting. She made her own baby food - none of that nasty stuff out of a jar for her babies; she even washed diapers - none of those paper diapers would ever touch her babies' bottoms. She listened to all the other moms talk about how REAL they were; after all, they made sure their children were dressed in designer clothes and that they went to the finest nursery school. She had heard of other moms who didn't strive for perfection in themselves and in their children - moms who were Really REAL, and she wondered what that meant.

A good friend, whose children wore hand-me-downs and received their schooling at home, was very experienced in nursery magic, and she was able to explain to this mom what it meant to be REAL. She said, "REAL isn't how many material possessions you can give to your children. It's a thing that happens to you when a child loves you... and not just for the things you can give to him, but Really loves you. Then you become REAL. It doesn't happen all at once... Generally by the time you are REAL, your hair is a mess and graying, you have wrinkles around your eyes, and you



Illustration by William Nicholson

get stiff knees and look very shabby, but these things don't matter at all, because once you are REAL, you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand.

The mom was fascinated and afraid. She asked her good friend if it hurt, and she

replied, "Sometimes," for she was always truthful. "When you are REAL, you don't mind being hurt."

The mom immediately knew that her good friend was REAL, and she longed for this magic to happen to her. Yet the thought of her getting gray hair and wrinkles made her feel sad. She wished she could become REAL without these uncomfortable things happening to her.

The days of childhood passed by very quickly. The mom spent countless hours with her children taking them for walks in the park, building snowmen in the backyard in the winter and helping them learn to swim in the summer. The mom was so happy that she didn't even notice that her hair was becoming gray and that there were now wrinkles around her eyes from smiling so much. But the other moms noticed and they also noticed the beautiful glow around this mom's face that was always present but became brighter whenever her children were near. She felt so loved, and she knew she was becoming REAL.

And then one day, the mom's little boy was very ill. He could no longer run or ride his bike, and within a short time he couldn't even walk. He could barely speak and it became increasingly hard for him to swallow his food. The mom spent many hours feeding and bathing the little boy, and playing games with him and reading to him. She missed the walks in the park and all the time they used to spend playing outdoors. The little boy's sisters missed these times, too, and they were frightened. The doctors told the mom that her little boy had a brain tumor and that they could not make him well. The mom wondered what awful thing she must have done to cause something so terrible to happen to one of her children. But deep inside she knew that it was part of becoming REAL, and she remembered her good friend's words.

It was a bright, sunny summer morning when God took the little boy home to make him well. The mom wanted so much to go with him, and she hoped that God would take her home, too. She and the little boy had talked often of how beautiful heaven was, with all the flowers, and all the friends and even the Pizza Huts. But it wasn't time for the mom to go home yet, and she felt discarded and very lonely. She went to the park where she and the little boy had spent long hours playing and to the lake where she had helped him learn to

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swim, hoping maybe to find him. She remembered those beautiful days of his childhood when they were so happy and she became very sad. Of what use was it to be loved and lose one's beauty and become REAL if it all ended like this?

And then a strange thing happened. All the tears that the mom had cried and all the pain she felt in her heart caused a beautiful flower to grow from deep within her, and the mom knew that this flower was love - a love that would enable her to share with and to understand others who were hurt and suffering - a love that she could now give to her family. The pain was no longer unbearable, and the loneliness faded away. The mom didn't mind so much that it hurt, for she was REAL, and she understood.

Joshua is the little boy who made me REAL. He was strong and courageous and wise. Throughout his illness, he gave that strength and courage to me, and he gives me wisdom when God knows I'm ready. Thank you, God, for Joshua, and thank you, Joshua, for making me REAL. I love you.

*Original story by Margery Williams; retold by Marsha Catilla
Reprinted from Kansas City, MO Newsletter, May 1994*

Welcome New Members

We welcome new members to our chapter of The Compassionate Friends. We're sorry you have a need to be with us, but we hope you feel you have found a safe place to share your grief and will return. It often takes a few meetings to feel at ease in a group setting. Please try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is for you. *Each meeting is different and the next one might be the one that really helps.*

Meetings are held the last Tuesday of every month, 7:00 - 8:30pm, at the Carson Tahoe Cancer Resource Center, 1535 Medical Parkway, Carson City, NV.

Working for Your Marriage

We are responsible for ourselves. Put things into perspective. We regain power over ourselves by putting things in order - job, family, house, routine - you know your own priorities. Think of how often you are critical of yourself and others. Stop criticizing. Go to work trying to open lines of communications with your spouse. If necessary, write him or her a letter.

You are not perfect. Neither is marriage, not in the bad times nor in the good ones. Forget about controlling your spouse; compromise.

Give yourselves some space; find separate activities for a while. Back off & breathe, then swallow your pride and appeal to your spouse again to communicate, so that you may work out your differences. If at all possible, SAVE your marriage. Otherwise you won't have anyone to reminisce with later when the pain softens. It's very lonely not to know someone who knew your child who died. The most important person to you for these memories is your child's other parent.

Believe in yourself and believe in your marriage; in time, hopefully, you will believe in your spouse again. Sometimes the hardest people to love are the people we love the most. Don't give up. COMPROMISE, CUDDLE & COMMUNICATE. I'll bet you have better results practicing these 3 C's than with "control."

*Fay Harden, TCF St. Louis, MO
Reprinted from Kansas City, MO Newsletter, May 1997*

A Day

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

Pam Burden, TCF Augusta, GA

Spring

Spring can be a difficult time for bereaved parents. It's a time of new beginnings all around us, and it can make us painfully aware that the child we've lost won't ever realize all the beginnings he or she should have had. To those who are newly bereaved the very idea of Spring, that life can just go on as usual after such a wrenching tragedy, can seem not only painful but offensive. It is good for all of us, though, to know that life does go on. We need that reassurance. We need the hope Spring offers- the promise that there WILL be good things for US again. Grief has seasons too... and we've all known its Winter. We've felt cold and bleak and desolate. TCF is here to help you hang on through that Winter, until your heart is ready for Spring again. That's what friends are for.

TCF Colorado Springs, CO

Reprinted from Kansas City, MO Newsletter, May 1998

Kevin

Of all our grandchildren born to us,
And there are many now,
The first one filled a special place
In our lives, somehow.

He was the first to brag about
To everyone we'd meet.
Our little gift from heaven.
So tiny and so sweet.

He was the first to finish school.
The first to marry, too.
The first to give us another child,
To let our love shine thru.

Oh God, he was the first to go,
And leave us in this place.
But how glad it makes my heart to know,
He was the first to see Jesus' face.

Lee Kloss, Grandmother, TCF Central AR

Reprinted from South Bay LA, CA Newsletter, May 1996

Reflections of a Step-Parent

I watched my mate go through pure Hell. And I felt helpless, useless, and sometimes... invisible. Other times, I stood strong while bearing the brunt of my love's anger that lashed out at the world as an angry God would open the heavens with roaring thunder and lightning. I was accused of not understanding and surely... I could not. I felt heavy pain for my step-child... the one I took as my own. I grieved for the good times we had together. The tugs at my heart that always pierced through any resentments.

The guilt weighed heavily on my shoulders for the times we didn't communicate and I wondered if I could have made it better.

At the funeral home, I felt even a pang of... yes... jealousy toward the natural parent of my beloved step-child... knowing that she and my mate shared a private room from the past that I could never... ever... enter.

Life must go on... this day-to-day existence... but things are different now, I offer my support as I see eyes staring off into a distant land. I hold a hand and kiss away the teardrops.

With an added sorrow, I wonder if my love will return to me or stay in that far-off land... forever. For deep in my heart, I know that this tragedy will bring us closer together or tear us completely apart.

Peggi Hull, TCF Houston, TX

Reprinted from Charlotte, NC Newsletter, May 1993

Register Now for TCF National Conference July 15-17

Compassionate Friends national conferences have always been a great healing experience for bereaved families and TCF's 34th National Conference July 15-17, 2011 in Minneapolis/St. Paul Minnesota will be no exception. With the motto "Shining Stars – Guiding Hope," the conference is now open for early registration.

Our members can register for the conference online or by downloading a conference registration brochure from the national website. If you don't have Internet access, you can also call the National Office Toll Free at 877-969-0010 to be sent the registration brochure.

Early conference registration is \$85 for adults ages 18 and up, and \$35 for siblings ages 9-17 and full-time college students. Early registration ends June 10 at which point there is an increase in registration costs. Walk to Remember early registration is \$20.

For full information, visit TCF's National Website at www.compassionatefriends.org and go to "TCF 2011 National Conference – Minneapolis" under News & Events.

A Beginning...

One day you wake up and realize you must have survived it because you are still here, alive and breathing. But you don't remember the infinitely small steps and decisions you took to get there. Your only awareness is that you have shed miles of tears on what seems to be an endless road of sorrow. One day, one glorious day, you wake up and feel your skin tingle again and you forget just for an instant that your heart is broken... and it is a beginning.

Susan Borrowman, TCF Kingston, Canada

"Submit a Child's Name" to be Carried in TCF's National Walk to Remember July 17

The Compassionate Friends Walk to Remember® on the final day of the national conference each year is one of the most anticipated events held by the organization. This year's Walk will be on July 17 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and we want everyone to be able to participate, even if they can't attend. Every year dozens of volunteers carry the names of thousands of children submitted to the National Office by family and friends and that opportunity is available again this year.

You can submit a child's name by going to TCF's national website at www.compassionatefriends.org and clicking on "Name Submission for Walk to Remember" on the drop-down menu under "News and Events." Last year we estimate the names of more than 15,000 children were carried during the Walk by the 1200 people participating and, we anticipate surpassing that number again this year. This is one way that The Compassionate Friends helps to make certain that no child is ever forgotten!



Second Sunday of May

Many happy memories
Linger in our hearts this day
As we each remember our child
Who has left this earthly plane.
The day is bittersweet for us,
The mothers who have lost so much,
For to remove all pain could well
Erase the precious life we touched.
Tears will trace the memories of
Other, happier Mother's Days,
As we dwell in a quiet reverie
This Second Sunday of May

*Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF Katy, TX
In Memory of my son, Todd Mennen, May 2006*

NEW for 2011:

This newsletter is now available online.
Visit our website **www.tfcarsontcity.org**
and click on "Newsletters."
You can download PDFs of previous newsletters or
subscribe to receive monthly newsletters via email.

Save the Date!

The Annual Balloon Launch will be held on
June 28th, as part of the regular meeting. The
balloon launch is a simple, yet meaningful way to
commemorate our children, grandchildren and
siblings who have passed away. Messages to our
loved ones are attached to balloons, and released
in a ceremony of poems, music, and reflection.
Refreshments will be served after the ceremony.

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