



# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *Lehigh Valley Chapter*

### **Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

Volume 33 Issue 3

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July, August, September 2019

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The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is an international non-profit self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families that have experienced the death of a child.

**Our Mission:** When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

**Our Vision:** Everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped

**Our Chapter 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 is available in hospital parking decks

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and mature siblings. 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.

#### **Upcoming Meeting and Events Schedule**

Sept. 9 - Meeting - General Sharing

Oct. - Meeting – General Sharing

Nov. - Meeting – General Sharing

Dec. 8 - 23rd Annual TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting—See page 2

Dec. 9 - TCF Lehigh Valley Candle Light Remembrance Service - See page 2

*Note: Newcomers please arrive a half an hour early for your first meeting*

#### **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.

**Inside this issue:**

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**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      |

**TCF Online Support**

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

Click on "Online Support" under the "Find Support" tab

**Chapter Notes**

**TCF, Lehigh Valley Family Picnic & Balloon Release** was held on June 15th. Thank you to all that attended, brought food to share and volunteered to help clean up, setup, cook, inflate balloons and read poetry. We were blessed with a beautiful day to gather in fellowship, enjoy a meal together and to release our message laden balloons to our beloved children.

**2020 Picnic and Balloon Release** A volunteer(s) are need to plan and organize next years picnic and balloon launch. Responsibilities include choosing a location and making rental arrangements, organizing volunteers and purchasing supplies, etc. For more information or to volunteer call the newsletter editor. *If we do not find someone to take over these responsibilities we will be unable to host the picnic.*

**23rd Annual TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting** held on the second Sunday in December unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon. You may participate by joining one of the local gatherings or by quietly lighting a candle in your own home at 7 pm. Information on local gatherings will be listed in the next newsletter issue.

*If you'd like to host a local gathering please contact the newsletter editor before Sept. 1st so that it can be listed in the newsletter.*

**TCF, Lehigh Valley Candle Light Remembrance Service**, will be held on December 9th 6:45 pm in the Sacred Heart Hospital Auditorium.

The Service will be held in lieu of the monthly support group meeting for December we will be celebrating the lives of our children, siblings and grandchildren with a very special service of remembrance. The program includes music, poetry, a sibling candle wreath lighting, memorial scroll, a photo table and slideshow. The program will be followed with a reception and fellowship. Guests are asked to bring a favorite treat or finger food to share. Please arrive early the program will begin promptly at 7pm. More information in the next issue.

**From the editor**

Dear Readers,

This issue of the newsletter is arriving late due to issues we experienced with our outdated computer system. We have purchased a new computer. Upgrading the hardware necessitated the need to upgrade the software including our database software and have the files migrated to the new system. There were no major glitches with the migration. While I could not check every record after the migration, I have checked random records to access the correctness of the information and haven't found any errors to date. This is not to say that there are none, so please contact me if you find an error.

**Newsletter Notes**

We welcome original stories and poetry from our members. We reserve the right to modify or reject submissions not in keeping with our mission.

All submissions must include the author's name & your contact information. Send to The Compassionate Friends, C/O Kathleen Collins, 2971 Pheasant Dr. Northampton PA 18067 or email to: [TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com](mailto:TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com) by the following cutoff dates:

| Newsletter       | Cutoff Date | Newsletter       | Cutoff Date |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Jan, Feb, March  | Dec. 1st    | July , Aug, Sept | June 1st    |
| April, May, June | March 1st   | Oct, Nov, Dec    | Sept 1st    |

## Love Gifts

Love Gifts are tax deductible donations that enable the chapter to continue to reach out to the newly bereaved and provide ongoing support to all members. They may be given in memory of a child or in memory of or in honor of a friend or relative. To make a love gift please use form in this newsletter.

*We thank the following for their generosity*

| Contributor                    | Loved One  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| ♥ Ellen & Jennifer Winkler     | Steven Ryan Winkler<br><i>We miss you more than words can say. Always in our hearts forever.</i>                                     |
| ♥ Frank & Lucy Reinhard        | Cathy A. Mertz and Denise Deiter<br><i>In memory of our two daughters</i>  |
| ♥ Barbara & Jim Minter         | Jim Minter<br><i>Happy 39th Birthday. Wish you were here. Love You, Mom &amp; Dad</i>  |
| ♥ Larry & Linda Melenchek      | Nathaniel Davis<br><i>We love and miss you, Nate</i> ♥   |
| ♥ David Bremmer                | Hunter Bremmer<br><i>I love you and think of you every day. All my love, Dad</i>   |
| ♥ Yvonne Hude & Nancy Kornafel | Molly Hude<br><i>6 years without your smile. Always in our hearts. Love &amp; miss you so very much. Mom, Dad &amp; Grammy</i>       |
| ♥ Kenneth & Barbara Zellner    | Kenneth Samuel Zellner<br><i>In Loving Memory</i>  |
| ♥ Kathleen Collins             | Anthony E. Mariani, II<br><i>Sending hugs and kisses to heaven for your 39th Birthday . We love and miss you. Your loving Family</i> |

## Donations and Contributions

- ★ Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown  
for meeting room and drinks
- ★ Giant Food Store Employees for United Way Contributions  
In Memory of David Todd Smith
- ★ Mary Ann Donuts, Allentown for meeting snacks
- ★ Everyone who volunteers their time and expertise to running the chapter and helping with the meetings
- ★ The Shafer Family Charitable Trust
- ★ Aetna Payroll Contributors
- ★ United Way Payroll Contributors

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

*"The tide recedes, but leaves behind  
Bright seashells on the sand.  
The sun goes down but gentle warmth  
Still lingers on the land.  
The music stops and yet it lingers on  
In sweet refrain.  
For every joy that passes  
Something beautiful remains"*

*M D Hughes*



# Our Children Remembered

*Please keep the parents, grandparents and siblings of the following children in your thoughts and hearts*

## July, August & September Birthdays and Anniversaries

|  | Birth  | Anniv. |
|--|--------|--------|
| <b>David</b> - Son of Nancy Densler  | Sep 7  | Nov 15 |
| <b>Walter Alfonso</b> - Son of Joan Kunsman; Brother of Sherry Flanagan, Sandra Kunsman, the late David Kunsman & the late Charles Kunsman, Jr                                   | Aug 10 | May 18 |
| <b>James Balloch</b> - Grandson of Fern Gerth & Bill Gerth   | Feb 22 | Sep 4  |
| <b>Morgan Basciano</b> - Sister of Olivia & Sophia   | Jul 6  | Jul 30 |
| <b>Todd Belles</b> - Son of Anita Belles   | Sep 17 | Sep 28 |
| <b>Hunter Bremmar</b> - Son of David Bremmer; Brother of Heather Bremmar   | Dec 12 | Jul 27 |
| <b>Holly Cavanaugh</b> - Daughter of Bill Cavanaugh & Beverly Ann Cavanaugh;   | Apr 27 | Sep 25 |
| <b>Carol Chanitz</b> - Daughter of Jay & Ruth Chanitz  | Aug 25 | Aug 25 |
| <b>Joseph Chanitz</b> - Son of Jay & Ruth Chanitz  | Jul 16 | Aug 28 |
| <b>Mitchell Cherry</b> - Brother of Christopher Conrad   | Mar 31 | Jul 31 |
| <b>Matthew Chupella</b> - Son of Maryann Chupella  | May 18 | Jul 31 |
| <b>Jessica Coe</b> - Daughter of Randy & Diane Coe; Sister of Allison Coe  | Aug 13 | Oct 7  |
| <b>Christopher Cole</b> - Son of Donald Cole; Brother of Lauren Cole   | Oct 10 | Sep 10 |
| <b>John Counterman, III</b> - Brother of Theresa Legarski  | Sep 30 | Nov 2  |
| <b>Christopher David</b> - Daughter of Marie David   | Nov 4  | Sep 16 |
| <b>Courtney David</b> - Daughter of Marie David  | Jul 15 | Jul 15 |
| <b>Hope Davidson</b> - Daughter of Dean & Donna Davidson; Sister of Nicholas Davidson  | Aug 8  | Feb 8  |
| <b>Sarah Davidson</b> - Daughter of Dean & Donna Davidson; Sister of Nicholas Davidson   | Jul 10 | Jul 10 |
| <b>Sheila DeBoer</b> - Daughter of Barbara DeBoer & the late Henry DeBoer; Sister of Leslie & Cory DeBoer  | Jan 29 | Jul 27 |
| <b>Denise Deiter</b> - Daughter of Franklin & Lucille Reinhard; Sister of & Cheryl A. McCue & the late Cathy A. Mertz  | Jul 3  | Jun 11 |
| <b>Alexandra Dixon</b> - Daughter of Albert & Joan Dixon; Sister of Zack Dixon   | Sep 22 | Jul 31 |
| <b>Jillian Faustner</b> - Daughter of Joan Cottone; Sister of Jennifer, Jessica & James  | Aug 7  | Oct 21 |
| <b>Brenda Fehr Hatrak</b> - Daughter of David & Eileen Fehr, Sr; Sister of Barbara Burgin & David A. Fehr, Jr.; Granddaughter of Warren & Rose Fehr and Elwood & Mary Mann       | Aug 31 | Jan 8  |
| <b>James Freed</b> - Son of Marianne Freed   | Sep 15 | Aug 13 |
| <b>Sgt. Christopher Geiger</b> - Son of George & Patricia Geiger; Brother of Roseanne Reenock, Michael, Terrance, David & Timothy Geiger   | Mar 30 | Jul 9  |
| <b>Chelsie Graham</b> - Daughter of Chris & Debbie Graham  | Sep 18 | Nov 2  |
| <b>Eric Graver</b> - Son of Mary L Graver  | Aug 17 | Jul 9  |
| <b>Rita Guerrieri</b> - Daughter of Art & Mary Guerrieri; Sister of Maryrose Guerrieri-Nesbitt   | Sep 29 | Mar 11 |
| <b>David Hoagland, Jr</b> - Son of Gypsy Garrett   | Sep 24 | Apr 26 |
| <b>James "Jimmy" Hotz</b> - Son of Elizabeth Hotz  | Apr 24 | Jul 4  |
| <b>Molly Hude</b> - Daughter of Rex & Yvonne Hude; Grand daughter of Nancy Kornafel  | Nov 2  | Jul 2  |
| <b>Jeanne Hurley</b> - Daughter of Stephen & Jeannette Viglione; Sister of Michele Yankowy & Robert Wambold, Jr.   | Oct 12 | Aug 13 |
| <b>Brandon Jesse</b> - Son of Cathi Jesse; Brother of Christian Jesse  | Nov 2  | Aug 6  |
| <b>Colleen Kilker</b> - Daughter of Mark & Kathleen Kilker; Sister of Meghan, Bridget & Mark Kilker  | May 6  | Jul 23 |
| <b>Richard Kulik</b> - Son of Dolores Kulik; Brother of Christina Schantzenbach & Michael Kulik  | Sep 5  | Oct 27 |
| <b>David Kunsman</b> - Son of Charles & Joan Kunsman; Brother of Sherry Flanagan, Sandra Kunsman, the late Walter Alfonso & the late Charles Kunsman, Jr                         | May 2  | Jul 15 |
| <b>Charles Kunsman, Jr</b> - Son of Charles & Joan Kunsman; Brother of Sherry Flanagan, Sandra Kunsman, the late Walter Alfonso & the late David Kunsman                         | Sep 18 | Nov 19 |
| <b>Matt Kush</b> - Son of Rick & Ann Kush; Brother of Mike & Jenn  | Aug 24 | Feb 10 |
| <b>John Leonard, Jr</b> - Son of Jack & Jule Leonard; Brother of Karen   | Jul 27 | Jan 6  |
| <b>Joseph Lestishock</b> - Son of Marjorie Lestishock  | Aug 30 | Nov 2  |
| <b>Paul Levine</b> - Son of Louisa Levine; Brother of Gregory, Mary & Philip Levine  | Sep 28 | Oct 31 |
| <b>Michael Mann</b> - Son of Lee & Shirley Lutz  | Sep 26 | Aug 12 |
| <b>Anthony "Tony" Mariani, II</b> - Son of the Kathleen Collins & the late Anthony E. Mariani; Stepson of Brian Collins; Brother of Matthew Mariani; Grandson of William Pickett | Sep 13 | Sep 6  |
| <b>Ed McNally</b> - Son of Don & Connie McNally; brother of Sean McNally   | Jul 29 | Feb 11 |
| <b>Doreen Meyers Ortiz</b> - Daughter of Terry & Angeline Meyers; Sister of Dwayne T. Meyers   | Dec 18 | Jul 13 |
| <b>Suzanne Miller</b> - Daughter of Russell & Margaret Billig  | Nov 28 | Sep 28 |
| <b>Glenn Miller, Jr.</b> - Son of Lin Mille; Brother of Lorrie Woolever  | Nov 20 | Aug 4  |
| <b>Jim Minter</b> - Son of Jim & Barbara Minter; Brother of Jeanine Minter   | Aug 15 | Mar 14 |



# Our Children Remembered

*Please keep the parents, grandparents and siblings of the following children in your thoughts and hearts*

## July, August & September Birthdays and Anniversaries

|  | Birth  | Anniv. |
|--|--------|--------|
| <b>Buddy Pearson</b> - Son of Bob & Shelly Garst   | Jul 12 | Mar 24 |
| <b>Wayne Petzold</b> - Son of David & Joan Petzold, Sr.; Brother of Amy, Dave & Father of Katie Petzold              | Aug 20 | Oct 8  |
| <b>PJ Pfenning</b> - Son of Maureen Pfenning; Brother of Amanda Sciarillo & Lauren Pfenning                          | Aug 30 | Nov 5  |
| <b>Michael Powers</b> - Son of Richard & Margaret Powers; Brother of Billy, Richie, Tara & Ryan                      | Jul 9  | Feb 10 |
| <b>Peter Radocha</b> - Son of Lucille Radocha; Brother of Gina Sacco & Frank Radocha, Jr                             | Jun 13 | Jul 1  |
| <b>James Ralls</b> - Son of Tina Ralls; brother of Timothy & Geoffrey  | Jan 2  | Aug 17 |
| <b>Lydia Rice Cobb</b> - Daughter of Virginia Rice   | Sep 27 | Oct 10 |
| <b>Anthony Romig</b> - Son of Edward C. Romig, Sr. & Lois Pearsall; Brother of Edward C. Romig, Jr.                  | Sep 12 | Jan 20 |
| <b>Cory Ross</b> - Son of Kathy Ross; Brother of Michael Ross  | Jul 24 | Jun 12 |
| <b>Scott Rothrock</b> - Son of Larry & Linda Rothrock  | Oct 20 | Sep 18 |
| <b>Jason Rute</b> - Son of Linda Cavanaugh   | Aug 25 | Nov 13 |
| <b>Robert Rute</b> - Son of Linda Cavanaugh  | Jul 9  | Apr 4  |
| <b>Aaron Schaible</b> - Son of Linda Stewart, Brother of Andy Schaible, Brother of The late Jennifer Schaible        | Jul 30 | Aug 28 |
| <b>Lauren Schneck</b> - Daughter of James and Lisa Schneck   | Aug 10 | Dec 2  |
| <b>Anthony Sisonick</b> - Son of Rella Sisonick Daniels, Brother of Nicholas Sisonick                                | Nov 8  | Aug 27 |
| <b>Jonelle Sisonick</b> - Daughter of Rella Sisonick Daniels, Sister of Nicholas Sisonick                            | May 22 | Aug 3  |
| <b>David Todd Smith</b> - Son of David and Kathleen Smith, Brother of Stephanie Seifert                              | Feb 25 | Sep 17 |
| <b>Constance Stewart</b> - Daughter of Joanne Stewart, Sister of Keith and Kevin Stewart                             | Sep 23 | Feb 1  |
| <b>Keith Storat</b> - Son of Richard and Susan Storat, Brother of Todd & Greg  | May 18 | Jul 22 |
| <b>Jon Sulick</b> - Son of John Sulick, Brother of Aymae Sulick  | Feb 9  | Sep 15 |
| <b>Michael Szabo</b> - Son of John and Maria Szabo, Jr   | Aug 2  | Aug 17 |
| <b>Jared Thomas</b> - Son of Sandra B. Schueck   | Aug 31 | Jun 22 |
| <b>David Uecker</b> - Son of Susan Uecker-Bittner & The Late Phillip C. Uecker, Brother of Amanda Uecker-Miernicki   | Aug 2  | Oct 3  |
| <b>Sean Virmalo</b> - Son of Udo and Janet L. Virmalo, Brother of Eric, Brett & Katelyn Virmalo                      | Sep 13 | Apr 28 |
| <b>Stephanie Volkert</b> - Daughter of Joanne Fimiano, Sister of Zachary Volkert                                     | Sep 22 | Feb 12 |
| <b>Gregory Weiland, Jr</b> - Son of Robin Gehret, Brother of Rozalyn Weiland   | Sep 23 | Dec 12 |
| <b>Christina Williamson</b> - Daughter of Chris and Kim Williamson, Sister of the late Christopher Jayden Williamson |        | Aug 6  |
| <b>Steven Winkler</b> - Son of Ellen Winkler, Brother of Jennifer, Grandson of Arnold Abramowitz                     | Jan 12 | Jul 26 |
| <b>Hunter Wolfe</b> - Brother of Carter & Olivia Wolfe & Katarina Sargent  | Jul 23 | Jul 7  |
| <b>Adam Wolk</b> - Son of Michael and Sheila Wolk, Brother of Laura & Sarah Wolk                                     | Aug 1  | Oct 22 |
| <b>Craig Yurick</b> - Son of Robert and Sharon Yurick, Brother of Todd Yurick  | Aug 5  | Jun 21 |

## Walking in the Shadow of My Child

Wherever I go, I walk with his shadow on my being.  
 I am clothed in a coloration not visible to the naked eye.  
 It casts an unexpected influence on how I carry myself as I journey through life.  
 It clouds my way of looking at things:  
 forces perspectives, which I didn't know were part of my psyche.  
 The shade of grayness through which I now view things  
 absorbs some of the radiances, which I experience.  
 Yet my shadow comes not from the valley of death;  
 but from my child being closer to the light.

Ed Kuzela, TCF Atlanta

# Butterflies Make Me Happy

By Lynn Vines, TCF South Bay/L.A., CA

Butterflies Make Me Happy Sometimes in our grief we truly believe we are going crazy. We hurt so bad we don't think we can manage to go on living without our precious child here with us. Part of the grieving process is learning how to do just that. Some parents need the reassurance that their child is okay. I think the human mind can only take so much pain and jumps at the chance to see signs from their children, reassuring them that they are okay. The way I look at it, if you get comfort from a dream or a sign...enjoy it. You've suffered enough, and believing in signs, butterflies, dreams or what ever else gives you comfort and hurts no one else, is your right as a bereaved person. Are these signs real, or just in my imagination? Can I prove they are messages from my son? Does it even need to be proven? No, I can't scientifically prove it. But I know that dreams, butterflies, signs and enjoyment in nature makes me feel closer to Eric and therefore I will

continue to enjoy them. It hurts no one, I'm not obsessive about it and anyone who chooses to think I'm nuts for believing in such things, can think I'm nuts. We've all heard how the butterfly is a symbol of rebirth. Whether it's our child moving from this world onto a higher plane, or a bereaved parent emerging from the cocoon of grief into a world without our child here. With us, butterflies are a comfort for many. When I'm missing my son and see a butterfly fluttering from flower to flower, I smile and feel better. When I'm in a happy mood and see a butterfly, I enjoy the beauty of such a delicate creature. Taking the time to slow down and watch such a fragile creature going about its business is calming and I don't think anyone should discount the benefits from having a calming moment. About four months after Eric died, I had a dream about him. I woke myself up from tears of joy running down my face, I knew

he was okay...what a relief that was. I still hurt terribly and missed him more than I thought I could endure, but I felt comforted by the dream. Some could say it was my subconscious trying to sort things out, but I choose to believe it was his way of trying to comfort me. Either way, it made me feel better. Maybe it's because bereaved parents walk around in such a fog and function on automatic pilot that we are moving slow enough to notice the signs that are around us. Maybe dreams are one way for us to accept messages we need to hear and take into our hearts without logically trying to interpret them. Maybe faith is what we rely on when nothing else makes sense and we instinctively know we need something to hold on to. Whatever it is, just give me a second helping; I like feeling closer to my son.



## You Are My Sunshine

By Carol Clum TCF, Medford, OR Copyright © 2003 The Rogue Valley Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

As a child, I learned to sing on road trips in the family car. We sang "She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain", "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and my favorite:

You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, You make my happy when skies are gray. You'll never know, dear, how much I love you. Please, don't take my sunshine away.

Since my son's death, whenever I hear this song, I mentally change the spelling to 'son-shine.' When he left, skies surely turned gray. Gray skies continue to visit me in random moments of grief to the point that at times, it's impossible to see the sun. And when summer brings sunny days, it breaks my heart that he can't be here with me to light up my life.

Grief enhances our senses so that the absence of light allows us to perceive our need for light. A good example came one dark and dismal day as I sat reading, a part of me dwelling on my missing child. Ever so softly, warmth

crept across my outstretched leg. I shot a glance in its direction and discovered a stream of golden sunshine. In my preoccupation, I hadn't noticed the parting clouds outside-the transformation from gloom to gleam. If I had not been sitting quietly, thinking of my child, I would have missed the gift-missed an opportunity to find joy in that brief moment when 'son-shine' paid an unexpected visit. What a blessed gift it is to remember my child with joy.

There's a scientific reason that a sunny day brings some joy and energy to our lives. Bright light makes a difference to the brain chemistry. Lack of light causes a condition called Seasonal Affective Disorder. SAD doesn't occur only in the dark winter months. If you work the night shift or you spend all day in an office, wear sunglasses outside, spend your days off in a dimly lit home you may not be getting adequate light. All the more reason to grasp at every golden moment that comes our way.

The true lifesavers in my grief journey

are those small surprising occurrences that often go unnoticed. When memories arrive on beams of joyous sunlight, I'm learning to take notice, to savor, then stock pile the simple pleasures that somehow appear in spite of heavy days. Sometimes light comes from deep within our hearts. Sometimes friends arrive with small rays of hope, guiding us through the darkest hours. Summer brings moonlit evenings, the flash of lightening across an endless sky, fireflies in a Mason jar, the beam of a flashlight piercing the darkness, yellow butterflies at the break of day; all reminders that our children were bright and full of life.

We are on a dark journey. At the same time, we are on a righteous search for light, grasping at hope wherever we find it. When gray days return and winter seems endless, remember- it's not. As grief changes, we learn to survive the darkness, believing that light lies ahead. May sunshine bless you with small, precious moments of hope and joy in the coming summer days.

## Borrowed Hope

By Eloise Cole, TCF Ireland Chapter

Lend me your hope for awhile, I seem to have mislaid mine.  
 Lost and hopeless feelings accompany me daily.  
 Pain and confusion are my companions. I know not where to turn.  
 Looking ahead to the future times  
 Does not bring forth images of renewed hope.  
 I see mirthless times, pain-filled days, and more tragedy.

Lend me your hope for awhile, I seem to have mislaid mine.  
 Hold my hand and hug me, Listen to all my ramblings.  
 I need to unleash the pain and let it tumble out.  
 Recovery seems so far and distant, The road to healing, a long and lonely one.  
 Stand by me. Offer me your presence, Your ears and your love.  
 Acknowledge my pain, it is so real and ever present.  
 I am overwhelmed with sad and conflicting thoughts.

Lend me your hope for awhile.  
 A time will come when I will heal,

### In Memoriam

John Sulick longtime  
 TCF member, supporter  
 and friend passed away  
 in Los Angeles on June  
 25th at the age of 80. We  
 will always remember  
 John's smile, his spirit of  
 volunteerism, and  
 uplifting positive  
 attitude. He is survived  
 by his Daughter Aymae  
 Sulick

We extend our most  
 heartfelt sympathies to  
 John's family.

*Every day may not be good, but there is something good in every day*

## The Classroom for Learning to Live Again

Lovingly lifted from the TCF Harrisburg Pa Newsletter—Author Unknown

Many of us are very aware of classrooms at this time of the year as the new school year begins for our children and young people of all ages.

For some, the experience is not one they look forward to with pleasure as it means the END of the carefree, unscheduled days of the summer. There was no need in their lives for continuous disciplined thinking and living. There were happy vacations, lots of swimming in a pool close to home, picnics, lots of baseball playing - all requiring lots of running and yelling; and of course the quiet lazy times when they could read about their special interests, work or hobbies, or just do nothing.

NOW - they are required to settle down into a set schedule and routine of doing what they may not especially enjoy at school in the classroom and at home. They must adjust to the confinement of sitting behind a desk for a specific time and to the need to concentrate for long periods of time - at times, on courses that are required for their education, but in which they have no special interest and which they may not even be able to

comprehend. So - they must discipline their thinking, or they will be disciplined with extra work, low or failing grades, seemingly unfair, demanding teachers and with questioning concerned parents.

We can liken this setting - somewhat - but in a much more intense way - to bereaved parents as they attempt to pick up the pieces of their lives after their child has died, and attempting to make some sense out of it all. Our happy carefree summer was the time before we experienced this most crushing loss - no matter how large or numerous our problems may have been in reality. Compared to this loss, all other problems simply fade away as if they never existed. And now, at least for a time, we are faced with the belief that there can never be any more summers. We must learn to climb out of this abyss. For those who have accomplished this, they report that this education is the most difficult work anyone will ever do.

We can imagine that we are in a classroom. Here, we are encouraged because we learn that all the other students are

bereaved parents. So, the first step upward is when we learn that we are not alone - that there are those around us who do understand, who really do know how it feels, how painful it really is. Next, we discover that there are no teachers to tell us what is right and wrong. Instead, there are guides to assure us they and others more advanced than we have also had the same thoughts and feelings - or similar ones. This assurance that we are not "cracking up" gives us the confidence we need to climb up several more steps.

At this point, we find that it is becoming easier to concentrate on at least some of the simple daily tasks such as grocery shopping or planning and preparing a meal or making a special dessert the family hasn't had for so long. Seeing their approval and appreciation gives us the power to discipline ourselves to try even harder because we see and feel that we have made a lot of progress with this "course" which we are required to "pass."

It doesn't matter if, during our most

*(Continued on page 8)*

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difficult periods, we slip back down a few steps, because by this time, we have climbed the steps of concentration and discipline, and we have the assurance that there are many hands reaching out to us and voices encouraging us - assuring us that we are almost there.

However, it is always necessary for each one of us to take each step by himself. Finally, we just know beyond the shadow of a doubt, that if others did it and they believe in us, then we can do it, too. So, no matter at what step you are in this "course" in this classroom you can receive the help, the assurance, the encouragement you may need to "graduate" so that you may

help the many others who, every day, are just beginning, are just entering this classroom. For you, the first step may be to come to our meeting where you can meet and talk with the other students who are still struggling at various levels with the same "course" that you are. Even if you don't need us, we need you.

## When Siblings Are Grieving

The Sibling Group TCF-Acadiana Chapter, LA

The sibling group of the Acadiana Chapter, Lafayette, LA has prepared a list of concerns that siblings who are grieving must cope with. These issues and suggestions are relevant not only for parents, but for family members, friends, and teachers as well.

1. Don't overprotect us. We are trying to fit back into our lives, and over-protecting us makes it harder.
2. Many feel that being stoical is being strong. Don't hide your grief from us. Show us that you grieve too, so we will come to you when we are hurting.
3. Information is important. We want to know what has happened or is happening, but we are often afraid to ask, for fear of hurting you more than you already hurt. Please give us opportunities to ask questions, and please answer our questions truthfully.
4. We often feel we are being ignored

when we are left with other people, especially when these people won't talk to us about what is going on. Parents and family members can help us when they help others to be open.

5. Grief is as individual experience. Sometimes when we are hurting badly, we need to be left alone. Please honor this need.
6. Grief is not a placid experience; it is full of ups and downs. Sometimes we're happy when you are sad, and sometimes we're sad when you are happy. Help us to accept that this is all right.
7. Advice and easy answers to difficult philosophical questions don't help. Don't tell us something just to be saying something. It's all right to tell us that you don't have all the answers.
8. Don't tell us that we won't understand when we ask questions. We understand more than you think we do.

## A Tribute

by Martha King,  
sibling TCF Concord NH

I think of you in silence  
My feelings seldom show,  
But how it hurts to lose you  
No one will ever know.

I hope there is eternal life,  
So we can meet again  
I not only lost my brother,  
I lost my very best friend.

The reason you left so early  
I'll never understand why.  
I just wish I'd known  
you were never coming back.  
'Cause I would have said good-bye.

## Missing You

Gretta Viney TCF Yakima, WA

I just can't believe it...  
The sun still rises and sets,  
The moon and stars still shine,  
The flowers still bloom, The birds still sing.  
I expected a change in everything  
I just can't believe it...  
It still gets dark and light,  
The ocean still has waves,

The rain still rains, The wind still blows,  
Is it because they do not know?  
I just can't believe it...  
I thought the world would stop  
When in my house I found  
an empty chair, a missing smile  
I thought it would stop For just a while.  
I just can't believe it...

*Grief is like weeding a flower bed in the summertime,  
you may have to do it over and over until the seasons change*



## 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 1<sup>st</sup>; Spring - March 1<sup>st</sup>; Summer - June 1<sup>st</sup>; Fall - Sept 1<sup>st</sup>

Contributor Name (this will be the name that appears in the newsletter)

Address

Phone

Mail to:

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS,  
LEHIGH VALLEY

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 to be published in.** Deadlines listed above. Late submissions will be published in the next edition

**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 gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Lehigh Valley ☐ Easton *Note: Please mail Easton gifts to the address below*

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

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## 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 & or Grandparents Names to be listed (We publish only Parents/Guardians, Grandparents and Sibling names)

**\* IMPORTANT:** If this is a information change, specify what change(s) are ( i.e. correction, sibling name addition etc...) Use another piece of paper if necessary



## THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, LEHIGH VALLEY

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Bath PA 18014

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E-mail: [tcflehighvalley@gmail.com](mailto:tcflehighvalley@gmail.com)

### **Other Local TCF Chapters and Support Groups**

**TCF Carbon County Chapter** - 1st Tuesday 7-9 pm Leaders - Dave & Lora Krum, Phone: 484-719-6753 Email: [tcfcarboncounty@gmail.com](mailto:tcfcarboncounty@gmail.com)

**TCF Easton Chapter**- 2nd Thursday 7 - 9 pm Leaders John & Maria Szabo, Phone: 610-866-5468 Email: [szabojanos1@verizon.net](mailto:szabojanos1@verizon.net)

**TCF Quakertown Chapter** - 2nd Tuesday 7:30 - 9 pm Phone: 267-380-0130, Email: [contact@tcfquakertownpa.org](mailto:contact@tcfquakertownpa.org)

**GRASP** (grief recovery after substance passing)  
Contact: Nancy Howe 484-863-4324; 484-788-9440; [nancyhowe@ymail.com](mailto:nancyhowe@ymail.com) or Jenny Kemps - 610-442-8490

## **The Compassionate Friends Credo**

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**W**e 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, 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 they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in 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 a 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 to grieve as well as to grow.

*We Need Not Walk Alone. We Are The Compassionate Friends.*