



The Compassionate Friends

Lehigh Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Fall-Winter 2017

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TCF Online Support

www.compassionatefriends.org
click on "Online Support" under the "Find Support" 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.

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.

Meeting and Events Calendar

- Oct 9 **Monthly Support Group Meeting** - General Sharing
- Oct 18 **TCF Basket Bingo** - See Page 3
- Nov 13 **Monthly Support Group Meeting** - General Sharing
- Dec 10 **TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting**
- Dec 11 **TCF, Lehigh Valley Candle Light Remembrance Service** See Page 3

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.

We welcome newsletter writings from our members, you can also submit writings by others. All submissions must include the author's name & your contact information. Send to TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA 18014 or email to: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com by the following cutoff dates:

Issue	Cutoff	Issue	Cutoff
Winter (Jan., Feb., March)	Dec. 1 st	Summer (July, Aug., Sept.)	June 1 st
Spring (April, May, June)	March 1 st	Fall (Oct., Nov., Dec.)	Sept 1 st

We reserve the right to alter, modify or reject submissions not in keeping with our mission

Other Local Bereavement Groups & TCF Chapters

TCF Carbon County Chapter - 1st Tuesday 7:00 - 9:00 pm at Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn., 501 Delaware Ave. Palmerton
Chapter Co Leaders - Dave & Lora Krum, Phone: 484-719-6753 Contact Email: tcfcarboncounty@gmail.com

TCF Easton Chapter- 2nd Thursday 7:00 - 9:00 pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2115 Washington Blvd., Easton
Chapter Leaders John & Maria Szabo, Phone: 610-866-5468 Contact Email: szabojanos1@verizon.net

TCF Quakertown Chapter - 2nd Tuesday 7:30 - 9:00 pm at St. Lukes Quakertown Hospital; 1021 Park Ave, Quakertown
Contact Phone: 215-536-0173, Contact Email: tcfquakertownchapter@verizon.net

GRASP Allentown (grief recovery after substance passing) Preregistration required, Contact: Nancy Howe 484-863-4324; 484-788-9440;
nancyhowe@ymail.com or Jenny Kemps - 610-442-8490

Local Children's Support Groups

Children's General Bereavement Group (ages 5 - 13) Meeting day, time & place coincide with TCF, LV
Facilitated by Jeanette Laube, MA on a as needed basis. Preregistration required. Call 610-762-5783

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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



Telephone Friends

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

Infant Loss -	
Kim Szep	610-730-3111
Only Child -	
Shelly Garst	484-241-5396
Addiction -	
Nancy Howe	484-863-4324
Suicide -	
John & Maria Szabo	610-866-5468
Homicide -	
Ginger Renner	610-967-5113

New Members

We welcome new members. We are deeply sorry for the circumstances that have brought you to our group. As fellow bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings we offer care, compassion, comfort and a deep understanding of the pain you are experiencing. We know how much courage it took to attend your first meeting and hope that you will allow us to help by continuing to attend.

Scott & Linda Huber whose beloved son, Francis, born 6/23, died 7/13 at 33 yrs
 Paul Mickelson whose beloved Daughter, Ashley born 2/20, died 7/28 at 22 yrs
 Janet Thibault whose beloved Granddaughter, Kelsey born 11/25, died 6/7 at 35 yrs
 Casey & Krista Reiger whose beloved Daughter, Stella born 6/18, died 6/18 at birth

There are three needs of the griever

To find the words for the loss
 To say the words aloud
 And to know that they have been heard

Victoria Alexander

News, Events & Announcements

It is with regret that we announce that Maria Szabo has stepped down from her role as Remembrance Secretary. Since taking on the position Maria has mailed out literally thousands of handwritten birthday remembrance cards to the bereaved parents of Carbon, Easton and Lehigh Valley chapters. We are so grateful for her years of service and dedication to fellow bereaved parents and wish her well in her future endeavors.

If you are interested in giving back to the chapter by stepping into this role please call Kathy Collins at 484-891-0823



TCF Basket Bingo October 18, 2017

Northampton Community Center, 1601 Laubach Ave, Northampton, PA

Doors open at 5pm, Games start at 7 pm

Advance Tickets: \$15.00, At the Door: \$20.00

Advance tickets available at meetings or contact Dawn DeLong @ 610-837-7924

Come join us and try your luck at winning some great Filled Longaberger Baskets, Specials, Chinese Auction & 50/50. Food, beverages & snacks available for purchase.



Button Machine at the November Meeting

We will be making photo buttons prior to the meeting from 6:30 - 7:00. To have a button made: Arrive early with a color or black & white COPY (Not original) of a picture on Plain Paper (NOT photo paper) of your child. Buttons are 2 1/4 in diameter. **Please Note:** *The photo you supply will be cut and used to make the button*



The 21st Annual TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting December 10, 2017 7pm

The Worldwide Candle Lighting is a very special and moving event, when bereaved families join together from around the world and light candles at 7:00 p.m. local time to commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon. The annual Worldwide Candle Lighting creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Participants may observe the event at home with family or attend a local gathering.

In the Lehigh Valley, Members Tom & Eva Siebert are graciously hosting a Worldwide Candle Lighting Social in their home. The Social will begin with a covered dish meal at 5:30 followed by the candle lighting at 7 pm. Covered dishes welcome but not necessary, candles provided. **Everyone is welcome, the only requirement to attend is to RSVP to Tom and Eva at 610-967-5886** so they can estimate the amount of food and candles needed.



TCF Candle Light Remembrance Service December 11, 2017

Sacred Heart Hospital Auditorium 6:45 - 9pm



We invite all TCF members as well as anyone who has experienced the loss of a child to join us as we celebrate the lives of our children, grandchildren and siblings in this very special service of remembrance. The program includes remembrance music, poetry, a sibling candle wreath lighting, memorial scroll, a slideshow of our children (to have your child added to the slideshow see page 4). The program starts promptly at 7 p.m., so please try to arrive 15-20 minutes prior.

The Memorial Scroll, inscribed with the names of the children who have died, will be on display. If your child's name has yet to be inscribed, you will have an opportunity to add it. A memory table will be set up to display your photos. Following the program a reception will be held across the hall from the Auditorium. Please bring one a favorite treat or finger food to share.

Note: *Volunteers are needed to help with the service and poetry readings. To volunteer please arrive by 6:00 pm and see Brenda in the regular meeting room across from the auditorium.*

To submit your child's picture for the slideshow, submit the following no later than Oct. 31st:

- ♥ 1-2 individual (not group) photo(s) of your child, sibling or grandchild (up to 8x10). Note: If you previously submitted a photo you do not need to submit another. All photos returned at the service
- ♥ Your contact info, child's name, birth & anniversary dates, family members names

Submit by:

- ♦ **Email:** a photo quality jpeg & info to: kimberlee.szep@lvh.com **Mail:** in a stiff mailer to - Kim Szep, 5816 Snowy Orchid Lane, Allentown, PA 18104 **or Make an appointment** by calling Kim @ 610-530-4244

Please follow the submission instructions carefully and submit all required information prior to the deadline. The chapter is not responsible for submissions that are incomplete, late or sent to the wrong address.

Love Gifts

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Love Gifts are donations given in memory of a child or in memory of or in honor of a friend, relative or special person. These tax deductible donations enable the chapter to continue our mission of reaching out to the newly bereaved and providing ongoing support to all our members. To make a love gift donation please use form.

We thank the following for their generous donations this month

Contributor	Loved One
♥ David Bremmer	Hunter Bremmer <i>Happy Birthday! All my love, Dad</i>
♥ Stephen & Jeannette Viglione	Jeanne C. Hurley <i>Your first grandchild, Gavin J. Hurley, 3 yrs old. One more to love and miss you. We show him your pictures</i>
♥ Fred & Pat Andrew	Jill Patricia Harris <i>Happy Birthday, Jill. We love and miss you. Mom, Dad, Jeff, Sam & Alex</i>
♥ Sherwood & June Gum	James "Jim" Gum <i>Our love always. Mom & Dad</i>
♥ Donald & Susann Southgate	Troy G. Southgate <i>We love and miss you so much. All our love. Mom, Dad & Martin</i>
♥ Udo & Janet L. Virmalo	Sean Mikhail Virmalo <i>Always with us. Janet, Udo, Eric, Brett & Katelyn</i>
♥ Betty Schuler	Dean Lynn Schuler <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Rex & Yvonne Hude	Molly Hude <i>Happy 29th Birthday, Molly. Have a blast. We miss you very much. Love, Mom, Dad & Grammy</i>

Donations and Contributions

- | | |
|--|--|
| ★ <i>Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown for meeting room and drinks</i> | ★ <i>The Matt Kush Foundation In Memory of Matt Kush</i> |
| ★ <i>Giant Food Store Employees for United Way Contributions In Memory of David Todd Smith</i> | ★ <i>Aetna Payroll Contributors</i> |
| ★ <i>Mary Ann Donuts, Allentown for meeting snacks</i> | ★ <i>United Way Payroll Contributors</i> |
| ★ <i>St Marks Evangelical Luthern Church, Bethlehem, PA</i> | |

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.



Look for us on the Web



Visit our **web page** at www.lehighvalleytcf.org for group information, meetings & events schedule, and helpful links. **Like our facebook page:** www.facebook.com/TCFLehighValley for quotes, meeting & event reminders, cancellations and member forum. Find us on **Pinterest** under the keyword **The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley Chapter**

Our Children Loved and Remembered Always

Birthday and Anniversary dates can be especially difficult. Please keep the parents, grandparents and siblings of the following children in your thoughts and heart this month

Note: Due to privacy concerns Birthday and Anniversary listings are only published with permission for Parents/Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents. For additions and corrections complete & sign the Update Form & mail to the address indicated.

October, November & December Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday	Anniv.
Aaron Abud	- Son of Jose & Susan Abud; Brother of Ariana & Sophia & Susan Abud	Nov 14	Sep 4
Patricia Alliston	- Daughter of Glen & Peggy Wessner	Jun 22	Dec 3
John Ashner, Jr.	- Son of John & Grace Ashner; Brother of Suzanne & Michael	Jun 22	Nov 8
Matthew Aungst	- Son of Christopher & Mary Kelly Aungst; Brother of Alecia & David Aungst Aungst	Oct 15	May 30
Salvatore Bartolotta	- Son of Salvatore & Mary Bartolotta	Nov 26	Dec 27
Robert Beidleman	- Son of David & Margie Beidleman; Brother of Jill Metzger & David J. Beidleman	Dec 6	Dec 26
Kevin Blosky	- Son of Jack & Janet Blosky; Grandson of Jack & Nancy Blosky	Jan 28	Oct 4
Joshua Booth	- Son of Les & Bonnie Booth	Mar 12	Dec 27
Hunter Bremmar	- Son of David Bremmer; Brother of Heather Bremmar	Dec 12	Jul 27
Brian Burke	- Son of Rich & Mary Burke; Brother of Melissa Burke	Jan 3	Oct 9
Anthony Coccia	- Nephew of Jane Coggins	Jun 30	Oct 3
Jessica Coe	- Daughter of Randy & Diane Coe; Sister of Allison Coe	Aug 13	Oct 7
Christopher Cole	- Son of Donald Cole; Brother of Lauren Cole	Oct 10	Sep 10
John Counterman, III	- Brother of Theresa Legarski	Sep 30	Nov 2
Kayla Crawford	- Daughter of Wayne & Tammi Crawford; Sister of Anthony Davis	Nov 24	May 5
Ari'ana-Jazell Curto	- Daughter of Jabbar Curto	Dec 24	Dec 24
Nathaniel Davis	- Son of Ronald & Elizabeth Davis	Dec 9	Aug 21
David DeLong	- Son of Gene & Dawn DeLong; Brother of Jamie DeLong; Grandson of David Kaufman	Oct 23	Dec 7
Angel Winter Dickinson	- Daughter of Debbi A Dickinson, CPBC	Dec 25	Dec 25
Junior Dickinson	- Son of Debbi A Dickinson, CPBC	Dec 24	Dec 24
Barry Donchez	- Son of Edward & Olga Donchez; Brother of Linda Shive & Mike Donchez	Nov 28	Jan 10
Robert Elisarraras	- Son of Robert Elisarraras; Brother of Anita, Margaret, Renee, Johnny & Rachel	Dec 20	Aug 25
Wayne Ernst	- Son of Julius & Doris Ernst; Brother of David Ernst	Jan 6	Dec 24
Jillian Faustner	- Daughter of Joan Coberly; Sister of Jennifer, Jessica & James	Aug 7	Oct 21
Nicholas Fetchko	- Son of George & Fran Fetchko; Brother of Andrew Fetchko & Rebecca Fetchko	Oct 11	Nov 20
Jennifer Flanagan Kutz	- Daughter of Nancy Kutz	Oct 7	Sep 11
Rocky Fraccica	- Son of Rocky & Sadie Fraccica	Sep 13	Dec 9
Benjamin Fry	- Son of John & Cynthia Chryst; Twin Brother of Jeff Fry, Brother of the late Peter & Paul Fry; Grandson of Charles & Rose Giltner	Oct 6	Mar 14
Kelly Gallagher	- Daughter of Marigrace Gallagher	Dec 31	Nov 15
Kevin Garrison	- Son of Kathleen Garrison; Brother of Anthony Garrison	Dec 2	Jan 16
John Gelsebach	- Son of Beth Love	Aug 7	Dec 6
Chelsie Graham	- Daughter of Chris & Debbie Graham	Sep 18	Nov 2
James "Jim" Gum	- Son of Sherwood & June Gum; Brother of Deborah Martini	Nov 21	May 1
Timothy Hamm	- Son of Shirley Hamm	Nov 1	Nov 20
Brett Harris	- Son of Chester & Carol Kinsey, Jr.; Brother of Terry & Lisa	Dec 10	Jan 14
Jill Harris	- Daughter of Fred & Pat Andrew; Sister of Jeff	Nov 5	Jun 28
Heather Hawn	- Daughter of Mike & Cathi Tirrell; Sister of Holli & Chad	Feb 25	Dec 25
Anne Marie Mabus Heater	- Daughter of Wayne & Frances Mabus; Sister of Steven Mabus	Jan 7	Nov 25
Sara Ann Hicks	- Daughter of Mary Ellen Hicks; Sister of David Hicks	Oct 19	Jun 24

October, November & December Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday	Anniv.
Justin Hilbert	- Son of Robert & Joan Hilbert; Brother of Ashley & Kyle Hilbert	Dec 22	May 26
Thomas Hillanbrand	- Son of LaDonna Hillanbrand; Brother of Tristen & Stephanie Miller	Nov 3	Jan 9
Jonathan Hoffstetter	- Son of Richard & Suzanne Hoffstetter; Brother of Diane & Kenneth Hoffstetter	Sep 22	Oct 1
Richard "Rich" Hollabaugh	- Son of Wayne & Linda Hollabaugh	Dec 20	Apr 10
Julie Howe	- Daughter of Timothy & Nancy Howe; Sister of Melanie	Sep 3	Nov 19
Molly Hude	- Daughter of Rex & Yvonne Hude; Grand daughter of Nancy Kornafel Howe	Nov 2	Jul 2
Jeanne Hurley	- Daughter of Stephen & Jeannette Viglione; Sister of Michele Yankowky & Robert Wambold, Jr.	Oct 12	Aug 13
Jordon Hyndman	- Son of Robin Hyndman; Brother of Shawna & Briana Hyndman	Nov 14	May 23
Brandon Jesse	- Son of Cathi Jesse	Nov 2	Aug 6
Carol Johnson	- Daughter of Lauretta Coyne; Sister of Elaine Muretta, Bob, Jim & Dave Johnson	Oct 18	Sep 23
David Julo	- Son of Jack & Margaret Julo	Oct 1	Oct 16
Jonathan Keller	- Son of Dennis & Lori Keller; Brother of Amy Keller	Oct 25	Mar 23
Kimberly Kissel	- Daughter of Michael & Gloria Kissel, Jr.; Sister of Colleen & Micheal Kissel & Lisa Zelko	Feb 6	Dec 22
Kimberly Kohl	- Daughter of Lyndon & Linda Kohl	Nov 17	Sep 28
Tara Koshinski	- Daughter of Daniel & Mary Koshinski Sr; Granddaughter of Joanne Gordon	May 26	Nov 18
Randy Krieg	- Grandson of Gloria Perlis	Oct 15	Dec 1
Gavin Krum	- Son of David & Lora Krum; Brother of The Late Dylan Krum; Grandson of Nevin Krum & Henry & Shirley Long	Apr 9	Nov 27
Todd Kuhns	- Son of Leonard Kuhns & Shannon Kuhns; Brother of Leonard & Londa Kuhns	Nov 9	Dec 15
Jack Kuhns, Jr	- Son of Jack & Cindy Kuhns; Brother of Michelle & Josh Kuhns	Sep 23	Oct 12
Richard Kulik	- Son of Dolores Kulik; Brother of Christina Schantzenbach & Michael Kulik	Sep 5	Oct 27
Michael Kulp	- Son of Mike & Tamara Kulp; Brother of Mikell Kulp	Apr 21	Nov 17
Charles Kunsman, Jr	- Son of Charles & Joan Kunsman; Brother of Sherry Flanagan, Sandra Kunsman, the late Walter Alfonso & David Kunsman	Sep 18	Nov 19
Trever Landis	- Son of Robin Landis; Brother of Marlea, Dana & Kelsey Landis	Apr 16	Dec 9
Joy Laube	- Daughter of Barry & Jeanette Laube	Nov 3	Jan 15
Joseph Lestishock	- Son of Marjorie Lestishock	Aug 30	Nov 2
Paul Levine	- Son of Louisa Levine; Brother of Gregory, Mary & Philip Levine	Sep 28	Oct 31
Nathan Loicano	- Brother of Andrea Loiacano	Nov 17	Nov 18
Andrea Luecke	- Daughter of Louise Luecke; Sister of Jennae Luecke	Jan 30	Oct 23
John Luzenski	- Son of John & Audrey Luzenski; Brother of Judy & Jeffrey Luzenski	Oct 6	Oct 28
Micheal Martin, Jr	- Son of Micheal & Jean Martin	Feb 4	Nov 29
Michael McLaughlin	- Son of James & Julia McLaughlin; Brother of Matthew & Patrick McLaughlin	Mar 16	Dec 24
Emma McNulty	- Daughter of Jessica & Susan Katzbeck	Nov 19	Mar 11
Cathy Ann Mertz	- Daughter of Franklin & Lucille Reinhard; Sister of Cheryl Ann McCue	Oct 28	Dec 17
Doreen Meyers Ortiz	- Daughter of Terry & Angeline Meyers; Sister of Dwayne T. Meyers	Dec 18	Jul 13
Jacob Miller	- Son of William R & Caroline P Miller	Nov 15	Nov 16
Jason Miller	- Son of Phil & Pam Miller	Dec 10	Nov 28
Johnny Miller	- Son of Heather Miller; Brother of Hannah Miller	Sep 6	Nov 12
Suzanne Miller	- Daughter of Russell & Margaret Billig	Nov 28	Sep 28
Glenn Miller, Jr.	- Son of Lin Miller; Brother of Lorrie Woolever	Nov 20	Aug 4
Lisa Munjone	- Daughter of Lorraine Parkhurst	Dec 5	Jun 11
Cody Myers	- Son of David & Denise Myers; Brother of Travis, Crystal & Benjamin Myers	Dec 12	May 15
Gianna Natale	- Daughter of Daniel & Jaclyn Natale; Sister of Jaden Weller	Dec 26	Dec 26
Chris Noonan	- Son of Maurie & Kathy Noonan; Brother of Johnny Noonan	Nov 5	Oct 31
Susette Olewine	- Daughter of Louis & Joyce Szoke	Feb 17	Dec 2
Nathan Orsini	- Son of Daniel & Christa Orsini; Brother of Hannah Orsini	Nov 11	Nov 30
Anthony Parker, Jr	- Son of Melissa Pickett	Oct 3	Oct 3
Allison Perno	- Daughter of Cathy Perno; Sister of Joseph & Anthony Perno	Oct 7	Jun 10
Wayne Petzold	- Son of David & Joan Petzold, Sr.; Brother of Amy, Dave & Father of Katie Petzold	Aug 20	Oct 8
PJ Pfenning	- Son of Maureen Pfenning; Brother of Mandy Sciarillo & Lauren Pfenning	Aug 30	Nov 5
Tasha Phillips	- Daughter of Donna Wilson	Jul 27	Oct 26

October, November & December Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday	Anniv.
Caleb Putro	- Son of David & Susan Pultro; Brother of David Pultro, Jr	Mar 31	Oct 13
Deanna Renner	- Daughter of Ginger Renner & The late Merle Renner	Oct 11	Oct 22
Lydia Rice Cobb	- Daughter of Virginia Rice	Sep 27	Oct 10
Daniel Rostkowski	- Son of Shirley May Rostkowski; Brother of Janet Wise & Andrew Rostkowski	Nov 28	Jan 30
Scott Rothrock	- Son of Larry & Linda Rothrock	Oct 20	Sep 18
Jason Rute	- Son of Bill & Linda Cavanaugh	Aug 25	Nov 13
Scott Sargeant	- Son of Gary & Phyllis Sargeant; Brother of Gary & Paul	Apr 14	Nov 1
Crystal Schaller	- Daughter of Jamie & Rose Schaller; Sister of Amanda Schaller	Nov 14	Dec 9
Lauren Schneck	- Daughter of James & Lisa Schneck	Aug 10	Dec 2
Dean Schuler	- Son of Betty Schuler & the late Lester Schuler	May 22	Nov 19
Steven Seibert	- Son of Thomas & Eva Seibert; Brother of Nick & Krista Seibert; Grandson of Eva Juhasz	Jun 27	Dec 22
Thomas Sensinger	- Son of Ann Sensinger; Brother of Susan Brown	Jun 14	Oct 9
Darryl Shurow	- Son of Lew & Sharon Richards	Oct 12	Aug 18
Matthew Snyder	- Son of Robert & Elizabeth Snyder; Brother of Megan & Jesse Snyder	Dec 22	Jul 10
Matthew Solderitch	- Son of Brenda Solderitch & the Late Stephen Solderitch Sr.; Brother of Tina Saginario	Nov 24	Nov 3
Troy Southgate	- Son of Donald & Susann Southgate; Brother of Martin Southgate	Feb 25	Oct 30
Lisa Staub	- Daughter of Mark & Louise Stahley	Oct 1	Mar 2
Michael Stocker	- Son of Calvin & Kay Stocker; Brother of Megan Fibrick	Oct 14	Jan 26
Jennifer Strohl	- Daughter of Thomas & Christine Strohl	Apr 15	Dec 12
Pete Swartwood, III	- Son of Pete Swartwood	Oct 11	Mar 22
Debra Sweeney	- Daughter of Richard & Doris Hosler; Sister of Donna Mallard	Nov 16	Jan 5
Travis Szerencits	- Son of Craig & Cookie Harron	Mar 11	Dec 1
Tracy Szoke	- Daughter of Randal & Kim Szoke; Sister of Trisha Remaley	Mar 9	Nov 24
Kelsey Thompson	- Daughter of Janet Thibault	Nov 25	Jun 7
Travis "Bo" Tkach	- Son of Jim & Sandi Tkach; Brother of Tristin & Tyler Tkach	Dec 25	Jul 20
David Uecker	- Son of Susan Uecker-Bittner & The Late Phillip C. Uecker; Brother of Amanda Uecker-Miernicki	Aug 2	Oct 3
Chad Wagner	- Son of Carl & Pamela Fehnel; Brother of Cori	Mar 13	Dec 23
Whitney Wagner	- Daughter of Nick & Mindy Snyder	Nov 25	Feb 23
Gregory Weiland, Jr	- Son of Robin Weiland; Brother of Rozalyn Weiland	Sep 23	Dec 12
Richard "Rick" Wetherhold	- Son of Franklin & Eleanor Wetherhold; Brother of Michael Wetherhold	Nov 20	Apr 16
Darren Whipple	- Brother of Jean Marie Yurkovitch	Oct 27	Nov 2
Christopher Williamson	- Son of Chris & Kim Williamson; Brother of Christina Joy Williamson	Nov 12	Nov 12
Adam Wolk	- Son of Michael & Sheila Wolk; Brother of Laura & Sarah Wolk	Aug 1	Oct 22
Michael Zalewski	- Son of Krzysztof & Jolanta Zalewska; Brother of Monika Baraket	Jan 7	Dec 6
Kenneth Zellner	- Son of Kenneth & Barbara Zellner	Oct 11	Nov 15

"To sink or swim" are not the only alternatives to life. Many survive by just FLOATING. There were many times after my son died that I did feel as though I was sinking below the waves of grief and I was just too exhausted to try and swim to the other side of that lake of pain. It was at those times that I just simply FLOATED.

By floating, it may have taken me longer to reach the shore than it would if I had tried to swim, besides, the shore seemed just so far away that I wouldn't have made it by swimming anyway. But by just floating along with the current, I did not sink, and the other side is getting closer all the time.

~Verna Smith, TCF Fort Worth, Texas

Shadows of the Night

I sit alone in the shadows of the night.
Looking up at the stars that shine so bright
I think of you somewhere far up above
I remember all the laughter, happiness, and love.

The full moon shines bright in the sky Staring at
the full moon, I start to cry From the face of the
moon above the tree I see your face staring back
at me.

Then it starts to rain and the sky turns gray
I remember what happened two years ago in May
It continued to rain the whole night through
I think the rain meant that you were crying too.

Lisa Johnson, TCF Baltimore MD

About Time and Change

By Dennis Klass

Professional Advisor TCF, St. Louis, MO

I often wonder what people are thinking when they say, "You'll get over it." Sometimes it sounds to me as if they are talking about a case of mumps or my despair at income tax time. But what can they mean when they say it about my grief? Maybe they mean that grief is just an interruption in life. Their theory seems to be that life is basically happy, buying stuff, working, watching TV, but that a time of death and grief is an unnatural sad time in that happy life.

I cannot agree with that view.

Time can lessen the hurt; the empty place we have can seem smaller as other things and experiences fill our life; we can forget for periods and feel as if our child didn't die; we can find sense in the death and understand that perhaps this death does fit into a bigger design in the world; we can learn to remember the good and hold on to that.

But we cannot "get over it," because to get over it would mean we were not changed by the experience. It would mean we did not grow by the experience. It would mean that the child's death made no difference in our life.

There is an interesting discussion in the Talmud, an ancient Jewish writing. Those Jews had the custom of rending their garments - literally tearing their clothes -

to symbolize the ripping apart that death brings. But the question was raised, after the period of mourning, could you sew the garment up and use it again? The teachers answered yes, but when you mended it, you should not tuck the edges under so it would look as if it had never been torn. This symbolized the fact that life after grief is not the same as before. The rent will show. The next question was, can you sell that garment? The teachers answered no. The rending and mending of our life is ours and others cannot wear it.

No, we don't get over it. We change and grow. Our life has a difference which is ours alone. Perhaps as compassionate friends we can help each other make that difference the kind of difference that increases the world's supply of compassion, love, and healing.

...to Get Over It?

TCF Fort Lauderdale, FL

How long will it take to get over the feeling of sorrow? *A lifetime.*

How long will I continue to feel guilty?

As long as it takes you to realize that you did nothing wrong.

How long will it take me to get over my anger?

As long as it will take you to stop blaming yourself, and others, and realize that it was the combinations of unpredictable happenings that occur in one's lifetime.

Why do friends give me such horrid advice?

To cover up their own inability to handle the situation.

Will I ever be happy again and able to laugh?

Yes, at your own timetable.

How long is long?

As long as it takes you to go through the process. Grief is a series of steps. Each individual advances these steps based on their own circumstances, support system and making the decision to start the healing.

You don't get over the death of someone you love, you get through it. It becomes part of the fabric of your life.

Darcie Sims, TCF, USA

One November Day

By Sherry Brown,
TCF Lehigh Valley, PA
Submitted by Brenda Solderitch
in memory of son Matthew

Everything we do
Changes our life in some way,
This happened to me
One November day,
That's when I had
My son; You see,
It was a joyful
Time for me.
As time went on
And years went by,
He became his own person
A wonderful guy



Those who knew Him
Loved Him so much,
It amazes me;
All the lives He touched,
For those of you;
That he never met,
He is one person you'd
Never Forget,
He's in God's Hands
For He passed away,
But I'll always remember
That one November Day.

season - as we did with each of our children. The intensity of summer brought not only growth but maturity as well: infant to toddler to school to graduation.

Does our child's life not seem to have been so equally short? Then it is as if a silent alarm went off signaling the need to end one life so that preparations may begin for the whole process to repeat itself once again. Unfortunately, life goes on whether we want it or not. It goes on just as unfairly as it did when our child was alive.

But it is Fall when the vibrant leaves fall to the ground that we see the mirrored symbolism in our lives. Our children were a central part of our family tree and they too have slipped from our grasp. Even though more leaves will appear again and again, NONE ARE THE SAME, as the one which has died before it. Only our Compassionate Friends seem willing to hold the course that our children may not be forgotten. It is Fall when I seem to need my Friends the very most.

I am Near

By Dian Lopez, Christmas 2004
Dedicated to all the bereaved parents

Hey, Mom, Dad, brother, sister
Special friends and family too
I know the holidays can be real hard
Without me being with each of you.

But please believe me
I am standing very close to you.
I hear your cries when you miss me most
Remember I miss you too.

This separation is only temporary
Being in Heaven, it is easy for me
Earth life it is so different though
I promise someday you will see.

When the pain pierces your
love filled heart
Remember we are only physically apart.
So many times I am right by your side
Wanting to dry away the tears
you've cried.

You've made me proud as I watch
Your great courage to
keep on going.
I watch from above
As your soul keeps on growing.

So during this holiday time
When the world is filled with love.
I am having a grand toast
In the Heavens above.

To my family and my friends
My sisters and brothers too,
Thanks for helping my Mom
and Dad
For helping them walk grief's path
through.

And to the greatest Mom and Dad
The one's I love the most.
It is you I send
The grandest toast.

"Your courage amazing me
so much,
your tears I know each one,
this time apart will only be
until your life's mission is done."

Remember to laugh
Sweet memories treasure the most
I am always near when
you are in need
I too am waiting for our
reunion toast

The Magic We Find in Fall

By Jack Frost,
TCF South Central, KY

How often do we marvel at nature's beautiful hand as she plays her creative masterpiece across each of earth's precious regions? The wonder of such hue intensity as we watch each leaf turn from one glorious color to another?

I think that autumn has us all so speechless due to the similarities we find between nature and ourselves as bereaved parents. It was just months before that Spring saw the buds and blossoms which nature had produced at the start of life's

"Your memories are not a delusion; they are a glimpse of a reality far more solid and lasting than this world will ever offer. Take comfort in this: those we love may be separated from us by death; but nothing can ever take them from our hearts."

Eldyn Simons
TCF New Orleans

The Holiday Season



From the TCF Cape Cod Newsletter

Getting through the holidays can be a difficult task for bereaved parents.

We as bereaved parents need to handle the holidays in a way that we feel is best for ourselves and our families. There are many things that bereaved parents can do to help ease the pain of the holiday season. Below are some suggestions that we thought may be helpful for you:

PLAN to be with people you enjoy.

VISIT the cemetery and take a

Christmas tree to the grave. Decorate it with popcorn or food for the birds.

DO SOMETHING for someone else. Give a gift or make a donation in memory of your child. This can help to keep their memory alive.

INCLUDE YOUR CHILD IN CONVERSATIONS, once others realize that you are comfortable talking about your child, they can relate stories that will add to your memories of him or her.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO MAKE CHANGES - it really can make things less painful. Change the time you open packages, or when the holiday meal is served.

KEEP IN MIND THE FEELINGS of our other children and family members. Let your needs be known to others and try to understand their needs as well.

MOST IMPORTANT, it is pointless to pretend that everything is the same as it was. As you accept your loss, give yourself the necessary time for grieving during the holidays.

TAKE ONE DAY AT A TIME. Be realistic, and realize that we *all need* to set limits to do those things which are meaningful to ourselves and our families.

Hanukkah Thoughts

By Stephanie Hesse, TCF Rockland Co. NY

At this season of lights,
We remember the light you brought into our lives:
The light of your laughter
The light of your wit and intelligence
The light of your love



May the time not be distant
when the memory of these lights
Will illumine our hearts and minds
And eradicate the darkness therein.

Little by little
I learned that I didn't need
To hang onto the death
To remember the life
What a joyous discovery!

Kittie Brown McGowin, TCF Montgomery AL

Holiday Reflections

By Candy McLaughlin, TCF Minneapolis MN

Christmas and Hanukkah are upon us once more. December is an emotionally laden month for most adults. We pause and ponder the meaning of "Peace on Earth, goodwill toward man." We overflow with nostalgia for holidays past. We touch base with our beliefs, rituals, traditions and treasured memories. In passing on this heritage to our children, we are like conduits connecting past, present and future.

It is a bit of immortality, a sense of tradition flowing from generation to generation. It is this very essence of the holidays that stabs at the heart of bereaved parents. Our children represent the future. We may wonder what is the point of tradition with so many pieces of the future dead. Each grieving parent must struggle to answer that question effectively in order to establish a framework for the holiday season. Since we cannot ignore it or make it go away we can deal with the situation by making specific plans with our families. We can assess priorities. We can make changes. We can decide which traditions to uphold and which to set aside this year. We can choose to acknowledge openly to our children and our grief. We can think about some very special gifts.

To ourselves we can grant the gift of acceptance by realizing that Our grief is a necessary healing process. To our families we can extend the gift of empathy by remembering that they, too, hurt. To our missing children we can bestow the gift of homage by determining to work through grief so that we may live life to the fullest.

It takes only you and a candle to join hearts with the world...that their light may always shine



Sibling Page

How can they move on?

By Traci Morlo, TCF St Louis MO

How can they move on? Every day I realize that while my brother's death may have touched many people's lives, they seem to be able to just pick up where they left off and continue with their lives. For me, it has been so much harder.

I learned this week, that last year, my brother's girlfriend had gotten married. While I am very happy for her to have finally been able to love again, my happiness is also filled with a little jealousy. I think of my brother at some point every day. Does this mean that she has forgotten him? I have asked myself this question all week. I hope that she hasn't and at least remembers the good times that they had some-times. I find it hard to think of her with someone else, but she was so miserable for so long, she deserves a little happiness. I was also told that she is pregnant and is having her baby soon. When I heard this I almost cried. I think that was harder than finding out that she was married. Then a real jealousy kicked in. I thought, "Hey, what about Sean's baby?" He'll never know the joy of being a parent.

After mulling this around for a while, I realized that everyone must move on. Sometimes I feel as if I can't go on another day because I feel so much pain. That pain is not so strong as it was two or three years ago, but it does come back to visit now and then. When Sean first died, a few of his friends came over a lot. Over the past few years, that began to happen less and less until his friends stopped coming at all. One of his friends still comes by or at least calls my mom at Christmas. Another puts presents on his grave occasionally.

I know that a lot of people cared about my brother, but I think that knowing him for 19 years and being as close as we were has made it all the harder for me. I know that he watches over our family and is always with us. I know in my heart that moving on is not the same as forgetting. I hope with my heart that all who knew Sean still spare at

least one thought for him once in awhile. While I wish every one of his friends much happiness in their lives, I hope that they will never forget.

Someone Who'll Watch Over Me

Author Unknown

I remember how I used to watch over you,
 Tried to teach you the things you should do.
 I can remember the things I would say
 As I tried to guide you along the way.
 But since you've gone, and our lives have changed,
 It seems the roles have been rearranged.
 Sometimes it feels like it used to be,
 Only you're the one watching over me.
 I know in my mind that you're not here;
 Yet there are times when you feel so near.
 I've learned if I let the love flow through,
 I'll get to keep a part of you.
 For though death comes the love never goes away.
 Your presence is with me every day.
 For my guardian angel you now will be,
 And you're the one who'll watch over me.

My Sister, My Friend

By Catherine Hall, BPUSA, Hinedale IL

Within our hearts
 You will always be.
 Our minds will be filled
 With sweet memories

Your spirit and love
 Will never be gone
 For each life you touched
 Will carry them on



Note: Sibling volunteers are needed to light the sibling wreath and as readers for the Candle Light Remembrance Service.

To Volunteer contact Gene Delong @ 610-837-7924

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.

Submission Deadlines: Winter - Dec 1st; Spring - March 1st; Summer - June 1st; Fall - Sept 1st

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P.O. BOX 149
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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

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