



# The Compassionate Friends

## Lehigh Valley Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies



484-597-0240

Email: [tcflehighvalley@gmail.com](mailto:tcflehighvalley@gmail.com)

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

[facebook.com/TCFlehighvalley](https://facebook.com/TCFlehighvalley)

January 2014

Copyright © 2014 The Compassionate Friends, Inc

Volume 28, Issue 1

#### Steering Committee

Brian & Kathleen Collins, Gene & Dawn DeLong, George Geiger, Brenda Solderitch, Sharon Yurick;

#### Newsletter Editor

Kathleen Collins  
[TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com](mailto:TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com)  
484-891-0823

#### Treasurer

Brenda Solderitch

#### Newsletter Mailing Coordinator

Brenda Solderitch

#### Remembrance Secretary

**Birthday Cards**  
Maria Szabo

#### Acknowledgement Secretary

Sharon Yurick

#### Newly Bereaved Packet

George & Pat Geiger

#### Newly Bereaved Research

Gail Strohl

#### Newly Bereaved Contact

Dawn DeLong  
484-597-0240

#### TCF Regional Coordinators

Ann Walsh & Bobbi Milne

#### TCF National Headquarters

PO Box 3696  
Oak Brook, IL 60522  
1(877) 969-0010 (toll-free)  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

#### TCF Online Support Community

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

Jan 13 Monthly Meeting - General Sharing

Feb 10 Monthly Meeting - Memories from the Heart - *see page 2*

#### \*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\* Inclement Weather \*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

Cancellations due to inclement weather will be posted on the chapter facebook page ([facebook.com/TCFLehighValley](https://facebook.com/TCFLehighValley)), on the website calendar and on voicemail message at 484-891-0823

#### 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: [panniss@aol.com](mailto:panniss@aol.com)

##### Easton

2nd Thursday 7 - 9 pm  
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,  
2115 Washington Blvd., Easton  
610-866-5468  
Email: [szabojanosl@verizon.net](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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 @ 610-762-5783

#### TCF Telephone Friends

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

Infant Loss ..... Cathy McDonald... 610 391-1474

Suicide..... John & Maria Szabo..... 610 866-5468

Multiple Children/

Addiction..... Nancy Howe..... 484-863-4324

General Loss..... Betty Thompson... 610 868-0303

Only Child..... Shelly Garst..... 484 241-5396

Homicide..... Ginger Renner..... 610-967-5113

## Inside this issue:

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Chapter News                                      | 2     |
| Our Children Remembered Birthdays & Anniversaries | 3 - 4 |
| Love Gifts  | 5     |
| Article - What is New About the New Year?         | 6     |
| Poem - The New Year                               | 6     |
| Articles - Coping; Goals                          | 7     |
| Poem - When Winter Comes                          | 7     |
| Article - Tracks in The Snow                      | 8     |
| Poem - In the Glow of Freshly Fallen Snow         | 8     |
| Article - New Grief, Old Grief                    | 9     |
| Article The Fifty Year Vigil of the Grave -       | 9     |
| Sibling Page : Article - Dear Sibling             | 10    |
| Poem - Your Presence is Missed                    |       |
| Love Gift Donation Form                           | 11    |



### Our Morning Call

#### "Be An Angel"

#### Wish List

- Reduced rate printing services or digital copier
- Reduced rate or no cost office space in Bath, Northampton or Bethlehem area
- Monetary Donations



Find us on the web at:  
[www.lehighvalleytcf.org](http://www.lehighvalleytcf.org)

and on Facebook at:  
[www.facebook.com/TCFlehighvalley](http://www.facebook.com/TCFlehighvalley)

# News, Events & Announcements

## Recent Events

On Dec 8th members and families gathered together in fellowship at Tom and Eva Seibert's home in observance of the Worldwide Candle Lighting.

On December 9th, members and families attended the Joint Chapter Candle Lighting service at Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown

The Lehigh Valley chapter would like to thank the Seibert Family for graciously opening their home again to us this year. We also thank the following for their contribution to the Joint Chapter Candle Lighting Service: Sacred Heart Hospital for use of the auditorium and beverages; Mary Ann Donuts for the donuts; Kim Szep for the beautiful slideshow of our children; the Easton Area chapter leaders, John & Maria Szabo for the candles; John Szabo for closing remarks; Dawn & Gene DeLong for supporting the chapter through the sale of their personalized angels, all our readers and helpers, the event committee who organized and orchestrated the event and everyone who brought the delicious treats to share.

## Upcoming Meeting February

Memories From the Heart - Please bring a memento, picture or memory of your child to share with the group.

## 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.

## To Our Seasoned Members

Think back to your first meeting, You were hurt, confused and felt alone in your grief. Remember the comfort you felt when you found you weren't alone and that others that had been where you were and survived. Remember the love and support you felt as fellow members offered on your grief journey. Now you are stronger and may not feel the need to attend meetings for aid and comfort. We need you though. New members need you. They need your encouragement, support and wisdom. If you haven't attended a meeting in awhile please consider coming back to offer hope to those who now feel lost and see no hope.

*"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely help another without helping himself" ~Ralph Waldo Emerson*

# Our Children Loved and Remembered Always

Birthdays and Anniversary dates can be especially difficult.

Please keep the parents, grandparents and siblings of the following children in your heart this month

## January Birthdays

|                                |   |               |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------|
| <b>Kevin Blosky</b>            | <i>Son of Jack and Janet Blosky; Grandson of Jack and Nancy Blosky</i>  | <i>Jan 28</i> |
| <b>Brian Burke</b>             | <i>Son of Rich and Mary Burke; Brother of Melissa Burke</i>   | <i>Jan 3</i>  |
| <b>Rachel Dallas</b>           | <i>Daughter of Robert and Linda Dallas; Sister of Sadie Dallas</i>  | <i>Jan 21</i> |
| <b>Sheila DeBoer</b>           | <i>Daughter of Barbara DeBoer &amp; the late Henry DeBoer; Sister of Leslie and Cory DeBoer</i>               | <i>Jan 29</i> |
| <b>Mark Dilts, Jr</b>          | <i>Son of Mark and Joy Dilts; Brother of Beth Dilts</i>   | <i>Jan 6</i>  |
| <b>Wayne Ernst</b>             | <i>Son of Julius and Doris Ernst; Brother of David Ernst</i>  | <i>Jan 6</i>  |
| <b>Maggie Faber</b>            | <i>Daughter of Harry and Carol Faber; Sister of Randi and Eric Gerencser; Sister of Heidi and Harry Faber</i> | <i>Jan 17</i> |
| <b>David "Dave" Fegley</b>     | <i>Son of Dick and Peg Fegley</i>   | <i>Jan 23</i> |
| <b>Araya Francisquini</b>      | <i>Daughter of Jamie Francisquini</i>   | <i>Jan 11</i> |
| <b>Jesse Gentile</b>           | <i>Grandson of Gerry and Doris Rothermel</i>  | <i>Jan 28</i> |
| <b>Anne Marie Mabus Heater</b> | <i>Daughter of Wayne and Frances Mabus; Sister of Steven Mabus</i>  | <i>Jan 7</i>  |
| <b>Jamie Laudenslager</b>      | <i>Daughter of Jane Laudenslager; Brother of Jon &amp; Shelly</i>   | <i>Jan 23</i> |
| <b>Andrea Luecke</b>           | <i>Daughter of Louise Luecke; Sister of Jennae Luecke</i>   | <i>Jan 30</i> |
| <b>Ryan Miller</b>             | <i>Son of Son of Patti Miller &amp; the late Richard Miller, Jr; Brother of Richard Miller, III</i>           | <i>Jan 4</i>  |
| <b>Gretchen Newton-Krieg</b>   | <i>Daughter of Gloria Perlis</i>  | <i>Jan 18</i> |
| <b>Kelly Owens</b>             | <i>Son of Douglas D. Owens; Son of Judy Dorward</i>   | <i>Jan 24</i> |
| <b>Allison Reboratti</b>       | <i>Daughter of Eduardo and Barbara Reboratti</i>  | <i>Jan 25</i> |
| <b>Joey Russo</b>              | <i>Son of Susan Russo; Brother of Jena &amp; Jevin Russo</i>  | <i>Jan 1</i>  |
| <b>James "Jimmy" Thompson</b>  | <i>Son of Mary A. Thompson &amp; the late Richard Thompson; Brother of Marie, Mark, Patrick &amp; Kathy</i>   | <i>Jan 23</i> |
| <b>Victoria Volkert</b>        | <i>Daughter of Joanne Fimiano</i>   | <i>Jan 14</i> |
| <b>Joshua Wersinger</b>        | <i>Son of David and Joanne Wersinger</i>  | <i>Jan 19</i> |
| <b>Avery Williams</b>          | <i>Daughter of Joshua and Ashley Williams</i>   | <i>Jan 5</i>  |
| <b>Stephen Winkler</b>         | <i>Son of Ellen Winkler; Brother of Jennifer; Grandson of Arnold Abramowitz</i>                               | <i>Jan 12</i> |

*Please Note: Due to privacy concerns Birthday and Anniversary listings are only published with permission for parents /guardians, siblings and grandparents. If your child, grandchild or siblings name does not above or a correction is needed please fill out and sign the Update Form on page 11*

## January Anniversaries

|                                 |   |               |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------|
| <b>Sean Apgar</b>               | <i>Son of Randy Apgar</i>   | <i>Jan 22</i> |
| <b>Ryan Cole</b>                | <i>Son of Terry and Michele Cole</i>  | <i>Jan 22</i> |
| <b>Barry Donchez</b>            | <i>Son of Edward and Olga Donchez; Brother of Linda Shive and Mike Donchez</i>  | <i>Jan 10</i> |
| <b>Maggie Faber</b>             | <i>Daughter of Harry and Carol Faber; Sister of Heidi &amp; Harry Faber and Randi &amp; Eric Gerencser</i>  | <i>Jan 17</i> |
| <b>Brenda Fehr Hatrak</b>       | <i>Daughter of David &amp; Eileen Fehr, Sr.; Sister of Barbara R. Burgin and David A. Fehr, Jr.; Granddaughter of Warren &amp; Rose Fehr and Elwood &amp; Mary Mann</i> | <i>Jan 8</i>  |
| <b>Araya Francisquini</b>       | <i>Daughter of Jamie Francisquini</i>   | <i>Jan 2</i>  |
| <b>Steven Fussner</b>           | <i>Son of George and Linda Fussner; Brother of Kathleen Kowker and Jeffrey Fussner;</i>   | <i>Jan 14</i> |
| <b>Kevin Garrison</b>           | <i>Son of Kathleen Garrison; Brother of Anthony Garrison; Uncle of Logan Garrison</i>   | <i>Jan 16</i> |
| <b>Jesse Gentile</b>            | <i>Grandson of Gerry and Doris Rothermel</i>  | <i>Jan 29</i> |
| <b>Brett Harris</b>             | <i>Son of Chester and Carol Kinsey, Jr.; Brother of Terry &amp; Lisa Harris</i>   | <i>Jan 14</i> |
| <b>Alisha Heilman</b>           | <i>Daughter of Joseph and Patricia Heilman; Sister of Tiffany, Rene', Stacie &amp; Kristi</i>   | <i>Jan 2</i>  |
| <b>Joy Laube</b>                | <i>Daughter of Barry and Jeanette Laube</i>   | <i>Jan 15</i> |
| <b>John Leonard, Jr</b>         | <i>Son of John and Jule Leonard; Brother of Karen</i>   | <i>Jan 6</i>  |
| <b>Beth Anne Mather</b>         | <i>Daughter of Peter Mather</i>   | <i>Jan 17</i> |
| <b>Ken McMahon</b>              | <i>Son of Cheryl McMahon; Brother of Lori McMahon</i>   | <i>Jan 6</i>  |
| <b>James "Jimmy" Mullen, II</b> | <i>Son of Jeanie Mullen</i>   | <i>Jan 1</i>  |
| <b>Gretchen Newton-Krieg</b>    | <i>Daughter of Gloria Perlis</i>  | <i>Jan 1</i>  |
| <b>Randy Peischl</b>            | <i>Son of Betty Peischl</i>   | <i>Jan 29</i> |
| <b>Anthony Romig</b>            | <i>Son of Lois Pearsall; Son of Edward C. Romig, Sr.; Brother of Edward C. Romig, Jr.</i>   | <i>Jan 20</i> |
| <b>Daniel Rostkowski</b>        | <i>Son of Shirley May Rostkowski; Brother of Janet Wise and Andrew Rostkowski</i>   | <i>Jan 30</i> |
| <b>Geoffrey Steckel</b>         | <i>Son of Dean and Patricia Steckel; Brother of Jennifer and Mark Steckel</i>   | <i>Jan 20</i> |
| <b>Michael Stocker</b>          | <i>Son of Calvin and Kay Stocker; Brother of Megan Fibrick</i>  | <i>Jan 26</i> |
| <b>Debra Sweeney</b>            | <i>Daughter of Richard and Doris Hosler; Sister of Donna Mallard</i>  | <i>Jan 5</i>  |
| <b>Russell Terry</b>            | <i>Son of Brian and Amy Erbe; Brother of Shannon</i>  | <i>Jan 9</i>  |
| <b>Avery Williams</b>           | <i>Daughter of Joshua and Ashley Williams</i>   | <i>Jan 6</i>  |

*Please Note: Due to privacy concerns Birthday and Anniversary listings are only published with permission for parents /guardians, siblings and grandparents. If your child, grandchild or siblings name does not above or a correction is needed please fill out and sign the Update Form on page 11*

## 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**

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| ♥ Julius and Doris Ernst        | <b>Wayne S. Ernst</b><br><i>Happy Birthday, Wayne. We love and miss you.</i>  |
| ♥ John and Audrey Luzenski      | <b>John J. Luzenski</b><br><i>You are always with us especially during Christmas. Love You</i>                        |
| ♥ Judy Dorward                  | <b>Kelly Shawn Owens</b><br><i>Happy Birthday, my special blue eyed child</i>   |
| ♥ Nancy Kornafel                | <b>Molly Hude</b><br><i>We miss you and love you. Grammy, Mom &amp; Dad</i>   |
| ♥ Lucille Radocha               | <b>Peter A. Radocha</b><br><i>In Loving Memory</i>  |
| ♥ Douglas D. Owens              | <b>Kelly Shawn Owens</b><br><i>Always Remembered, Never Forgotten</i>   |
| ♥ Franklin and Lucille Reinhard | <b>Cathy Ann Mertz and Denise Lynn Deiter</b><br><i>Still missing you every day!</i>                                  |
| ♥ Jeanette Beilfuss             | <b>Rachael Brosky</b><br><i>Merry Christmas Rachael, Heaven's most beautiful Angel</i>                                |
| ♥ Ellen Winkler                 | <b>Steven Winkler</b><br><i>Son of ellen, Brother of Jennifer, We love you very much, miss you and always will !!</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

**To contribute through the United Way to The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley, ask your employer for the appropriate form and use the number 12116 in the write-in area.**

## What is New about the New Year?

By Don Rooker  
TCF. Upper Valley, VT

There is a lot of silliness about ringing in the New Year, and I have never been able to enter into the spirit with noisemakers, funny hats and loud hurrahs. Since the death of my son, I especially find myself wondering what this is all about. I think some of the partying and celebrating are motivated by a deep desire for a new start in our lives; a desire to leave behind some of the problems, sorrows, worries and pain of the year just ending. The short, sunless days and long, dark nights make us want something to cheer us. So we give the New Year's Eve party a try.

But it really doesn't work for most of us; we see now that we are just the same and the heaviness in our hearts, as we continue with the struggle to cope with the loss of our child, remains with us. Can we find new ways to live our lives in the New Year?

I'd like to suggest a few things we can try. Let's make an effort to find new friends. A good place to start this is at Compassionate Friends meetings. Here you are with a group of people who care about each other in special ways. We understand the pain and anger, the confusion and the inertia suffered by bereaved parents.

In the New Year, let's also find new ways to be close to the family that we have left. We feel regrets about hugs not given, letters not written, "I love you's" not said often enough. We can do all these things now. We can establish new memories with the family we have right now.

Another way to move into this New Year with a better feeling is to think about what we can do for others, because that is truly a way to help ourselves, too. If we can reach out to other sorrowing families, give a gift of our time, a note of love, a listening ear, or a shoulder to lean on, we'll grow stronger ourselves.

For those parents who are suffering the deep pain of the newly bereaved, none of the things I've

mentioned may be possible yet. For you, I hold out the hope that soon your days will be just a bit better, your sorrow a little lighter, your tears healing, your friends strengthening and your memories filled more with the good times and less with the unhappiness of your grief.

## A New Year

By Nan Gurskl, TCF Houston

The year is coming to an end.  
Please lend an ear to my thoughts, my friend.  
May I really tell you how I feel  
about another year with which I'll deal?

I won't always ask that you understand  
And when you don't, just hold my hand.  
If I look ahead with a sense of dread,  
help me look again with hope instead.

If on New Year's I shed a tear  
for that precious child no longer near,  
just know I need a little time  
to blink back tears, then I'll be fine.

This hurt will last my whole life through  
but I can manage with God and you.  
And I know again my child will shine  
because he's in your heart and in mine.





## Coping

By Mary Cleckley, TCF Atlanta, GA

With the holidays past, we will be off on another 365. Some of you, I know, wonder if you can make it. That's such an enormous amount of time to contemplate all at once, isn't it? You may have some of your "firsts" coming in the months ahead, and the normal impulse seems to be to lump all those days together and dread them concurrently, like a prisoner serving several life sentences.

It's possible to do it that way, but that's the hard way. Getting through this day may take all the energy you can muster. Why try to handle March or May or July (or whenever your special days are) now? You can't really, and by trying, you end up only defeating yourself in your effort to effectively survive this day. When this day is past, March or May or July will still be there, trying to defeat your tomorrow...but only if you let them!

Get past this day and tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow. By the time March, May or July gets here you'll have improved your coping skills. You can better handle your special days with more practice.

I encourage you to know you can and will be better. Use this New Year constructively to work toward that end and utilize the help that is available to you through your compassionate friends

## Goals

Adapted from an article by Mary Cleckley, TCF Atlanta, GA

The holidays over... you made it through and by now maybe some of the stress of that powerful time has left you. Next year you will find you learned from this year, no matter how many years it has been, and I hope it will be easier for you, too, in the years ahead.

If you made New Year's resolutions, hope they included:

- To try and take it one day at a time;
- To forgive yourself for whatever it is you feel you did wrong;
- To figure out ways to resolve your anger so you can let go of it;

- To concentrate on and value what you have left as much as what you have lost;
- To risk reinvestment in life;
- To let those you value know how important they are to you.

These are important steps forward. Try to be good to yourself in the new year.

## When Winter Comes

By Glenda Fulton Davis ©1983

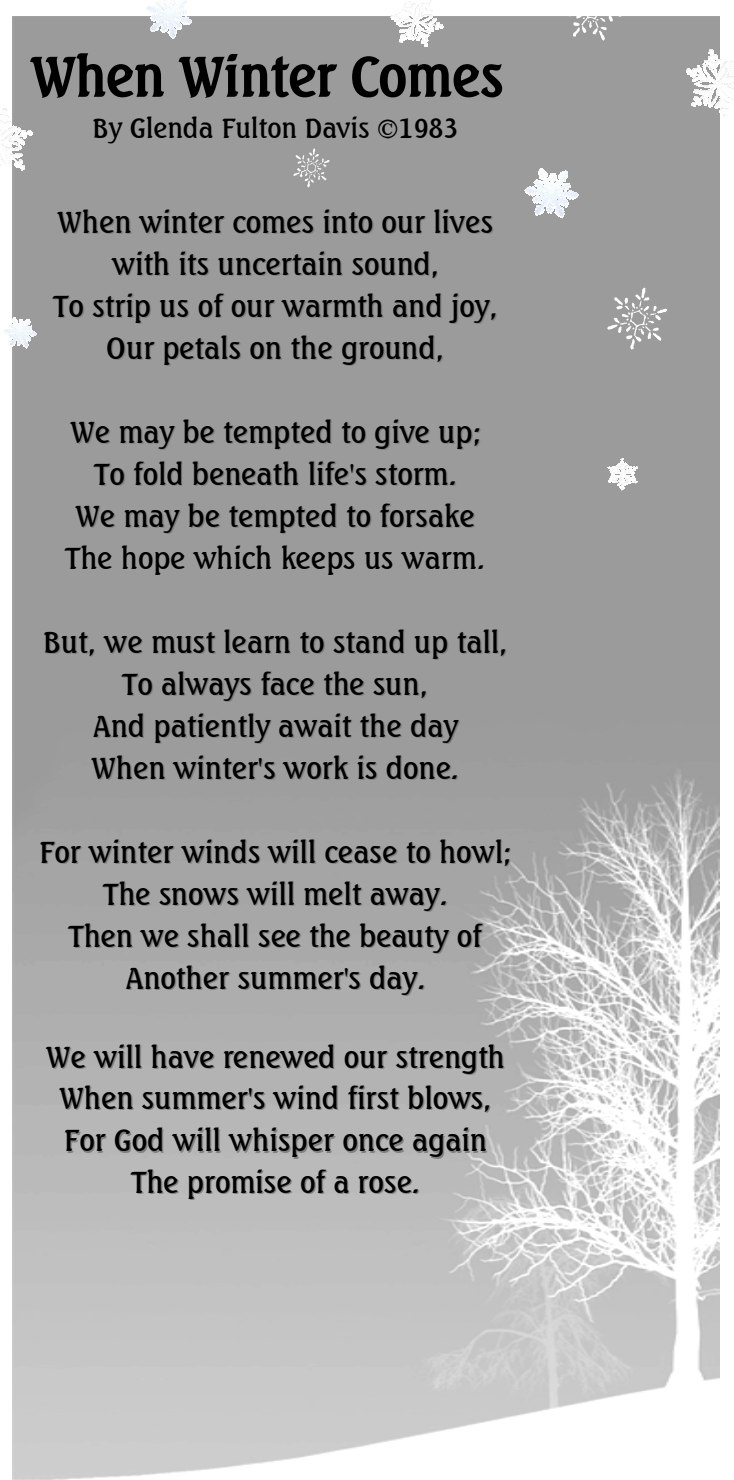
When winter comes into our lives  
with its uncertain sound,  
To strip us of our warmth and joy,  
Our petals on the ground,

We may be tempted to give up;  
To fold beneath life's storm.  
We may be tempted to forsake  
The hope which keeps us warm.

But, we must learn to stand up tall,  
To always face the sun,  
And patiently await the day  
When winter's work is done.

For winter winds will cease to howl;  
The snows will melt away.  
Then we shall see the beauty of  
Another summer's day.

We will have renewed our strength  
When summer's wind first blows,  
For God will whisper once again  
The promise of a rose.



## Tracks in the Snow

By Juliet Freitag, Bereavement Magazine  
www.bereavementmag.com

It had been at least three days since the last snowfall, when I realized I had to head into town for groceries, and out to the cemetery for one of my weekly visits. I cursed the snow often for covering up all the life I saw in the summer and spring. Everything was just a frozen blanket of white, a barren ice land, when the snow fell. The fact that my daughter, Kyla Louise, was buried underneath that thick coating of ice in the cemetery, made me dislike the snow even more.

So on this day, I grumbled as I scraped my van windows in preparation for the long haul into town. My wheels crunched ice and slid as I pulled slowly out of the driveway. I let my mind wander into thoughts of a warm spring and the drive into town. I dreamed of flowers and birds, not frozen ponds and lifeless skies. I wondered if I would even be able to get into the cemetery to visit my darling's grave. Curse this snow!

After grocery shopping I headed out to the cemetery feeling depressed and hopeless. Why had my daughter died at the tender age of four from a brain tumor? Why was I having to visit her grave covered in snow, and out of my warm arms? What was the point of it all? I shivered as I neared the cemetery. It looked like not many people had been out since the last snowfall because the ground was still a flat solid sheet of snow. Or was it?

As I let the van quietly creep into the cemetery, my eyes gazed at the snow, and a small laugh escaped my lips. Across the rows and rows of frozen graves were animal tracks going every which way. Birds, rabbits, deer and who know what other types of creatures had found a quiet, safe place to play. The tracks told of deer leaping over headstones, romping in the snow. There were tracks of rabbits darting in and out of the bushes between the headstones. Bird tracks gently dotted the snow until they disappeared where a winged one had taken flight.

I parked the van and stepped out into the glistening snow. As I walked toward my daughter's grave, I saw that a bird had visited her earlier, and that a rabbit had made a resting place under the bushes near her grave. A set of tracks even went

back and forth between a pinwheel (Kyla's grandma had left at the grave) and a bush. What a wondrous sight!

My little angel even had visitors when I could not be there. As I stood quietly pondering this change in my point of view, something caught my eye a few rows up. I looked and there were two small deer running after each other. They stopped and looked at me, and I at them. Tears sprung to my eyes, and my heart soared. What majesty! They stood there still for a second, and then they bounded off and over the fence.

I pressed my hands into the snow on my sweet Kyla's grave, leaving my hand prints. Then I drew a heart with my finger. As I walked away, I looked back and saw my own tracks, proof that I had been there, proof of my love. It was then that I realized what a gift the snow was. It had shown me how full of life the cemetery and the world really are, even though we think it is frozen and desolate. On my drive back home I looked around at the shimmering white land before me. I saw that the snow protected and preserved the land beneath it like a warm blanket, until the land could once again rise anew.

## In the Glow of Freshly Fallen Snow

By Sandy Goodman, "Love Never Dies"

Last night, in the glow of  
freshly fallen snow,  
I felt for the first time in months  
a sense of peace.  
A feeling of wonder overcame me  
and I looked around to see  
if you were there.  
Later, I thought to myself—  
Why did I need to look?  
I know, as surely as I know  
how to breathe,  
that you are with me always.  
You are closer to me now  
than ever before  
and the only difference is that,  
instead of opening my eyes to see you,  
now I must open my heart.

### "DON'T SCRAPE THE ICE"

The season for ice and snow is upon us (again)! Although we want to make sure the grave site markers are visible, it causes permanent damage to some markers if snow and ice are scraped off. Even plastic scrapers will mar bronze. Before using salt, snow removal chemicals, etc..., it is suggested that you check with the groundskeeper at your cemetery. ~TCF Billings, MT



## New Grief

By Linda Zelenka, TCF Orange Park Jacksonville FL

New grief is about a toothbrush  
lying dry on the bathroom sink.

Its about a sweater tossed carelessly on his bed  
It's about a folded bag of Cajun Chips with a few left  
that he should have come back to finish.

It's about a folder neatly labeled "American History"  
with notes about the balance of trade  
scrawled in preparation  
for some future reckoning some silly test.

It's about bumping into him  
in the hall as he rushed out and I rushed in.  
It's about every instant spent folding clothes  
and only half listening, not really noticing  
when I could have been studying his face,  
hearing his needs, being with him.

It's about driving past the high school  
where he should be  
and being overwhelmed by mute,  
inextinguishable rage.

New grief is about silence I can't speak across  
and emptiness I can't reach across.  
Most of all, it's about horrible,  
unequivocal ... finality.

## Old Grief

Older grief is gentler.

It's about sudden tears  
swept in by a strand of music.

It's about haunting echoes of first pain,  
at anniversaries.

It's about feeling his presence  
for an instant one day while I'm dusting his room.  
It's about early pictures that invite me  
to fold him in my arms again.

Older grief is about aching  
in gentler ways, rarer longing,  
less engulfing fire.

Older grief is about searing pain  
wrought into tenderness.

## The Fifty-Year Vigil of the Grave

Anthony FonEisen

The Hartford Courant/TCF Maryland

Ten years ago, a grave in the cemetery caught  
my wife's attention. It was close to the graves we  
visited. My wife went to read the inscription. It  
was the grave of a girl named "Marjorie." She  
was only three years old when she died in 1935.

My wife's name is "Marjorie" also, and that may  
have been a small reason for our interest in the  
grave. But it was the date of death that struck  
us. Although the child had died in 1935, 42  
years later there were beautiful, tended flowers  
growing on that grave. A three-year-old girl was  
still alive in someone's memory.

Whenever we went to the cemetery, we visited  
this grave. We saw flowers growing there every  
summer for the next eight years. We never saw  
the person who planted and tended the flowers,  
but we guessed it to be the girl's mother, whose  
date of death was yet unwritten on the family  
stone.

The flowers appeared until 1985, 50 years after  
the child had died. That summer there were no  
flowers, and the date of death appeared on the  
mother's headstone.

Time  
cannot steal  
the treasures  
we carry in our  
hearts

Jean Kylar McManus



# Sibling Page

## Dear Sibling,

*How can I possibly tell you how much I miss you? But of course you probably know, since you knew me better than anyone. No matter how much time passes, I still wish you were here to share our lives. And the future I expected us to have together. Even though we fought and at times neglected each other, I just assumed that you would always be there. That we'd grow old together and remember stories of growing up and laugh at each other as we looked and acted more like our parents. That we'd share our joys and setbacks, and adore each other's children.*

*Your death has rocked me harder than I could have imagined I'd survive. Ultimately, there are no answers to my questions. There is no replacing you and there is no solace for my grief. There is only the simple choice I made every day to live on in the honor of your memory and the love we shared. To strive to carry on the best of who you were. To cherish the brief time we have with others. To celebrate the opportunity to be alive. To have compassion for the pain of others as well as my own. To have the courage to love fully as I have loved you and to remember that you would want me to go on and find joy again.*

*You gave me so many gifts while you were alive and I continue to discover the gifts in this loss. I am so thankful you were born my sibling. I would not have traded our time together for anything. You are always with me because you are a part of me.*

*Melanie Lamoureux,  
TCF Marin County, Ca*

## Your Presence is Missed

By Julie Cooper TCF, Moore, OK

Your presence is missed.  
The anger, the tears,  
The questions unanswered  
Bring unknown fears.

Time passed by  
As we never thought it could.  
They say, go on with your  
Remember the good.

I see a glimmer of life  
In your pictures astray.  
My brother,  
What a price you had to pay.

Today the sun comes up  
As it always does.  
And sets peacefully  
Under the clouds up above.

I often wonder if you can see the light,  
Of a world you were once part of,  
Do you still sleep at night?

There's a hole in my life now  
That I can't seem to fill.  
When I think of that day  
Up my spine runs a chill.

I can never make sense  
Of why it was your fate.  
You were good in heart  
You didn't hate.

Sweet Brother Richard,  
I'll meet you when I die.  
Until that day comes  
Remembering you, I'll cry.

### 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 YOR 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 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) section.

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

The following is  Information change or update  Address or Phone change  Permission (check this box to grant OCR publication Newsletter/ Web permission)

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature (required) \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Child \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (where your newsletter is to be sent to) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian 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

## Siblings Walking Together

(Formerly 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.

## 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](mailto:TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com) or by mail sent to TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA 18014

**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.



### 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: TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA 18014 or email to: [email: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com](mailto:TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com)