



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

PIKES PEAK CHAPTER  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



August 2016

## Upcoming Events

August 18th - Annual Balloon Memorial - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church  
September 15th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

## STEERING COMMITTEE

### CHAPTER LEADER

LARAINÉ ASARO-ANDERSON  
Son, Michael Edward Anderson

### MAILINGS & DATABASE

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL  
Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

### TREASURER

YVETTE THOMPSON  
Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR & EMAILINGS

STEWART LEVETT  
Son, Aaron Paul Levett

### SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

BOB THOMPSON  
Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

### SC MEMBER/LIBRARIAN

CHAELE CHRISTIANSON  
Son, Damon Vincent Christianson

### SC MEMBER/WELCOME PACKETS

LETA LEVETT  
Son, Aaron Paul Levett

### SC MEMBER

LEONIE CRAMER  
Son, Julian Anthony King

### SC MEMBER

DIANNE McLAUGHLIN  
Son, Kevin Hardman

## TELEPHONE FRIENDS

Any of these members may be contacted to talk about your loss:  
All telephone numbers are 719 unless otherwise indicated.

### CHAPTER LEADER

LARAINÉ ASARO-ANDERSON \* 351-7653

### DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS

STEWART & LETA LEVETT \* 531-5488

### TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON \* 573-2743

### LEUKEMIA

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL \* 282-1924

### ADULT CHILD / SUDDEN DEATH

CHAELE CHRISTIANSON \* 687-6688

### SUICIDE

LARITA ARCHIBALD 596-2575

### MULTIPLE LOSSES

LORI DARBY 464-4703

### SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

RAYE WILSON (303) 814-9478

*Please feel free to contact any of these Steering Committee members if you can not reach our Chapter Leader. \**





### *Welcome*

Our support group meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Meetings are open to the parents, grandparents and older siblings of your loved one. We meet at the **First Baptist Church** downtown at 317 E. Kiowa. We understand your pain; won't you let us help you through your grief?

**Our next meeting will be on August 18, 2016.**

The death of your child is probably the most traumatic, life-changing event that you will ever experience. The Compassionate Friends is an organization of parents who have also lost a child to death. Each of us has experienced the deep, searing pain that you are feeling now. Each of us has turned to other parents who were farther into their grief journey for guidance, support and understanding. This is done through our monthly meetings, our newsletter, our website, our Telephone Friend program, our library and our e-mail program. Each month parents find our meeting to be a safe place where they can talk about their pain and problems with others who are uniquely qualified to understand; bereaved parents offer gentle suggestions or often simply listen. We invite you to bring a friend to your first few meetings until you feel a level of comfort with the group. Do not be surprised if we talk about the happy times with our children, the wonderful memories and the various methods we have created to keep our children close to us. It is here that many bereaved parents find hope as those who are more seasoned in their grief shine the light of experience to help illuminate each grief path. We have no dues. We are self-sustaining through donations and the generosity of so many in our community.

**You Need Not Walk Alone.**

## Support Resources

### TCF Online Chat Groups:

[www.compassionatefriends.org/resources/online\\_Support.aspx](http://www.compassionatefriends.org/resources/online_Support.aspx)

- For questions, please contact Diana Jorden, 925-432-3854, who moderates the general grief and suicide loss rooms on Friday nights and Sunday. TCF online offers several specialized chat rooms, all moderated by moms who have been in chat for at least 2 years or more. We offer a sibling-only chat, loss under 1 year, loss over 2 years, loss of only child, suicide survivor, infant/pregnancy loss, and every night (and Monday mornings) there is a general loss room open to parents, step and grand, and siblings.
- You can sign up for the online TCF National newsletter at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)
- You can reach our TCF National Facebook page through the link on the same home page of our national website. You will be asked to join Facebook if you are not already a member, and we hope you'll find our Facebook page as interesting as do the more than 11,000 fans who have already found us!



The agony is great and yet I will stand it. Had I not loved so much I would not hurt so much. But goodness knows I would not want to diminish that precious love by one fraction of an ounce. I will hurt. And I will be grateful for that hurt for it bears witness to the depth of our meaning. And for that I will be eternally grateful. -

**Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross**



### **Welcome New Friends.**

Teresa Fields	Son	Jason Fields
Megan Riley	Son	Brandon Naymik
Karen Talbott	Son	Westly Cox
Terra Tice	Daughter	Raven Guinevere Hosmer
Bob & Joann Zelins	Daughter	Karey Ackerman

At nearly every meeting we welcome new members to our group, always with mixed emotions. We are glad you found us, but we are so sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain; we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief. Attending a meeting for the first two or three times takes courage, but for many it is the first real step toward healing. It may seem overwhelming, so we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become comfortable.



**Chaplain Gene Steinkirchner - CSPD**

**Chaela Christianson - In Loving Memory of Damon Vincent Christianson**

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CONTACTS**

**TCF National Office**  
**P.O. Box 3656**  
**Oak Brook, IL 60522**  
**630-990-0010 or toll free 877-969-0010**

EMAIL: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)

#### **WEBSITES:**

Pikes Peak - [www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org](http://www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org)  
Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/TCFPikesPeak>

"Our grief journeys are not about closure; they are about adjustment and staying connected."  
"The Compassionate Friends is about transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope. It takes people out of the isolation society imposes on the bereaved and lets them express their grief naturally. With the shedding of tears, healing comes. And the newly bereaved get to see people who have survived and are learning to live and love again."

**– Simon Stephens**  
**Founder of The Compassionate Friends**



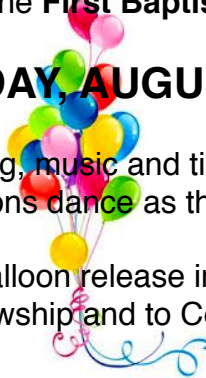
## ***Annual Memorial Balloon Release***

will be held at 7 pm in the **First Baptist Church** Parking Lot

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 18th**

Special reading, music and time to reflect,  
Watching the balloons dance as they lift into the sky.

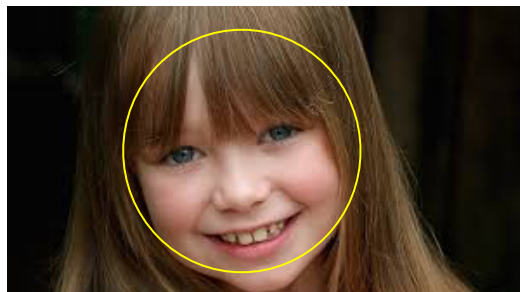
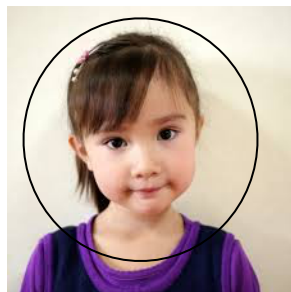
Refreshments will be served after the balloon release in our regular meeting room downstairs.  
Please join us for Fellowship and to Celebrate The Children!



## **Button, Button, We've Got Your Button!**

Hey, guess what? We have purchased a photo button making machine and we are ready to start making your picture buttons at our next meeting.

For those who would like a button made with a picture of their child, please bring your pictures to any of our monthly meetings. We will need a 3"x5" or 4"x5" photo of your child but would prefer NOT using the original photo. We suggest using Walgreens who can quickly make good copies from your original.



For best results make sure the photo of your child is centered and not too close to the edge or the results may not turn out as expected.

We are initially requesting one photo button per family to get us started. Thereafter we will be able to make additional buttons for each member of the family as time and labor allows. This is still new to us so we request that you bring two pictures just in case we make a mistake with the first one. Also, for those who have lost more than one child, we will gladly make a button for each child.



## Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays - August

<b>Child's Name</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Compassionate Friend</b>
Eric Johnson	Aug 1	Gary Johnson
Aaron Paul Levett	Aug 2	Stewart & Leta Levett
Veronika Olivia Baca	Aug 2	Sharon Baca
Genevieve Sucharski	Aug 2	Mark & Karen Sucharski
Emma Renee Younger	Aug 2	Adam & Mindy Younger
Eugene Harris, Jr.	Aug 2	Gene Harris, Tonia Paguyo, Stacey Burciago
Nicholas Clare Cousineau	Aug 3	George & Chris Cousineau
James Russell Kempa	Aug 4	Gayle Kempa
Matthew John McCallister	Aug 4	Steve & Carol McCallister
Rebekah Cano Moore	Aug 6	Janis Cano
Graham Stingley	Aug 7	Mary Winter-Stingley
Jessica Stockwell	Aug 7	Mark & Sally Stockwell
Stella Elliott	Aug 8	Donna Elliott
Kali Albern	Aug 9	Sherri Albern
Nicholas Ryan Nelson	Aug 10	Marley Nelson Rhoad
Clayton Neal Brehm	Aug 10	Ramona Atkinson
Kimberly Denise Patterson	Aug 11	Sigrid Patterson
Lisa Marie O'Briant	Aug 11	Gary & Mary O'Briant
Omar Amaya	Aug 12	Oscar & Juana Amaya
Eric Paul Deming	Aug 12	Denise Deming
Michael Williams, Jr.	Aug 13	Carmen Randall
Christopher Calegar	Aug 15	Kevin & Linda Calegar
Gina Marie Geffre	Aug 16	Joann Jahraus
Zack Orr	Aug 16	Dave & Sharon Orr
Jackson Ahrold	Aug 16	Gretchen Blenkarn, Doug & Tina Blenkarn
Adam Czyz	Aug 17	Robyn Czyz
Brandon Naymik	Aug 20	Megan Riley
Suzanne Bethany Thomas	Aug 20	Arnie & Mary Thomas
James Wiezorek	Aug 21	Mary Beringer
Susanna Jeanette Scruggs	Aug 21	Patricia Beard
Raul Garcia	Aug 21	Rena Gonzalez
Mark Anthony Hickman	Aug 22	Aundria & Dennis Casey
Mia Allyson Gardiner	Aug 22	Peri Gardiner
Abigail Ruth Smelser	Aug 23	Robin Myers
JT Tills	Aug 24	Sarah Gleeson
Lance Alan Rigby	Aug 25	Deborah Rigby
Sayge Frisco	Aug 26	Renai Frisco
Patrick Casey Hildebrand	Aug 26	Dr. Jan & Judi Hildebrand
Sheldon Pasca	Aug 26	Norma Watkins
Andrew Paul Whiteman	Aug 27	Lyle Whiteman
Mary Hope Burton	Aug 27	Jim & Betty Burton
Kevin Hardman	Aug 28	Dianne McLaughlin
Ryan Pappas	Aug 29	Susan Pappas
Matthew Medina	Aug 29	Vicki Schwindt
Nolan Edward Stites	Aug 31	Richard & Marilyn Stites





## Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries ~ August

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Tyrone Elliott Bautista	19 years	Aug 1	Rosemary Devney
Jason Bradford Pfeif	18 years	Aug 1	Chris & Brad Pfeif
Chelsey Ann Kear	15 years	Aug 5	Tami Kear
Thomas Rosenkranz	20 years	Aug 5	Carolyn Kochis
Kevin Hardman	21 years	Aug 6	Dianne McLaughlin
Sam Skaggs	10 years	Aug 7	Jennifer Skaggs
Keith Andrew Barrett	24 years	Aug 9	Ree Barrett
Brent Eads	20 years	Aug 12	Lucy Butcher
Kali Albern	20 years	Aug 15	Sherri Albern
Laura Dean	30 years	Aug 16	Barbara Dean
Andrew Paul Weaver	20 years	Aug 17	Valerie Lightbody
Nikolas Chunn	5 years	Aug 18	Monica Chunn
Derrick Shane Moore	11 years	Aug 20	Ray & Deanna Moore
Nathaniel Hughes	18 years	Aug 21	Jim Hughes
Scott Martinson	6 years	Aug 21	JoAnn Martinson
Michael Ramirez	59 years	Aug 22	Jennie Ramirez
Clayton Champion	29 years	Aug 22	Jessie & Phyllis Roark
Jose N. Camacho	9 years	Aug 24	William & Veronica Camacho
Addie Marie Vande Stouwe	23 years	Aug 25	Shawn Roberson
Sayge Frisco	1 day	Aug 26	Renai Frisco
Kimberly Elizabeth Pratt	17 years	Aug 27	Pam Bilberry
Jake Holm	19 years	Aug 27	Eric & Kalynne Holm
Nolan Edward Stites	19 years	Aug 29	Richard & Marilyn Stites



### TREASURER NEEDED

Our local chapter of Compassionate Friends will be losing its treasurer at the end of this year. Yvette Thompson, our long time Steering Committee member and current treasurer will be stepping down to pursue family interests and activities. Yvette, along with her husband Bob have been active in our chapter since the death of their son Ryan back in 2005. We wish them well on all their future adventures.

Should you have an interest in helping our chapter, feel that the time is right for you to do some stepping up and just so happen to be a whiz at balancing your check book, contact our Chapter Leader or any of the Steering Committee members to find out the duties and responsibilities needed to help keep our chapter chugging along.



## ***Love Gift Donations***

A "Love Gift" is a wonderful way to remember your child, while also helping our TCF chapter "reach out" to bereaved families. There is no charge to attend meetings, use the library, or receive the newsletter. We depend solely upon these gifts, monetary or gifts-in-kind, to support our chapter. You may choose to donate a tax deductible "Love Gift" at any time. Let us be here for the families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

Our chapter exists entirely through your donations which are tax deductible. A Love Gift is money donated to the chapter in memory of your child who has died. If you feel a Love Gift is an appropriate way to honor the memory of your child, please consider a donation, large or small. Please fill out the form located in this newsletter and mail it to the address listed. All pictures submitted will be returned unless you specify for us to keep them and place them on our Child Remembered board displayed at monthly meetings.

### **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

**\$50 or more** - Newsletter Sponsor. May include a full page for printing. Please remember to send your page "Copy Ready" as you would like to see it printed in the newsletter.

**\$0 to \$50** - A picture, if available, and dedication to be listed in the newsletter. Love Gift donations should be sent directly to our treasurer, Yvette Thompson whose address is listed on the Love Gift Donation Form. *Wouldn't you like to make a dedication to your child and help our chapter?*

**⇒ Send Love Gifts to Yvette Thompson, 5012 Rocking R Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80915 ⇒**

***Thank you for contributing and supporting the work of our local chapter!***

## **LOVE GIFT DONATION**

**Costs are rising. We need your Love Gift to support our chapter & newsletter! If you can, please help.**

I would like to make a donation ☐ in Memory of

☐ a Chapter Gift

**In loving memory of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Love Gift Donation:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Please make check payable to: The Compassionate Friends

Cut and mail this form with your Love Gift to: Yvette Thompson – 5012 Rocking R Dr. – Colorado Springs, CO 80915

**Contributor Name & Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship:** ☐ Son ☐ Daughter ☐ Grandson ☐ Granddaughter ☐ Friend ☐ Other

**Photo Enclosed:** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Photo To Be Returned:** ☐ Yes ☐ No

### **TO OUR NEW MEMBERS**

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person or just the right words that will help you in your grief or comfort you. Remember we have all been there and even though circumstances may be different we really do understand. You are not alone

### **TO OUR SEASONED MEMBERS**

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together. Each meeting the pain will not always be this bad it really does get better with wisdom. Show others that there is hope, from someone who has found it.



## HEALING WORDS

### **The Wounded Heart**

Children have preceded their parents in death for eons of time. We are not the first, nor will we be the last, to enter the realm of Bereaved Parents. But for now right now it is OUR HEARTS that are freshly wounded and OUR HEARTS in need of mending.

Wounded hearts must be allowed to mourn and lament their loss; to pour out their pain, agony, sadness, hurt, and anger; and to release their well of tears. Wounded hearts need to be wrapped in quietness, gentleness, and compassion, away from the turmoil of daily life.

A wounded heart, not allowed to mend from the depth of its agony, will be as an abscess to swell and undermine, erupting at a distant time. Or, suppressed, will slowly choke the spirit of its host. Only the bearer will know when his heart has healed.

The wounded heart, encouraged and given the time and freedom to mend, will carry in its chambers the memory and shared love of a precious child.

**Nancy Green - TCF Livonia, MI**

### **Unconditional Caring**

**By Kitty Reeve, TCF Mann/San Francisco, CA**

My son Philip died in August of 1994, when he was 26 years old. He died by suicide, influenced by a genetic illness, bipolar mood disorder (Manic Depression). I well remember how I flinched inwardly when people began referring to Philip's having "committed suicide." It seemed to diminish my wonderful son, to make him into what he never was – a kind of criminal. I wanted people to remember the beauty of his soul, yet what they focused on was the shocking way in which he died.

So it has been personally important to me to learn that TCF has made a change in the language it uses related to suicide. TCF now uses the terms "died of suicide" in all publications and presentations. The new, emotionally neutral language helps to lift the burden of stigma from all of us whose children or siblings died by suicide. It gives us strength and helps us heal.

If your child or sibling has died in one of society's less "acceptable" ways – by suicide, murder, alcoholism, from a drug overdose, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, or in prison, do know that TCF does not accept society's stigmas. There is no room for blame or condemnation when all our hearts are aching for the children we no longer have. We honor your child and your grief, no matter the cause of death.

Similarly, if you are a parent or sibling who may feel "other" in our oft judgmental society, please know that you will not be "other" in TCF. We welcome you with understanding and compassion, whatever your age, your race, your ethnicity, or lack of religion. We welcome you. And if you have endured the most terrible tragedy, if you have had more than one child or sibling die, or have lost all of your children or siblings, you are welcome.





## THOUGHTFUL POEMS

### Hidden Emotion

Hidden deep inside my breast is a longing that has been suppressed. The feeling is always there--- longing---longing to see you, to hug you, to know who you are at this time in your existence. It stays hidden for a period of time and then---when I least expect it--- rises to the surface and must be tended to.

At times I feel as if I cannot breathe, as if I will suffocate trying to suppress the pain. At other times a tear comes from nowhere and trickles down my cheek. Occasionally, something inside of me explodes, causing me to weep uncontrollably.

I can only guess what causes these unbidden emotions. Is it the song that's playing on the radio? Can it be the changing of the seasons? Do the budding trees beginning new life cause me to let down my guard? The longing never goes away.

I feel like a tight rope walker never knowing if I will make a misstep, causing me to fall into the stream of emotional pain that forces me to cry out, as I long to see you again.

With the passing of years, I have learned that if I can hang on for just a little longer, these emotions---strong as they are---will pass and I can live again with the longing hidden deep inside my breast.

**Shirley Muller**  
TCF Lafayette, IN

We are always looking for material from our chapter members to include in this newsletter. It is the perfect way to share your child, grandchild or sibling with all of us. Tell us about the special things you did in their memory or simply tell us the special things you will always remember and keep close to your heart. It is a beautiful way for us to get to know more about your loved one. It unites us as a bereaved family and it will help us all to become closer. Where there is unity, there is strength, strength that we can give to and draw from one other.

We would also welcome any book reviews. If you have read a book that has helped you on your journey please tell us about it. There are many, many grief books out there. Some will be more healing than others. It is so helpful to be guided to the right ones. Please forward any writings, poems, book reviews etc. to Stew Levett [PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com](mailto:PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com) or you may use the U.S. Mail and send it to me at 160 El Dorado Ln., Colorado Springs, CO 80919.



The Compassionate Friends  
Pikes Peak Chapter  
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Colorado Springs, CO 80949-1345

**August 2016**

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