



The Compassionate Friends

Lehigh Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



Email: tcflehighvalley@gmail.com

www.lehighvalleytcf.org

facebook.com/TCFlehighvalley

September 2013

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Volume 27, Issue 9

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TCF Online Support Community

www.compassionatefriends.org
To participate, click on "Online Support" under the resource tab

Who We Are

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a national nonprofit self-help organization that offers friendship, understanding and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There are no religious affiliations and no dues.

About Our Meetings...

Meetings are held 2nd Monday each month from 7 to 9 pm at Sacred Heart Hospital (2nd Flr. Conference Center), 4th & Chew Sts, Allentown. Free parking deck passes are available at the meeting.

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and mature siblings. Younger siblings may benefit from one of the children's bereavement groups listed below. Meetings vary, from sharing, to guest speakers, to special presentations. Separate sharing sessions are offered to new members. Participation in group sharing is confidential and voluntary. Our hope is that being among other bereaved parents you may feel free to talk, cry and share, but it is okay to just come and listen too.

We invite you to bring a picture of your child to display at the meeting for their birth or anniversary month or at any time.

To Our New Members

Making the decision to come to your first meeting can be difficult. It can also be difficult to return for a second or third meeting, but we ask that you attend three meetings before deciding whether or not TCF will work for you. We cannot walk your grief journey for you, but we can take your hand and walk beside you if you allow us to. We have no easy answers or quick fixes, but we care, share and understand. Although our members circumstances may be different, we have all "been there"...we are all grieving the loss of a child and therefore we can truly say we understand. You are not alone.

Meeting and Events Calendar

- Sept. 9 **Monthly Meeting: Guest Speaker - Rev. Anne Huey**
- Oct. 14 **Monthly Meeting: General Sharing**
- Oct 16 **TCF Basket Bingo - See page 2 for details**

Other Local TCF Chapters Meetings

Carbon County
1st Wednesday 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn.
501 Delaware Ave. Palmerton
610-826-2938
Email: pannbiss@aol.com

Easton
2nd Thursday 7 - 9 pm
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,
2115 Washington Blvd., Easton
610-866-5468
Email: szabojanosl@verizon.net

Quakertown
2nd Tuesday 7:30 - 9 pm
St. Lukes Quakertown Hospital
1021 Park Ave, Quakertown
215-536-0173
Email: tcfquakertownchapter@verizon.net

Local Children's Support Groups

Ryan's Tree for Grieving Children (ages 5-18)

Sessions are offered at various times throughout the year.
For information or to register contact Krista Malone @ 610-997-7120 or visit www.slnh.org/ryanstree

Children's General Bereavement Group (ages 5 - 13)

Jeanette Laube, MA facilitates a children's bereavement group on a as needed basis. Preregistration required. Meeting day, time & place coincide with TCF, LV meetings. To preregister or get further information contact Jeanette @ 610-762-5782

TCF Telephone Friends

There are times that you need to connect with someone between meetings ...for those times the following bereaved parents are available to listen, care and share

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Infant..... | Cathy McDonald... 610 391-1474 | Suicide..... | John & Maria Szabo..... 610 866-5468 |
| Multiple Children/
General Loss..... | Betty Thompson... 610 868-0303 | Addiction..... | Nancy Howe..... 484-863-4324 |
| Only Child..... | Shelly Garst..... 484 241-5396 | Homicide..... | Ginger Renner..... 610-967-5113 |

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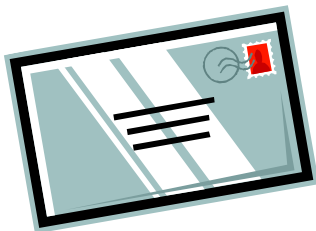
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Newsletter Submissions

Submit articles and poetry to the editor by the first of the proceeding month. Include the author's name & your contact information.

Mail to: **The Compassionate Friends**
Attn: Newsletter Editor
PO Box 149
Bath, PA 18014

Email to: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com



Watch Your Mail

For information about the
**TCF Children's Memorial
 Garden**

Upcoming Events

Guest Speaker - Rev. Anne Huey, MDiv, MSHS, BCC September 9th TCF Lehigh Valley Meeting

Rev. Huey will be addressing the group at our September Meeting. Rev. Huey is currently supervises the Spiritual and Bereavement Care Programs at St. Lukes hospice and has over 20 years experience working with hospice care and over 30 years in the ministry. She has spoken with our group several times over the years and her intelligent and insightful visits are always well received.

Even if you are unable to attend any other meetings this year we encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to hear Rev. Huey speak.

TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting December 8, 2013

TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family & friends around the globe as candles are lit for children who have died.

In Our Area: Tom & Eva Siebert are hosting their annual Holiday Social at their home on Dec 9th at 5:30. Everyone welcome! Covered dishes welcome but not necessary, candles provided.

For Directions & to RSVP call Tom and Eva at 610 967-5886



TCF Joint Chapter Candle Light Remembrance Service December 9, 2013

Sacred Heart Hospital Auditorium 6:45 - 9pm

All members and families, as well as anyone who has lost a child, sibling or grandchild are invited to attend. The service features music, poetry readings, a slideshow of our children and memorial candle lighting, followed by a social.

For Slideshow: Submissions must be received no later than Oct. 31st

To have your child's photo added to the slideshow request submission instructions by Emailing - TCFLehighValley@gmail.com or calling 484-891-0823

Note: all photos will be returned at the service

News



In the photo from left to right: Brenda Solderitch -TCF treasurer, Kathy Collins, newsletter editor/ office administrator, Lori Keller nominating member & Tracy Perry, UGI representative

UGI gives donation to TCF, Lehigh Valley

TCF, Lehigh Valley was recently chosen by UGI Utilities as the recipient of a \$500.00 contribution in their "Blog for bucks" campaign. Member Lori Keller nominated the chapter by writing a short essay about what TCF meant to her and her family and the services we provide to all members. This donation will help the chapter to continue our mission of reaching out to the newly bereaved as well as providing on going support to our current members.

TCF Lehigh Valley on the Web

We are pleased to announce the release of our new website, www.lehighvalleytcf.org, designed with a fresh look and user friendly navigation. The website features the chapter and TCF national information; Meeting information; Newsletters - current and past issues; & Helpful resources. The current newsletter will be posted on the site every month and in the future we will be adding additional features. We hope you enjoy browsing our new site.

Comments about the site can be emailed to: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com

We also maintain a Facebook page which can be found at www.facebook.com/TCFLehighValley or accessed by the link on our website. The page features a children's picture gallery, meeting and event calendar, quotes and short articles. To have your child's photo to the gallery email a jpeg photo to TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com. If you do not have a jpeg photo but would like to have a photo in the gallery contact the newsletter editor.

The Butterfly

By Cherry Austin,
TCF, Newman-Coweta, GA.

I've always thought the butterfly
to be so beautiful and free.
This delicate creation now has
a precious, new meaning to me.

The caterpillar signifies
our existence here on earth,
The cocoon is our death
awaiting our rebirth.

The butterfly in its beauty
is a symbol of greater freedom.
A small but glorious glimpse into
Heaven's eternal kingdom.

I look upon this living creature
with renewed faith and hope.
It gives me strength to face another day,
and courage to help me cope.

About Being Strong

By Sascha Wagner

Many people are convinced
that being strong and brave
means trying to think and
talk about "something else."

But we know that being
strong and brave means
thinking and talking
about your dead love,
until your grief begins
to be bearable.

That is strength,
That is courage,
and only thus can
"being strong and brave"
help you to heal.



Our Children Loved and Remembered Always

Special Days can be especially difficult times. Please keep the families of the following children in your heart this month

Birthdays

Nicholas Allesch	Son of Toni Allesch	Sep 2
Christopher Antler	Grandson of Charles & Charlotte Antler	Sep 14
Neal Balmer, II	Son of Lisa Feist; Step Son of Charles Feist; Brother of Kaitlyn & Laura Balmer	Sep 5
Todd Belles	Son of Anita Belles	Sep 17
Michael Buss	Son of Bea Bryfogle; Brother of Lindsay & Katelyn Buss	Sep 13
Daniel Catino	Son of Stacie Catino; Brother of Hunter, Tanner & Joshua Catino	Sep 26
John Counterman, III	Son of Mary Jo Ackerly; Brother of Theresa Legarski	Sep 30
Brian Davis	Son of Stewart & Nancy Davis; Brother of Kristin Hoffman & Sandy Davis	Sep 15
Brian DeLong	Son of Lenny & Linda Fritzingler	Sep 15
Alexandra Dixon	Daughter of Albert & Joan Dixon; Sister of Zack Dixon	Sep 22
Rocky Fraccica	Son of Rocky & Sadie Fraccica	Sep 13
Rita Guerrieri	Daughter of Art & Mary Guerrieri	Sep 29
Lisa Hawk	Daughter of Bruce & Mary Hawk Sister of Bruce Hawk & the late Jonthan Hawk; Aunt of Shaine, Sloan & Madisynn Hawk	Sep 4
Zachary Heck	Son of Lori Heck; Brother of Cyera Heck	Sep 3
David Hoagland, Jr	Son of Gypsy Garrett	Sep 24
Jonathan Hoffstetter	Son of Richard & Suzanne Hoffstetter; Brother of Diane & Kenneth Hoffstetter	Sep 22
Julie Howe	Daughter of Timothy & Nancy Howe; Sister of Melanie Howe	Sep 3
Richard Kulik	Son of Dolores Kulik; Brother of Christina Schantzenbach & Michael Kulik	Sep 5
Charles Kunsman, Jr	Son of Charles & Joan Kunsman; Brother of Walter Alfonso, Sherry Flanagan, Sandra Kunsman & the late David Kunsman	Sep 18
John "Jack" Kushnerick, Jr.	Son of Bernice Kushnerick; Brother of Pat & Jan; Husband of Deborah Kushnerick; Father of Tyler, Joe & Justin	Sep 17
Paul Levine	Son of Louisa Levine; Brother of Gregory, Mary & Philip Levine	Sep 28
Alexander Madden	Son of Judith Madden; Brother of Jennifer Cenci & Thomas Maher	Sep 18
Michael Mann	Son of Lee & Shirley Lutz	Sep 26
Anthony "Tony" Mariani, II	Son of Kathleen Collins & the late Anthony E. Mariani; Stepson of Brian Collins; Brother of Matthew Mariani; Grandson of William & Janet Pickett	Sep 13
Carrie Meuret	Daughter of Jennifer Zayas; Sister of Dakota Zayas	Sep 15
Caden Rabenold	Son of Catherine Rabenold; Grandson of Bill & Vicki Rabenold	Sep 16
Harry Rawdon	Son of Margaret Rawdon	Sep 23
Harry Rawdon	Brother of JettaAnn Rawdon	Sep 23
Lydia Rice Cobb	Daughter of Virginia Rice	Sep 27
Anthony Romig	Son of Edward C. Romig, Sr. & Lois Pearsall; Brother of Edward C. Romig, Jr.	Sep 12
Constance Stewart	Daughter of Joanne Stewart; Sister of Keith & Kevin Stewart	Sep 23
Sean Virmalo	Son of Udo & Janet L. Virmalo; Brother of Eric, Brett & Katelyn Virmalo	Sep 13
Stephanie Volkert	Daughter of Joanne Fimiano; Sister of Zachary Volkert	Sep 22
Dale Waitkus	Son of Elizabeth Waitkus; Brother of Alice Walbert & the late James Waitkus	Sep 18
Gregory Weiland, Jr	Son of Robin Weiland; Brother of Rozalyn Weiland	Sep 23
Michael Widmer	Son of Steve Widmer & Mary Widmer; Brother of Suzanne Widmer	Sep 1

Anniversaries

Aaron Abud	Son of Jose & Susan Abud; Brother of Ariana & Sophia & Susan Abud	Sep 4
Christopher Antler	Grandson of Charles & Charlotte Antler	Sep 14
James Balloch	Grandson of Fern Gerth & Bill Gerth	Sep 4
Todd Belles	Son of Anita Belles	Sep 28
Rachael Brosky	Daughter of Karl Brosky & Jeanette Beilfuss; Sister of Rebekah Brosky-Dorsey & William Brosky	Sep 8
Holly Cavanaugh	Daughter of Beverly Ann Cavanaugh & Bill Cavanaugh; Sister of Bo Cavanaugh	Sep 25
Christopher Cole	Son of Theresa Cole & Donald Cole; Brother of Lauren Cole	Sep 10
Thom Eichlin	Son of Nancy Eichlin	Sep 11
Kevin Fetherman	Son of Jean Fetherman & The Late John J. Fetherman	Sep 29
Robert Freudenberger	Son of Nola Freudenberger	Sep 10
Carol Johnson	Daughter of Loretta Coyne; Sister of Elaine Muretta, Bob, Jim & Dave Johnson	Sep 23
Danielle Jones	Niece of Terry & Sherry Mertz	Sep 2
Kimberly Kohl	Daughter of Lyndon & Linda Kohl	Sep 28
Matthew Kolb	Brother of Sarah & Andrew Kolb	Sep 6
Anthony "Tony" Mariani, II	Son Kathleen Collins & the late Anthony E. Mariani; Stepson of Brian Collins; Brother of Matthew Mariani; Grandson of William & Janet Pickett	Sep 6
Janet Mitchell	Daughter of Inez Housel; Sister of Lisa, Brian, Tammy & Jay	Sep 24
Nicole Reinhart	Daughter of Michael & Pamela Reinhart; Sister of Mikey & Timmy Reinhart	Sep 17
Scott Rothrock	Son of Larry & Linda Rothrock	Sep 18
Elwood Rush	Son of Elwood & Shirley Rush	Sep 27
Jeanmarie Siedlecki-Moyer	Daughter of Joe & Monica Siedlecki; Sister of MaryAnn & Michele Siedlecki & the late Joey Siedlecki	Sep 25
David Todd Smith	Son of David & Kathleen Smith	Sep 17
Jon Sulick	Son of John Sulick; Brother of Aymae Sulick	Sep 15
James "Jimmy" Thompson	Son of the late C. Douglas "Doug" Thompson	Sep 13
Dale Waitkus	Son of Elizabeth Waitkus; Brother of Alice Walbert & the late James Waitkus	Sep 5

*Remembering you is easy we do it everyday
Missing you is a heartache that never goes away*

Unknown

Love Gifts

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Our largest monthly expense is the printing and mailing of newsletters to our 400 readers. Your tax deductible Love Gift donations enables the chapter to continue our mission of reaching out to the newly bereaved and providing ongoing support to all our members. Love Gifts are most often given in memory of a child who has died. They may also be given in memory of or in honor of a friend, relative or special person. To make a love gift donation please use form on page 11

We thank the following for their generous donations this month

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| ♥ Barbara & Jim Minter | Jim Minter
<i>Happy Birthday. We love you more each passing day. Love, Mom & Dad</i> |
| ♥ Dolores Kulik | Richard J. Kulik
<i>We miss and think of you everyday. Love Mom</i> |
| ♥ Kathleen & Brian Collins | Anthony E. Mariani, II
<i>Words cannot express how much you are missed. All our love, Your Family</i> |
| ♥ Mr & Mrs David A Fehr, Sr | Brenda Marie (Fehr) Hatrak
<i>Brenda, Happy belated 39th Birthday! Love & miss you! Love, Your family XOXO</i> |
| ♥ JoAnne Fimiano | Stephanie Volkert
<i>Happy Birthday in Heaven, 25 years old. Miss and love you. Love Mom & Brother Zack</i> |
| ♥ Richard & Suzanne Hoffstetter | Jonathan Paul Hoffstetter
<i>Dear Jon, Remembering you on your 37th Birthday. Love Always, Mom, Dad, Ken & Diane</i> |
| ♥ Lee & Shirley Lutz | Michael Douglas Mann
<i>Happy 44th Birthday to our precious son. Miss you more each year. All our Love, Mom & Dad</i> |
-
- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ♥ Mark & Tina Saginario | Thomas G. Englert
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ Rella Daniels | Jonelle Sisonick
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ Larry & Linda Rothrock | Scott G. Rothrock
<i>Our hearts are with you. All our love</i> |

Donations and Contributions

TCF Lehigh Valley Contributors

- ★ Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown for meeting room and drinks
- ★ Mary Ann Donuts, Allentown for meeting snacks
- ★ Giant Food Store Employees, Village West, Allentown for United Way Contributions

- ★ Aetna Payroll Contributors

- ★ United Way Payroll Contributors

TCF Carbon County Contributors

- ★ Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn. for meeting room
- ★ The Country Harvest, Palmerton for meeting snacks

It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself

Ralph Waldo Emerson

OUR WORST SUMMER

By Lora Krum, TCF Carbon County, PA

June and July have raced by in many ways, even when the days felt like they'd never end
The vast emptiness of summer mornings has been my unwanted friend.
Although it's warm, the pool has stayed closed and there's such loud silence in the yard.
Missing you both, as I sit on a cool bench while quiet memories catch me off guard.

There's still the beauty of singing birds, and butterflies fluttering by,
Flowers that bloom, and fountains that flow beneath a clear blue sky.
But just like the trees, the flowers were planted in memory of you,
The cherubs, rocks and stone garden walls remind us that what happened is true.

You are both so far away from me, although I will keep you both in my heart forever;
The bonds of love between us all are too strong to ever be severed.
But no matter how intensely strong the love, my life is so vacant of charms,
No matter how hard I try to reach you, you'll never again be in my arms.

In my mind I hear the two of you laughing and giggling, and jumping in with a big splash
And I can close my eyes and picture that busy pool, but the image is gone in a flash.
For an instant, I recall my quiet mornings on the patio while I knew you both still slept;
My heart would feel warm when you finally woke up, and down the yard you crept.

We'd leisurely talk about fun of the night before, and plan what would happen today;
I always felt blessed for such simply special times, and in those moments I wanted to stay!
So carefree and happy, we'd come up with ideas for creating a new day of fun;
Whether games or walks, shopping or swimming, I loved each second with both of my sons.

Even when we'd begin to talk about preparing for a new school year
We knew that there would be plenty of time to still enjoy with cheer.
We would take time to remember our vacations and our famous trips to the shore,
My heart just tears wide open when it dawns on me that there will never be any more.

When Dad and I venture away, even the most spectacular trips are shadowed with grief
And we talk about how our times with you were just so unfairly brief.
We miss you terribly in each new trip, and imagine how each of you would enjoy new places;
We dream of what you'd have to say and imagine the look of excitement on your faces.

As we continue in this world without you, in the worst summer we've ever had,
We continue to cherish sweet memories and honor you both, although the rest of our days will be sad.
And we quickly realize that all of our wishing for you will never bring you back to us
Then we begin to long for the time we'll be with you in Heaven, and know it's God we have to trust.



A New School Year Begins

By Don Hackett,
TCF, South Shore Chapter

School opens for another year. There is a flurry of activity to end the summer; clothes to buy, notebooks, pencils and pens to gather; decisions to make on rulers and odd-shaped erasers. The family plans and almost plunges into the final weekend - the Labor Day splurge that ends summer and starts the fall.

For many, there will be no flurry. Clothing, notebooks, erasers, and all those other things become simply another note of hollowness in a fragmented life. For these, the last summer weekend may pass unnoticed. It is a time to consume silence in the land of bereavement.

When the school doors open, when the buses roll once more, communities across this nation visibly proclaim the hope we all invest in our children. Bereaved parents, having no immunity to these desires and aspirations for our kids, find themselves even more highly sensitized to that never again kiss of parting, that vigorous waving as the school bus pulls away. Perhaps for some, an empty desk, an unoccupied chair, will form the elements of a new vision that proclaims again emptiness forever a part of life.

I teach. I know that school's reopening will remind me, even six years into bereavement, of the bittersweet capability of this time. And, I admit with some sorrow, I am never totally free of it, for often do I consciously hope that death will not again shadow a door that is mine, even the door to a classroom.

School is opening. For some among us this is a period of deep, unuttered hurt. Only the pain of the holidays may be deeper. As these doors open once again, and as the opening weeks pass, let us remember, and reach out to those for whom the school bell is no longer calling. For these parents, that bell is an endless tolling.

Let us all offer the assuring hope that today's

doleful tolling will instead, someday, become an evoker of memories... remembered images that will dance upon the heart, forming an echo of love on which healing may poise itself to soar, to bring the darkness of pain to light.

Grandparents Remembrance

By Susan Mackey TCF Rutland, VT

We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives.

Our grief is two-fold and at times we feel powerless to help. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts.

We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild, and we have lost a symbol of our immortality. As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them, and when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together. We continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. We support the new ones, which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort.



DOUBLE GRIEF

By Andy Ciprian Tallahassee FL

The death of my grandchild
In secret I mourn beyond relief
And the grief of my son
For I have been given a double grief.

Pull on my heart strings
God, help me to deal with the pain and sorrow
And I am undone.
Of living without the hope of tomorrow.

The Secret of TCF

By Dennis Klass, TCF St Louis, MO

The secret of The Compassionate Friends is simple: there is no line between helped and being helped. In the early months of people's membership in TCF, it seems that most of the time is spent absorbing ideas, crying, and letting the grief flow and "learning the ropes" of being a bereaved parent.

The next step is reaching out to others and helping them. It is not a big step, for listening to another person sort out their life helps us to sort out our life too. But it is an important step because it is the first point at which the movement is reversed. All of the energy had been going inward. We had been feeling so empty inside that we kept withdrawing into ourselves. But the point when we turn around is the point when we first listen to another, speak the words of comfort and hope, share our pain instead of just feeling the pain. At that time the real healing has started.

How Long Should I Remain Part of a Support Group

By Kay Bevington, Van Wert, OH BP

Many of the "seasoned griever" are often asked, "Why do you still go to those bereavement support groups and/or conferences?" Some of our friends and/or family members question our need for being a part of a support group after several years. Non-bereaved members of society think we should "be over it" and "get on with our lives" since it's been so long since our child died. People do not realize that our deceased child will always be our child and that we are "recovering bereaved parents. Many people in society have the opinion that it is o.k. to be a "recovering alcoholic" but not o.k. to be a "recovering bereaved parent My response to those questions has been, "Rhonda lived. I return to the meetings and/or conferences because these people have become my extended family. I can also now assist others on their grief journey as other bereaved parents once companioned me on my journey. It does not matter how long we've been bereaved; there seems to be situations that occur in our lives when it is helpful to be able to network with others like ourselves."

It might also be beneficial to share with those who question us to mention how society honors political figures, movie and television stars and other prominent individuals. Think about all of the documentaries on television near the birth/death of people like Princess Diana, John Kennedy, and others. How many times do people go to view a prominent individual's home or estate of a person that is deceased or stand in line at a post office to purchase a commemorative stamp that honors someone that is deceased? Our children were far more important to us than any prominent person so give yourself permission to commemorate your child's life by attending bereavement functions and doing things to honor his/her life.

Each of our grief journeys will be as unique as our fingerprints. We cannot measure time by how someone else is handling their grief. Our needs will depend upon personality traits, previous life experiences, tragedies we've encountered since our child's death, coping skills we have learned, the support system that we have and the relationship that we had with our child. Some bereaved parents may find that they will only need to attend bereavement functions for a few years while others may make a lifetime commitment of honoring their child and helping others.

Some bereaved parents find the need to attend bereavement functions as there may be some unresolved grief issues that occur later during their grief journeys. The death of a spouse, parents or friends, a divorce, relationships that are severed, a change or loss of job and relocation may be any of several causes that make us feel that we are going through the early phases of our grief once again.

We may also find that physical changes in our bodies will cause us to need the support of other bereaved parents much later in our grief.

We, as bereaved parents, will always need to hear our child's name, see their photos, listen and tell stories about him or her. Time alone does not heal our deep wounds but doing our grief work with time eases the intense pain of early grief. It is perfectly normal to attend support group meetings and conferences twenty, thirty or forty years after our child died as we are the veterans that can companion others on their grief journey and honor our child's memory as **OUR CHILDREN LIVED!**

Sibling Page

Re-Entering School After the Death of a Sibling

By a sibling

Going back to school after the death of your brother or sister is a hard thing to go through. At first there are three groups of people to deal with: People who give you a lot of support, people who don't know what to say, and those who give you weird looks and stay away from you. This lasts for a little while.

After a short time, changes with each group occur. Those who didn't know what to say start to speak or begin to talk. The group who kept away, stops ignoring you. The people who gave you a lot of support slowly return to their own affairs. After about a month and a half, everything goes back to normal and is over to everyone except you. This is very difficult to accept and makes you feel all the more alone.

After a long while, the shock for you goes away and it is then when you need the support from your friends, peers, and teachers.

This month is the first anniversary of the death of my brother. Most people will have forgotten and everything is right with the world. But it is not! Certainly not to my mother and me.

Jordan Ely, TCF Albany/Delmar Chapter

#1 BROTHER

Suzanne Hemenway, TCF Hopewell Junction, NY

I've been wanting to write these words for so long
But found it hard to say what I was feeling.
Besides, Lonliness and feelings of forlorn,
There's this missing piece in my life,
A space in my heart
That I know time can never heal.

Some days when I'm thinking of you
A smile comes easy.
Other days, like today,
It's my tears that fall like the rain.
I'm missing you so much, big brother.

I look for you in the face of a crowd.
I search to find resemblance anywhere,
In anyone,
Hoping that seeing that slight resemblance
will numb the pain at least for a little while.
Maybe take away the ache in my heart
And put that smile back on my face.

I know you're watching out for me,
and I know you're with me.
And until the day when we are with each other,
I'll have to learn to live with the memories and
continue to search for your face in the crowd,
My #1 Brother.

DOUG

By Kevin Hofmockel, TCF Valley Forge, PA

This was my brother, taken from me
His body now dead, his spirit set free
His friends all mourn, life that's past
And learn so young that life won't last
When life must end with so few years
It fills the heart with sorrow's tears
He lived his life, as all men should

He lived his life as few boys could
He took life's best, and worst the same
And fought so hard to win the game
But in the end, it's not the score
Or length of play that matters more
But love he shared before the end
And joy he gave to each his friend.

Love Gift Form

*Please consider making a Love Gift to support the Compassionate Friends today.
Your gift will help defray the cost of chapter expenses such as the newsletter mailings, meetings and our outreach to the newly bereaved.
The Compassionate Friends is a 501c(3) non-profit organization and your donations are fully tax deductible.*

MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE 1ST OF THE MONTH PRIOR TO THE MONTH YOU WISH YOUR GIFT PUBLISHED

Contributor Name _____

Mail to:

Address _____

**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER
P.O. BOX 149
BATH, PA 18014**

Phone _____

Email Address _____

I would like to make a donation In Memory of In Honor of A Chapter Gift (*without memorial or honorarium*)

Name of person gift given for _____

Edition Month desired publication month . Deadline by the 1st of the prior month _____

Special Text - Brief Messages Please. Poems & story submissions are always welcome and should be sent directly to the Newsletter Editor for inclusion in the newsletter.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____ Lehigh Valley Carbon County Easton

Note: Please mail Carbon County & Easton gifts to the addresses below

If your gift is for Lehigh Valley please designate which of the following your gift is for (you may circle more than one)

Newsletter Expenses Postage Office Expenses Outreach Program Special Events

Mailing Addresses for Carbon County and Easton Chapters

The Compassionate Friends, Carbon County
C/O Patti Bissell
365 Drift Rd
Palmerton, Pa 18071

The Compassionate Friends, Easton
C/O John Szabo
1514 Sculac Dr
Bethlehem, Pa 18020

Member Update Form

Please use this form to change or update information or permit publication of child's Birth and Anniversary dates in "Our Children Remembered" (OCR) newsletter section.

Mail this update form to: Kathleen Collins, 2971 Pheasant Dr., Northampton, PA 18067 **or email updates to:** TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com

The following is Change or Update of information Change of Address or Phone Number Permission (check this box to grant OCR publication permission)

Your Name _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Mailing Address (where your newsletter is to be sent to) _____

Child's Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Date of Death _____

Parent's Names _____

Child's Sibling's Names _____

If this is a information change ... please indicate what changes need to be made (i.e. name change, correction, sibling name addition etc...)

TCF 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 and 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 we feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source for strength; while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in a 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 that 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 grieve as well as to grow.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends

TCF SIBLING CREDO

**We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.
We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters.
Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us.
Sometimes we will need the support of our friends.
At other times we need our families to be there.**

**Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be.
We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.
When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed.**

We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak.

Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

About This Newsletter

This newsletter comes to you courtesy of The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley Chapter with the hope that it will be a helpful resource for you on your grief journey.
If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter please contact the newsletter editor by phone at 484-891-0823 by email: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com or by mail sent to TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor.

Please Note: Our newsletters are mailed through Bulk Mail and the Post Office does not forward or hold bulk mail. It is returned to us at our expense.

If you are moving or having your mail held please remember to inform the Newsletter Editor (see information above). If your newsletter is returned to us and we are not notified your name will be removed from the mailing list.

