



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS NORTHERN NEVADA CHAPTER

Carson City, NV

November/December 2012

Chapter Leader's Message

...That Their Light May Always Shine

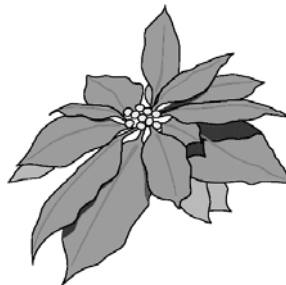
Sunday, December 9th will be the 16th Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting. A 24-hour wave of light around the world will honor children, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren whose memories we treasure in our hearts.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting is open to all who wish to participate, whether by sponsoring or attending a service open to the public, joining in a small gathering, or lighting a candle in the quiet solitude of their homes or wherever they may be. Although the event is officially held at 7 p.m. for one hour, services are held throughout the day, for continuous light for 24 hours.

Due to scheduling, the Carson City chapter will not hold a public service this year. We ask that you share in the wave of light by lighting a candle at 7 p.m. wherever you may be. To view a list of known services open to the public and for more information about The Compassionate Friends and the event, visit www.compassionatefriends.org.

Our regular meeting will be held on December 18th. We will have an ornament exchange. Bring an ornament with your child's or sibling's name on it to exchange. My Christmas tree has many ornaments with the names of our children. Bring a desert or something to share.

*Wishing you the very best for a good Holiday Season,
Delores*



SPECIAL DATES

November 27th Carson City Meeting

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Carson Tahoe Cancer
Resource Center
1535 Medical Parkway
Contact: Delores (775) 883-4415

December 9th Worldwide Candle Lighting

7:00 - 8:00 p.m.

December 18th Carson City Meeting Annual Ornament Exchange

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Carson Tahoe Cancer
Resource Center
1535 Medical Parkway
Contact: Delores (775) 883-4415

January 29th Carson City Meeting

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Carson Tahoe Cancer
Resource Center
1535 Medical Parkway
Contact: Delores (775) 883-4415

STEERING COMMITTEE

Chapter Leader

Delores Sherman (775) 883-4415

Treasurer/Mailing List/Memorial Page

Kathy Schultz (775) 883-3132
kathy@tfc Carsoncity.org

Newsletter Editor

Georgette Riley editor@tfc Carsoncity.org

Regional Coordinator

Gene Caligari (480) 703-2963

Members

Betty Kalicki
Jo Saulisberry (775) 246-5570
Cathy Silva, Delegate (775) 883-5388
Sonja Strom (775) 783-8020
Hawthorne contact: Petra Wilson (775) 945-5782
Fallon contact: Judy Dunning (775) 423-7286

The National Office

PO Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
(877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

Phone Friends

Cathy (775) 883-5388
(youth, illness)

Delores (775) 883-4415
(teenage, car accident)

Kathy & Norris (775) 883-3132
(teenage, illness)

Sonja (775) 783-8020
(multiple death)

Judy (775) 423-7286
(car accident, daughter & grandson)

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 here.

November Birthdays

<i>Rick Beaty</i>	<i>Sister: Cathy Silva; Brother: Joe & Angie Beaty</i>
<i>Sedona Rose Blair</i>	<i>Parents: Nicole & Jamie Blair</i>
<i>Joseph Robert Caputo</i>	<i>Mother: Joseph & Jeanne Caputo-Young</i>
<i>Micah Christensen (son)</i>	<i>Mother: Kristin Pullin</i>
<i>James (Jimmy) Davis</i>	<i>Mother: Gayla Davis McDonald</i>
<i>Paula L. Holmes</i>	<i>Mother: Janae Holmes</i>
<i>Michelle Jacoboni</i>	<i>Parents: Ron & Judy Jacoboni</i>
<i>Jessica Brooke Loomis</i>	<i>Mother: Lynn Loomis</i>
<i>Robert James Nielsen</i>	<i>Parents: Millie & Irv Nielsen</i>
<i>Pamela Kay Pack</i>	<i>Mother: Brenda Pendergrass</i>
<i>Julie Rodriguez</i>	<i>Mother: Sonja Strom</i>
<i>Vickie Ryback</i>	<i>Mother: Donna Ryback</i>
<i>Matthew Ryan Silva</i>	<i>Grandmother: Reynese Peterson</i>
<i>Dean M. Stout</i>	<i>Parents: Millie & Earl Stout</i>
<i>Cody Michael Tyzbir</i>	<i>Grandmother: Carolyn Tyzbir</i>
<i>Evan Vorreyer</i>	<i>Grandparents: Harold & Barbara Zaroff</i>
<i>Paul W. Watkins</i>	<i>Parents: Nancy & Bob Watkins</i>

November Anniversaries

<i>Michael Allen</i>	<i>Parents: Knowles & Helen Allen</i>
<i>Candice Beam</i>	<i>Parents: Michael & Debbie Beam</i>
<i>Stephanie Lou Beavers</i>	<i>Parents: John & Nancy Beavers</i>
<i>Sedona Rose Blair</i>	<i>Parents: Nicole & Jamie Blair</i>
<i>Melinda Brown</i>	<i>Parents: Darryl & Rita Brown</i>
<i>Brandon Bryant</i>	<i>Mother: Sunny Bryant</i>
<i>Micah Christensen (son)</i>	<i>Mother: Kristin Pullin</i>
<i>Benjamin Griffith</i>	<i>Parents: Pat & Mary Griffith</i>
<i>Thomas Richard O'Connell</i>	<i>Grandmother: Deborah Jones</i>
<i>Pamela Kay Pack</i>	<i>Mother: Brenda Pendergrass</i>
<i>Bryan Wall</i>	<i>Mother: Loni Wall</i>
<i>Ricky Woodring</i>	<i>Parents: Ron & Vickie Woodring</i>



December Birthdays

<i>Tomoah KhalifJon Anderson</i>	<i>Parents: Tansey Smith</i>
<i>Ian Thomm Campbell</i>	<i>Father: Donald Campbell</i>
<i>David Manual Fulghum "Festus"</i>	<i>Mother: Vivian Casey</i>
<i>Erin Hackman</i>	<i>Parents: Rick & Cecilia Hackman</i>
<i>Adina Jacoboni</i>	<i>Parents: Ron & Judy Jacoboni</i>
<i>Kara Lee Kalicki</i>	<i>Mother: Betty Kalicki</i>
<i>Michael Kronowitz</i>	<i>Mother: Muriel Kronowitz</i>
<i>Ryan "T.J." Marich</i>	<i>Parents: Richard & Jill Marich</i>
<i>JonPaul C. Martens</i>	<i>Mother: Amber-Rose Aparicio</i>
<i>Jeff Martin</i>	<i>Mother: Suzanne Fox</i>
<i>Shelly Mott</i>	<i>Mother: Stephanie Mott</i>
<i>Maddyson Palmer</i>	<i>Mother: Mandi Palmer</i>
<i>Michelle Shaw</i>	<i>Parents: Sylvia & Jim Shaw</i>
<i>Special Child</i>	<i>Mother: Tammy Anstedt</i>
<i>Corey Wetenkamp</i>	<i>Mother: Joyce Wetenkamp</i>
<i>Kelly Williams</i>	<i>Parents: Gary & Judy Williams</i>

December Anniversaries

<i>Tomoah KhalifJon Anderson</i>	<i>Parents: Tansey Smith</i>
<i>Chris</i>	<i>Sister: Camile Strauch</i>
<i>James (Jimmy) Davis</i>	<i>Mother: Gayla Davis McDonald</i>
<i>Eric D. Eisele</i>	<i>Parents: Don & Darlene Eisele; Brother: Steve & Marianne Eisele</i>
<i>Joshua Raymond Farler</i>	<i>Parents: Jim & Brenda Farler</i>
<i>Bryan Harding</i>	<i>Mother: Sandra Harding</i>
<i>Ethan Harmon</i>	<i>Parents: Ken & Duana Harmon; Grandparents: Chuck & Shirley Evans</i>
<i>Knox Justin Johnson Kolbe</i>	<i>Mother: Helen Johnson</i>
<i>Michael Kronowitz</i>	<i>Mother: Muriel Kronowitz</i>
<i>Tim Lane</i>	<i>Father: Don Lane</i>
<i>Brent A. Lauderbaugh</i>	<i>Mother: Myra Lauderbaugh</i>
<i>Jason Marshall</i>	<i>Parents: Jean & Phil Marshall</i>
<i>JonPaul C. Martens</i>	<i>Mother: Amber-Rose Aparicio</i>
<i>Shelly Mott</i>	<i>Mother: Stephanie Mott</i>
<i>Jeff Poy</i>	<i>Parents: Myrna & Robert Poy</i>
<i>Julie Rodriguez</i>	<i>Mother: Sonja Strom</i>
<i>Special Child</i>	<i>Mother: Tammy Anstedt</i>
<i>Leoma N. Vaughan</i>	<i>Parents: Judy Dunning</i>
<i>K. Manley Vaughan</i>	<i>Grandparents: Judy Dunning</i>
<i>Richard Young</i>	<i>Mother: Karen Young</i>



Love Gifts

Betty Kalicki in memory of her daughter

Kara

Delores Sherman in memory of her son

Tommy

Cathy Silva in memory of her brother

Rick

Betty Epley in memory of her son

Larry

Stephanie Snyder in memory of her daughter

Elise

Andra Woolman in memory of her son

Jeremy

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

Thank You

The Northern Nevada - Carson City chapter of The Compassionate Friends is funded solely by contributions. There are no dues or membership fees. A LOVE GIFT is a donation to honor a child who has died, or sometimes as a memorial to a relative or a friend. Your gifts allow us to continue to reach out to other bereaved families through our books, programs, and newsletter. Thanks to each of you for your generous gifts and support. LOVE GIFTS are tax deductible and may be mailed to:

The Compassionate Friends
Kathy Schultz, Treasurer
1111 Liberty Ct.
Carson City, NV 89703

Only December

Feelings heavy,
tears and tears.
Will the darkness last?
Or is it –
only December?

Hadn't past months
brought peace and hope?
Where is the strength
of October –
and November?

Lights, carols, ornaments on trees,
cards from friends,
happy times in seasons past.
We remember.
We remember.

Will January bring
light at last?
Will we be stronger then,
for making it through
this December?

When people ask
how I'm doing, I say,
"Well,
you know,
it's December."

*Genesse Bourdeau Gentry
TCF Marin/San Francisco, CA*

Reprinted from the Holiday 1998 We Need Not Walk Alone, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends

**A Special Wish for You During
This Holiday Season**

We wish you UNDERSTANDING, ASSURANCE, ENDURANCE,
and PATIENCE (with yourself and your loved ones).

We wish you the inner resources to SURVIVE, STRENGTH to
make it through one more day.

We wish you the ability to COMMUNICATE, CONCENTRATE,
EXPRESS YOUR GRIEF, CRY, and COPE.

And with these wishes we offer HOPE - that your tears will
be healing and become gentler in time.

May the season be a remembrance of LOVE, and of JOY, and
of special times shared.

For the New Year we wish you COMFORT and PEACE.

Val Mason

TCF Pocatello, ID

*Reprinted from the December 2000 newsletter of the
South Bay/Los Angeles, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

There is Life after Infant Death

Here I am two years later, a normal functioning person. It must be a miracle. Two years ago, I wouldn't have believed it possible, yet here I am. I can smile, laugh and do the everyday menial tasks that two years ago seemed to overwhelm me. I feel pain, but not the driving, stabbing pain of the past that comes and goes when the memories of the past creep in to disturb my happier present. Somewhere along the road, I found the strength hidden within me to go on without Sara. I know my life is less rich without her, but still very much worth living.

Does time heal all wounds? I don't feel healed, but time has given me a chance to learn to live and cope with the pain. I can now go on and live a good life with my husband and three wonderful daughters.

I hope for all those whose pain is new, that they can just hold on until their day comes as mine has today. When they can say, "It's a miracle. There is life after infant death."

*Fran Downing
HOPE Newsletter Winchester, MI
Reprinted from the December 2000 newsletter of the
South Bay/Los Angeles, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

Think About This

You have to make your own music, sing your own song, feel your own joy and excitement, love your own peace and create your own harmony.

Happy days, happy thoughts, happy feelings are decisions made by you. All that you see and feel and think is decided by you. Happiness can happen in the middle of difficulty, in the storm of life and in moments when going on is a real strain.

It is a personal decision not to let disappointments whip you, not to let other people's decisions break your heart. There will be tunnels others will make for you to walk through, but if you hang on and decide everything is going to be all right, it will!

*Joyce Sequichie Hifler
TCF Fort Wayne, IN
Reprinted from the November 2006 newsletter of the
Kansas City, MO/KS chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

Traditions - Gone Too Soon

When I think of past Christmases as a child, I think of my brother. In truth, he was the one who put in place many of the family Christmas traditions. In plain English, he was the oldest and "the instigator."

Rick, "The Kid," was the mastermind as we'd sneak out into the living room very early on Christmas and wait for a car to pass by so the room would be lit up by the headlights just long enough to read the names on the tags.

Or the tradition of waking up the household at four in the morning to open gifts. Of course the youngest in the family "traditionally" had to wake up Mom & Dad. I was too young and naive to know I'd been had! That Christmas tradition carried right on through our grown up years when all us kids would come home to Mom & Dad's to celebrate Christmas morn together. Of course this tradition was continued much to the chagrin of our spouses and to the glee of our children. At least, thankfully, I was no longer the youngest with the dubious honor of waking up the household!

Rick was the first of our family to spend Christmas in Heaven. My own two children and dad followed him all too soon thereafter. Christmases aren't the same any more. Those early traditions had to be left behind because they are a painful reminder that these very important people are not here among us. But my love for Rick, Stephanie, Stephen and Daddy remain constant, because I carry them deep within my heart. They are loved, missed and forever remembered.

*Pat Loder
TCF Lakes Area, MI
Reprinted from the December 2000 newsletter of the
South Bay/Los Angeles, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

Double Grief

The death of my grandchild
And the grief of my son
Pull on my heart strings
And I am undone.
In secret I mourn beyond relief
For I have been given a double grief
God, help me to deal with the pain and sorrow
Of living without the hope of tomorrow.

*Andy Cipriano
TCF Tallahassee, FL
Reprinted from the December 2000 newsletter of the
South Bay/Los Angeles, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

Thanksgiving for What?

This time of year we all do a lot of soul-searching. All around us there is the spirit of Thanksgiving. But what do we have to give thanks for? We have suffered the greatest loss imaginable. Surely we have no grounds for Thanksgiving!

I think back to a national conference and a sharing session in which a woman commented: "If I had realized how much pain the death of my child would cause me, I would have wished he had never been born." We were appalled by her statement. Bryan's death caused me pain, but I could never think that it would be better had he never been born. I contrast that woman's self-pity with the courage of another mother, Lena Horne. Within 13 months, she lost her husband, her father and her 30-year old son. "I discovered I was strong even though they had left me, because they had left me so much."

Thanksgiving, according to the dictionary, is the "act of giving thanks; grateful acknowledgment of benefits or favors." It is giving thanks for gifts received. Dr. John Claypool, whose 10-year-old daughter, Laura Lue, died from Leukemia, told us in Tampa that he had come to view his daughter's life not as a right, but rather as a gift. Her life was not something to which he was entitled, of which he was robbed, but a beautiful gift that he was able to enjoy for the 10 years she was with him. He came to see the question not as why did she die, but rather as why did she live? He aptly observes that we think quite differently about gifts than we do about possessions.

What do I have to be thankful for? For the opportunity to see a shy child of a broken home become a troubled teen, but then blossom into a sensitive, caring young man. And to be thankful that I was able to see over that phone call in the middle of the night to the life that lay behind it.

As Iris Bolton says in ***My Son, My Son***: "You have taught me to revere life. I see that it is precious and can vanish in an instant ... What a treasury of lessons your sacrifice has uncovered."

If I remember only the pain of Bryan's death, not the joy of his life, if the pain of his death blinds me to the gift of his life, I do him a great disservice. I think that we all, even those who shared such a short time with their child, can be thankful for what was given, even while we are saddened by what was lost.

*Bob Rosenberger
TCF Burke-Springfield, IA*

*Reprinted from the November/December 2001 newsletter of the
South Lake Tahoe, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

Don't Tell Me

Don't tell me to "get over it." There is a hole in my heart and in my soul.

Don't tell me I'm strong. I'm weary from hurting.

Don't tell me I'm brave. My world has been shattered and I don't know how to put it back together again.

Don't tell me he is in a better place. I know that, but dreams were left unfulfilled here.

Don't tell me he knew I loved him. I wanted to be there to hold his hand and tell him once more. I still love him, I miss him, and I want him back.

Don't tell me to move on. I'm trying, but nothing is the same. Move on to what?

Don't tell me he would want me to be happy. Happiness is too fleeting to hold on to.

Don't tell me you couldn't survive losing one of your kids. You would, because like me, you would have no choice.

Don't tell me he had a good life. It was far too short to accomplish all that he had planned.

Don't tell me to pack up his things, to "let my heart heal." He is a part of me and I do not want to forget any part of him.

Please don't tell me to forget. Rather, tell me that you remember my son.

Do tell me, if you are my friend, that you remember his beautiful eyes, his smile, his laughter, his sense of adventure, his never ending quest to have fun, his love of life, his kindness and compassion for others.

*Marlene Moore, mother of
Jared M Moore (8/15/85-12/29/04), Basehor, KS,
firefighter lost in the line of duty
Reprinted from the November 2006 newsletter of the
Kansas City, MO/KS chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

Am I Healing?

Am I healing? I'm able to gaze at her photograph without that tourniquet tightening around my throat, clamping memory ...

I'm beginning to see her in her life, and not only myself bereft of her life ...

Piece by piece, I reenter the world. A new phase. A new body, a new voice. Birds console me by flying, trees by growing, dogs by the warm patch they leave behind on the sofa. Unknown people merely by performing their motions. It's like a slow recovery from a sickness, this recovery of one's self ...

*Toby Talbot
TCF Volusia/Flagler, FL*

Letting Go

It's been three years, son, since you died
And you've been ever by my side.
I mourned you then, I mourn you still;
Deep in my heart I always will.
But lately there's a brand new me.
Changes are happening gradually
A ready song, a quicker step
And, gratefully, a bit more pep.
I didn't know I'd see the day
When I could think of you and say
My smile is back, my heart is light,
I battled grief. I won the fight!

I feared that when this day came
Ties to you wouldn't be the same
That when the pain left, you would, too,
And precious memories would be so few.
I cast aside these foolish fears!
Memories are sweeter less the tears,
You're even closer now, you see,
With clearer mind and heart that's free.
I sort out good times and the bad;
Put in perspective the times we had.
These thoughts come back like dear old friends.
They'll comfort me 'til my life ends.

It must please you, my dearest son,
To see my grievous ordeal done,
And when someday we meet anew
(The butterfly's promise will come true!)
We'll be together evermore
With a longing ache nevermore.
Until that day, my distant star,
It's not goodbye, just au revoir!

*Marge Frankenberg, 1981
TCF Arlington Heights, IL*

Days of Thanks

In a year when much was given,
Much was taken, too,
So we who pause and give our thanks
For what now is,
Think, too, of what once was,
And we are grateful for
The threads of lives gone by,
Threads that enrich the fabric
Of this, the life we know.

*Lois Wyse
Reprinted from the November newsletter of the
Tulsa, OK chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

To Parents who have lost a Child through Suicide

Parents and siblings of a young person who has completed suicide face an almost overwhelming burden of emotions. It is one of the cruelest tragedies that can happen to a family. To pull oneself out of the emotional wreckage is a mighty struggle. Each parent can be utterly devastated and unable to be supportive to mate or to surviving children. Other family members are shocked and unable to cope with the event. They do not know how to console or help us. Our friends wonder, "How could such a thing happen." They, too, do not know how to help us. We struggle with the whys ... the unanswered questions, and the painful memories.

We who count ourselves as survivors- we've made it a year, two years, some of us are in the third year - would like to share a few thoughts.

First, you are not alone. We understand whatever you may be feeling, for we have "been there!" Suicide can intensify the feelings of shock, denial, guilt, anger, depression - all a part of the grief process. The course of recovery is up and down. Give yourself plenty of time. You need a great deal of support, at least through the first year. The suicide of one's child raises painful questions and doubts and fears. We can find ourselves in a spiritual crisis. We question our beliefs and may feel cut off from God. Through sharing with others and listening to others who have walked the same path, you may gain some understanding of your reactions and learn some ways to cope.

But most of all, we, who are in the process of rebuilding our lives, have not forgotten the dark hours of those early days and weeks when we thought we could not live again. We cannot offer you any shortcut through the pain. There isn't any. But you can help yourself along the way to healing. We can offer you support, encouragement, and the hand of friendship.

*JoAnn Dodson
TCF Louisville, KY*

Who We Are...

The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.

We gather to listen, to share, and the support each other in the resolution of our grief. You need not walk alone, we are the Compassionate Friends.

Yesterday

Yesterday the sun shone bright
over a snow covered hill.

Yesterday a tender sight
a bird on my windowsill.

Yesterday the rivers flowed
Cool and clear and free.

Yesterday it was not cold
and sights were there to see

Yesterday my heart was happy,
my heart was calm and gay.

Yesterday it was wonderful
but now it is today.

Loretta Holden, 1975

December 17, 1956 -May 10, 1994

Reprinted from the November/December 1997

newsletter of the Winnipeg, MB chapter of The Compassionate Friends

I Know

When you tell me how long it's been
since your child's death
and you're feeling so bad,
I know.

When you wonder if that pain in your
heart will ever stop,
I know.

When an anniversary is coming and
you dread thinking about it,
I know.

When you tell me your friends just
don't understand,
I know.

I know because I've been there,
and I also know it will be easier someday-
I know you'll be able to share those happy memories
someday!
I know you'll be able to reach out and help someone
someday -
and then you'll say, "I know."

Therese Goodrich

Past Executive Director, US National/TCF

Reprinted from the November/December 1996 newsletter of the

Winnipeg, MB chapter of The Compassionate Friends

Memories of Chanukah

December is usually sad for me. The beautiful decorations of Christmas remind me that my life has changed in a very drastic way. I see the children's excited faces in the shopping malls, everyone around trying to buy just the right gift.

Chanukah is our family holiday, and it usually falls around Christmas, so I would join the throngs of people shopping, rushing to find just what I wanted for my precious daughter and son. When they were young, there was so much anticipation and happiness in our home, getting ready for the holiday. We had Chanukah decorations hanging from the ceiling in the living room. The Menorah (candle holder) was placed in the center of the table on a beautiful table cloth. Eight presents were on one side for Cheryl, and eight on the other side for David. There was one gift for every night, as the holiday is celebrated for eight nights. Each night they took turns lighting the Menorah, and looked so solemn doing it!

Money wasn't in great quantity in those days, so the gifts included necessities, as well as toys and items they requested. Mike and I would dress with care, and we would sing the appropriate songs with the children. They would be fed and bathed and in their pajamas. I can still see their shining faces, their eyes so big, and they looked like two little angels. They would shake their packages, trying to figure out what was in each box. "Mommy, Daddy, which one should we open?" Mike and I would get tears in our eyes, watching them. (I have tears in my eyes now, remembering.) When they opened the package, they would always run over to us, happy and grateful for their gifts. They would hug and kiss us. Thank God, Cheryl is still giving me hugs and kisses. She was a special child, and is now a lovely woman. My heart still cried for the other part of that team. It is now eleven Chanukahs that I haven't talked to, held, kissed or hugged my precious son.

So... Chanukah and Christmas time of year is one of my favorite memories, but, oh, does it hurt!

Gerri Toth

TCF Miami, FL

*Reprinted from the November/December 2001 newsletter of the
South Lake Tahoe, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends*



Understanding Your Grieving Child

INFANTS AND PRESCHOOLERS Many adults underestimate the abilities of young children to realize something is wrong and to understand death. Adults often talk “around” young children, believing they can’t understand or they’re too young to “get it.” Include young children in the process when a family member is dying or has died. “Protecting” them will backfire as they sense something is wrong yet no one will discuss it with them.

Children need clear, honest explanation. They can learn the finality of death over time. Hours after learning her father is dead, a 3-year-old asks, “Is Daddy going to be dead all day?” When told his mother has gone to heaven, a 4-year-old wonders, “When will she be back?” The most helpful explanations are simple and concrete. For instance, “When your mom is dead she can’t eat, see, hear, sing, walk around, laugh or cry. A dead person doesn’t sleep, get hungry, cold or scared.” Young children repeat their questions. Because they learn by having questions answered again and again. They may want to hear what happened many times, much as they like to hear a familiar bedtime story. It’s the young child’s process as he struggles to understand death.

SIX TO TWELVE Most children this age still depend on others for basic needs, and the loss of a parent or sibling is confusing and difficult. These children often don’t have ways to verbalize their complex feelings and thoughts, so they can come out as anger, frustration, irritability and troublesome behaviors. Kids this age also tend to have magical thinking. They may believe that their behavior, thoughts or wishes caused the death and they frequently show signs of guilt. They want to be like their friends, to fit in. They do not want to be different, but when a parent or sibling dies, they are different.

They often respond well to accepting their emotions and thoughts as well as alternative, safe behaviors for self-expression. Alternatives include using a punching bag, drawing feelings on paper or kicking Nerf balls.

TEENS Adolescence ordinarily can be a difficult but a teen impacted by a family member’s death also must deal with a radically altered future, including altered relationships, roles and family structure. Because the peer group is important to teens, a friend’s death, too, has deep impact. Teens commonly think they’re immune from injury or death. When a parent, sibling, or friend dies, the teen’s world is thrown into chaos. Many have difficulty communicating, not eating, skipping school and homework, escaping through alcohol and other drugs and other reckless activities.

Be supportive-listen, and be available and approachable, especially when they are open to communicating, even late at night. Avoid telling them what to do. Allow the teen to do his grief work as he chooses within reasonable boundaries.

From The Dougy Center, Portland, OR

Reprinted from the November 1999 newsletter of the South Bay/Los Angeles, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends

Lights of Love

Can you see our candles
Burning in the night?
Lights of love we send you
Rays of purest white

Children we remember
Though missing from our sight
In honor and remembrance
We light candles in the night

All across the big blue marble
Spinning out in space
Can you see the candles burning
From this human place?

Oh, angels gone before us
Who taught us perfect love
This night the world lights candles
That you may see them from above

Tonight the globe is lit by love
Of those who know great sorrow,
But as we remember our yesterdays
Let’s light one candle for tomorrow

We will not forget
And every year in deep December
On Earth we will light candles
As... we remember

*Written by TCF Member Jacqueline Brown
for National Children’s Memorial Day*



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

Brianna's Blankets

My beautiful baby, Brianna, was born January 13, 2012. I was nervous the whole entire pregnancy. I was never the type of person who thought I would enjoy being a mother. However, I was so grateful for a loving husband who I knew would be an amazing father to our precious girl. Once she was born, I realized I have never been in love with anyone like I was with her. Once I held Brianna in my arms everything changed; she was my whole life. Being my first child, she has made me a mother and my husband a father. All this being said, she was stillborn.

The day she was born had a joyous start. She was healthy during the whole pregnancy and other than the most horrible heartburn anyone could imagine, never even caused me trouble. I went to the hospital at 3:00 a.m., although I wasn't sure exactly why. I guess it was just that mother's instinct to check on my daughter. Once I arrived, they found that her heartbeat was fine, and to my surprise, I was told that I was having steady contractions. She was double footling breeched and I was three days from my due date, so the doctor scheduled me for a C-section. I was horrified. I had been adamant through my entire pregnancy in my decision not to have a C-section. But once I realized I would meet Brianna in a few hours, I started to get excited.

My husband called our families and close friends. By the time I was taken into the operating room, everyone was in the lobby waiting to meet her. Brianna was born at 9:35 a.m. We never heard her cry; we never saw her move. However, she was perfectly formed. She was beautiful, and I was her mother. Getting to hold her, kiss her, and love her has been a highlight of my life. Even though my family and friends never met her while she was alive, we have been strengthened by her.

The hospital gave me all the items she was dressed in, as well as the blanket that had been wrapped around her. In fact, I sleep each night clutching the beanie she wore. These items are precious to me. I wanted to do something to carry on her name. I wanted to keep a hold of that hope, faith, and unconditional love I had for her. And I never want to forget her.

Blankets for Brianna was formed. This nonprofit organization collects baby blankets to donate to hospitals for their stillborn and NICU babies. The blankets may be homemade or purchased. They are usually small, between 20 and 30 inches square, and either simple or creative. Each blanket has a personalized label attached with a picture of Brianna's footprint and a message: "Blankets for Brianna. Made with love for you." Not all the parents will have such a devastating loss, but we hope that the blankets will provide them the strength and comfort they need during such a difficult time.

In the few months that we have been collecting them, the blankets have already started to stack up in our home office, and we have made one delivery to the hospital in which Brianna was born. We also contacted the surrounding hospitals to make deliveries there as well. Community groups and individuals are even getting involved to make blankets to donate. I see so much potential in this little project. Being able to honor Brianna, and other children like her, has been a wonderful feeling. I am doing this for my daughter. All the work I put into the organization is the work that I would have done for her. Some days that cheers me up, and some days it makes me sad that she is not here, but I try to see the positives in everything.

I know there is a reason this happened to my husband and me, and I have hope that when I finally get to see Brianna again, she will run up to me and call me Mom. I can't wait for that moment.

Laurel Taylor and her husband, Joe, have made a home in Southern California. She is a dispatcher for the Riverside Sheriff's Department and Joe is a fire captain for Cal Fire. They look forward to having other children when the time is right. They are affiliated with the Inland Empire Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. Blankets for Brianna can be found at <http://blanketsforbrianna.blogspot.com/> and <https://www.facebook.com/BlanketsforBrianna>.

Reprinted from the autumn 2012 We Need Not Walk Alone, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends

Ponderings

No mother should ever have to cradle her son's ashes
in a box in her arms
No father should ever have to enter his child's date of
death on a family tree
No brother should ever have to carry out
his brother's last wishes
Or find just the right music or photos for his wake
We shouldn't have to deal with such sorrow.
We could rise above the circumstances,
We could carry our pain with grace
We could look for ways to redeem our loss
We could be strong and inspire others
To live life to the fullest and make each day count
We could turn this tragedy around
But, we shouldn't have to.

*Irene Rowland
In honor of Christopher Michael Rowland, who had a huge
heart, and is missed and loved by many.
Reprinted from the autumn 2012 We Need Not Walk Alone,
the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends*

To My Stepson, Jay:

You were eleven when I met you. You were shy, reserved, and somewhat guarded. When we would laugh, play together, and create stories, I knew we connected. I worked so hard to build a family of love and companionship. I never knew in those early years if that's what you wanted, too.

As time went on, I understood you better. When your sister was born, I saw something unfold within you. I guess it was unconditional love. It was through your relationship with your sister and then your little brother that I began to see how sensitive, gentle, and loving you were. My love for you grew stronger through your example.

Before I knew it, you were a man. You went off to college and did amazing things. A part of me was with you wherever you went. I was proud of you, not just for all of your accomplishments, but for the person you had become. When we spoke on the phone, you never hung up without saying, "I love you." It was at those times, I knew that you understood my great love for you.

And then it was all over one afternoon. Where did you go? It's too hard to believe that you will not be coming home anymore. That realization brings such deep and heavy pain. In the depth of my sorrow, I discovered how completely I had devoted myself to you. You had become part of me. Did you know you took a part of me with you?

*Love,
Suzanne McFarlin-Wolkin*

James Jacob Wolkin died March 22, 1999 when the airplane he was piloting crashed into the San Bernardino Mountains near his college. Jay was 21 years old.

Reprinted from the November 2000 newsletter of the South Bay/Los Angeles, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends

Those who have recently lost children might feel that never again will hope, joy, fulfillment, or anything positive exist in their lives again. Slowly, after months or years which seem agonizingly long, a glimmer of happiness, contentment, or satisfaction occurs to foster optimism that life can once again become purposeful or meaningful.

It is not unusual for a bereaved parent to resent the suggestion that it is possible to feel better. Any thought of improvement requires a degree of energy and commitment not present in newly bereaved persons. The length of time needed to reach the point where the desire to rebuild develops, is different for each individual and cannot be rushed.

Each person must find his own space, struggling with disappointing reversals and difficult hurdles that hopefully will become fewer and more easily surmountable as time passes.

*TCF Sacramento Valley, CA
Reprinted from the November 2000 newsletter
of the South Bay/Los Angeles, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

Don't Be Fooled Again

Holiday depression is more common than you think. People all around you feel bad because they aren't enjoying Thanksgiving, Christmas, and other family-type holidays "like they should." Nearly everybody feels they ought to get along better with their family.

You are not alone. Everywhere you look, the ads, the movies, and the TV, you see the most heartwarming family gatherings.

The truth is, nobody is having that much fun. Those are make-believe families played by actors to make you feel good about buying the sponsor's product. There's nothing wrong with that unless you expect your own holiday to be as magical as the ones on TV.

Don't try for a perfect Thanksgiving or Christmas. Just relax and take it as it comes. It's sweeter that way. If you feel you must have a good time on New Year's Eve, you'll be disappointed again, no matter how much you drink. So take it easy. Pretend it's just another night. It will work out better.

Take care of yourself. We'll need you in January. Peace and Goodwill.

*Ken Nottingham
Anderson, IN
Reprinted from the November 2000 newsletter
of the South Bay/Los Angeles, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

Making It Through The Holidays

Prior to the death of a child, most holidays are intended to be a time of joy, community, gift giving, and thankfulness. When a family loses a child, holidays often become challenging times to “get through.” Helpful information shared by a Hospice counselor and our members at a recent meeting included-

Setting Limits For Yourself - It’s okay to say no, when you don’t feel up to something. It’s okay to say yes, too. “Look to simplify rather than overwhelm yourself. Do only as much as you can manage emotionally and physically.”

Express Your Feelings - Sharing your feelings with those close to you regarding the upcoming holidays often helps. Writing feelings down through journaling, simple note taking, listening to special music, and creating art that expresses feelings have been helpful for many people.

Making Plans - Planning in advance often helps to lessen the pressure on grieving families and individuals as the holidays approach. A plan can be as sophisticated or simple as you choose. Giving yourself permission to change plans at the last minute is important, too. Sometimes you might plan to go to Aunt Sal’s for Thanksgiving, and then find yourself not feeling up to it. It’s okay to change your mind. One professional speaker offered suggestions regarding holiday gatherings, including replying to invitations “We would like to come, and we’ll try to, but we’re not really sure how we’ll feel on that day”, giving yourself permission to leave early, it’s okay to order out, it’s okay to plan something totally different.

Ask For What You Need - Oftentimes people want to help, but don’t know how to. Communicate what you need. Ask for help with entertaining, shopping, cooking, and cleaning.

Resist Isolation - While in grief, oftentimes we do not feel up to being around large groups. Sometimes that we find that the support and enjoyment of being with people who love you can help to nourish and heal.

Avoiding the Holiday? - While avoiding the holiday sounds like an interesting idea, the holiday won’t care! Every time you leave the house between now and first of the year, you will likely see some holiday reminder. A speaker suggested that “It often feels better to at least acknowledge your loss and your loved one in some special and meaningful way” than to try to skip the holiday entirely.

Breaking Traditions - Especially in the first years, traditions that emphasize the absence of your child may not be appropriate. If you do keep with traditions allow for changes, such as location or guest list.

New Traditions - Creating new rituals has been healing for many families. Involving family and friends may help their grief, too. Saving a place at the table for the child who has died, mentioning the child’s name, taking a moment to acknowledge their absence, sharing a memory, lighting a candle in their memory, visiting the grave site sometime during the day are just a few ideas that families have shared as helpful.

It’s Okay to Change Things, and It’s Okay to Change Back - What feels right the first or second year, may not in subsequent years. Many families find that deviating from their traditional holiday events is appropriate early on, but that returning to tradition is right for them several years down the line. It’s okay to change things... temporarily or permanently. I know that I wanted to be away for Thanksgiving the year that my son died, so I went to a place that was warm, where no turkey was served, and there were beaches. For several years, my daughter-in-law did the holiday cooking. This year will be the 6th Thanksgiving without my son, Max. This is the first year that our family will return to our traditional gathering at my house, with me cooking.

Cecilia Gabrielli

TCF Yolo/Sacramento Valley, CA

Reprinted from the November 2007 newsletter of the Sacramento Valley, CA chapter of The Compassionate Friends

Newsletter Items

Newsletters are published bimonthly. We welcome your stories, poems and pictures for our newsletter. Newsletter items are free of charge, but donations are welcome to assist with printing and mailing costs. E-mail your newsletter items to editor@TCFcarsoncity.org. You can also mail your items to: 1111 Liberty Ct, Carson City, NV 89703. Or bring to a meeting and give your item directly to Georgette.

If you have not been receiving the newsletter whether it’s by e-mail or postal mail, please let Kathy know so that we can update/change postal or e-mail information.

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



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

The Compassionate Friends of Northern Nevada
2648 Kit Sierra Way
Carson City, NV 89706

NONPROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
CARSON CITY NV
PERMIT NO. 189

Return Service Requested



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Light a candle for all
children who have died

Worldwide Candle Lighting®

*... that their light
may always shine.*

**Sunday, December 9, 2012
7 PM Around the Globe**



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe as they light candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age from any cause. As candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons remember children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting is believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe. It creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who are no longer with them.

Due to scheduling, the Carson City chapter will not hold a public service this year. We ask that you share in the wave of light by lighting a candle at 7 p.m. wherever you may be. To view a list of known services open to the public and for more information about The Compassionate Friends and the event, visit www.compassionatefriends.org.