



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**
PIKES PEAK CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



August, 2017

STEERING COMMITTEE

CHAPTER LEADER

Laraine Asaro-Anderson

Son, Michael Edward Anderson

MAILINGS & DATABASE

Jane & Steve Gabriel

Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

TREASURER

Ruby Doyle

Son, Patrick Michael Doyle

NEWSLETTER EDITOR & EMAILINGS

Stewart Levett

Son, Aaron Paul Levett

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

Chaela Christianson

Son, Damon Vincent Christianson

SC MEMBER/WELCOME PACKETS

Leta Levett

Son, Aaron Paul Levett

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

Any of these members may be contacted to talk about your loss:

CHAPTER LEADER

LARAIN ASARO-ANDERSON - 719-344-3216 *

DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS

STEWART & LETA LEVETT - 719-531-5488 *

LEUKEMIA

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL - 719-282-1924 *

ADULT CHILD / SUDDEN DEATH

CHAE LA CHRISTIANSON - 719-687-6688 *

SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

RAYE WILSON - 303-814-9478

MOTORCYCLE DEATH

STEVE SEIFERT - 719-331-6455

*Steering Committee

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 17, 2017.

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.





Seeking Contributors

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 or you may use the U.S. Mail and send it to me at 160 El Dorado Ln., Colorado Springs, CO 80919.

Button, Button, We'll Make You A Button!

We have purchased a photo button machine and we are ready to start making your picture buttons. Bring 2 copies of the SAME picture to your next meeting and we will have it ready for you the following month. THIS IS A FREE SERVICE TO YOU.

Please bring your pictures to any of our monthly meetings. We will need a 3"x5" or 4"x6" photo of your child but would prefer NOT using the original photo. We suggest using Walgreens who can quickly make good 4"x6" 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 requesting one photo button per family to get started. Thereafter we will be able to make additional buttons for each member of the family as time and labor allows. Also, for those who have lost more than one child, we will gladly make a button for each child.

ADULTS GRIEVING THE DEATH OF A SIBLING

When a sibling dies, the world changes in a heartbeat. Oftentimes when such a loss occurs, others fail to recognize that the surviving sibling faces emotional battles on many fronts while working through the loss. Largely ignored, surviving siblings are often referred to as the "forgotten mourners."

Within this group of surviving siblings is one that is unique—the adult survivor who lives away from home and is mourning the death of an adult sibling. In the case of an adult sibling, attention and words of comfort are usually aimed at the parents, spouse and children.

The Loss of History

Each family has its own special history and the shared bonds that are a part of that history. When a sibling dies, the bonds are shattered and the history forever has a void that cannot be filled.

As they grow, children develop certain characteristics and talents. Brothers and sisters tend to complement each other by developing a balance of interests in different areas. However, surviving siblings will need to redefine their roles in the absence of this relationship.

The Loss of Future

When a sibling dies, all future special occasions will be forever changed. There will be no more shared birthday celebrations, anniversaries or holidays. The sharing of life's unique and special events will never again take place.

What Adult Siblings May Expect

- Survivor guilt is normal. Siblings usually have a relationship where they seek to protect each other. Despite the physical distance that may separate them as adults, this need to have provided protection weighs heavily in the aftermath of the loss.
- Guilt about how the relationship was maintained is common. So often as adults, the sibling relationship has changed from younger years. Each travels a separate path, and sometimes communication is lacking and ambivalent feelings about maintaining the relationship surface. No matter how good a relationship may have been, the survivor often believes it should have been better.
- Anger over a new role within the family often occurs. A surviving sibling may now be the one expected to care for aging parents, and he or she may have to step into the role of guardian

(Continued on Page 9)



Welcome New Friends.

Linda Fletcher - Son, Romaine Bonsaint
Lucrecia & Joel Sjoerdsma - Daughter, Riley
Calen Winters
Lois Spangenberg - Sons, Colin Robert
Spangenberg, Nathan Luther Spangenberg
Doug & Shelli Petersen - Son, Mike Petersen
Velda Fields - Son, Clinton Boland

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.

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.

Digital Picture Frame - If you've been to one of our monthly meeting then you've noticed our large digital picture frame displaying picture of our children. Should you be interested in adding your child's picture to our display, please bring a picture to scan to our meeting or (preferred) email the picture, along with child information to Stew Levett at PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com
Pictures will be returned after they have been scanned and your child's slide completed.

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

WEBSITES:

Pikes Peak - www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org
Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/TCFPikesPeak>
National - www.compassionatefriends.org



**Chaplain Gene Steinkirchner - CSPD
Chapter Gift**

**Michaela R. Christianson
In Loving Memory of Her Son
Dameon Vincent Christianson**



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays - August

| <u>Child's Name</u> | <u>Birthday</u> | <u>Compassionate Friend</u> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|--|
| Lauren Hoover | Aug 1 | Jill & Banty Hoover |
| Eric Johnson | Aug 1 | Gary Johnson |
| Emma Renee Younger | Aug 2 | Adam & Mindy Younger |
| Veronika Olivia Baca | Aug 2 | Sharon Baca |
| Aaron Paul Levett | Aug 2 | Stewart & Leta Levett |
| Eugene Harris, Jr. | Aug 2 | Gene Harris, Tonia Paguyo, Stacey Burciago |
| Genevieve Sucharski | Aug 2 | Mark & Karen Sucharski |
| Nicholas Clare Cousineau | Aug 3 | George & Chris Cousineau |
| Matthew John McCallister | Aug 4 | Steve & Carol McCallister |
| James Russell Kempa | Aug 4 | Gayle Kempa |
| Rebekah Cano Moore | Aug 6 | Janis Cano |
| Jessica Stockwell | Aug 7 | Sally Stockwell |
| Graham Stingley | Aug 7 | Mary Winter-Stingley |
| 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 |
| Lisa Marie O'Briant | Aug 11 | Gary & Mary O'Briant |
| Kimberly Denise Patterson | Aug 11 | Sigrid Patterson |
| Eric Paul Deming | Aug 12 | Denise Deming |
| Omar Amaya | Aug 12 | Oscar & Juana Amaya |
| Michael Williams, Jr. | Aug 13 | Carmen Randall |
| Christopher Calegar | Aug 15 | Kevin & Linda Calegar |
| Zack Orr | Aug 16 | Dave & Sharon Orr |
| Jackson Ahrold | Aug 16 | Gretchen Blenkarn, Doug & Tina Blenkarn |
| Gina Marie Geffre | Aug 16 | Joann Jahraus |
| Adam Czyz | Aug 17 | Robyn Czyz |
| Santiago Ruiz | Aug 17 | Miriam Ruiz |
| Brandon Naymik | Aug 20 | Megan Riley |
| Suzanne Bethany Thomas | Aug 20 | Arnie & Mary Thomas |
| Susanna Jeanette Scruggs | Aug 21 | Patricia Beard |
| James Wieszorek | Aug 21 | Mary Beringer |
| Mia Allyson Gardiner | Aug 22 | Peri Gardiner |
| Mark Anthony Hickman | Aug 22 | Aundria & Dennis Casey |
| Abigail Ruth Smelser | Aug 23 | Robin Myers |
| JT Tills | Aug 24 | Sarah Gleeson |
| Romaine Bonsaint | Aug 24 | Linda Fletcher |



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays - August

| <u>Child's Name</u> | <u>Birthday</u> | <u>Compassionate Friend</u> |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| Lance Alan Rigby | Aug 25 | Deborah Rigby |
| Sheldon Pasca | Aug 26 | Norma Watkins |
| Patrick Casey Hildebrand | Aug 26 | Dr. Jan and Judi Hildebrand |
| Sayge Frisco | Aug 26 | Renai Frisco |
| 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 |
| Robert Yankosky | Aug 30 | Dave & Lucy Klos |
| Nolan Edward Stites | Aug 31 | Richard & Marilyn Stites |

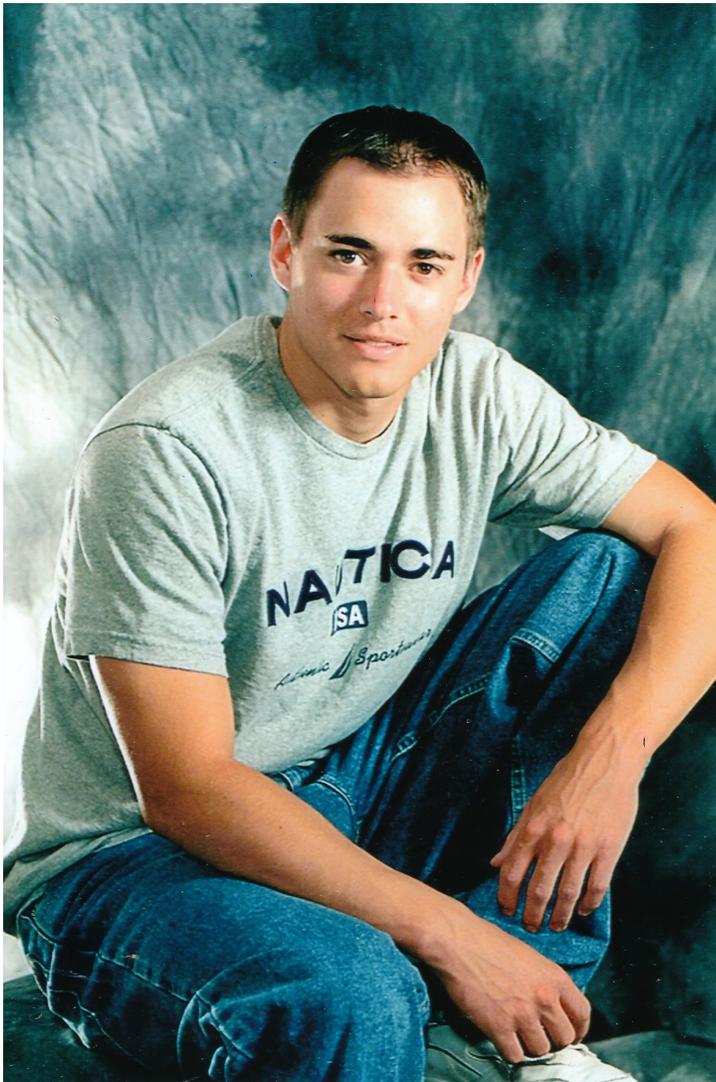
Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries - August

| <u>Child's Name</u> | <u>Forever Age</u> | <u>Date of Death</u> | <u>Compassionate Friend</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 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 |
| Jake Matthew | 18 years | Aug 15 | Malcolm Matthew |
| 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 |
| Ryan Colgrove | 30 years | Aug 21 | Theresia Colgrove |
| 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 |
| Patrick O'Grady | 17 years | Aug 24 | Elizabeth Alvar |
| Jose N. Camacho | 9 years | Aug 24 | William & Veronica Camacho |



Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries - August

| <u>Child's Name</u> | <u>Forever Age</u> | <u>Date of Death</u> | <u>Compassionate Friend</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 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 & Kalyne Holm |
| Nolan Edward Stites | 19 years | Aug 29 | Richard & Marilyn Stites |



IN LOVING MEMORY

Robert "Bobby" Yankosky

Born: August 30, 1984

Anniversary: November 21, 2016

Our 1st birthday without you. It seems unreal, but we know you are with us and also in the arms of Jesus. We love you and miss you more than we can express. Forever 32, but remembering you on your 33rd birthday.

Remembrance By:
Dave & Lucy Klos



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

A DEATH HAS OCCURRED

*A death has occurred,
and everything is changed by this event.
We are painfully aware that life
can never be the same,
that yesterday is over,
that relationships once rich have ended.
But there is another way to look upon this
truth.
If life went on the same without the presence
of the one who died,
we could only conclude that the life we here
remember
made no contribution,
filled no space,
meant nothing.
The fact that this person left behind a place
that cannot be filled
is a high tribute to this individual.
Life can be the same
after a trinket has been lost,
but never the same
after the loss
of a treasure.*

Paul Iron - TCF- Savannah, GA

Miss Me but Let Me Go

When I come to the end of the road,
And the sun has set for me,
I want no rites in a gloom-filled room,
Why cry for a soul set free.
Miss me a little, but not too long, and not with
your head bowed low.
Remember the love that we once shared,
Miss me, but let me go.
For this is a journey we all must take
And each must go alone...
It's all part of the Master's plan,
a step on the road to home.
When you are lonely and sick of heart,

Go to the friends we know;
and bury your sorrows in doing good deeds,
Miss me, but let me go.
Author Unknown

Getting Better?

Getting Better?
My tears feel warm on my cheeks now—
Not burning hot.
Is this a sign I'm "getting better"?
When I cry now I am almost often alone.
In the car, in the shower.
Or sometimes taking a walk.
I do not cry in public or feel as much panic.
Is this a sign I'm "getting better"?
I sleep the night through sometimes
And awaken without tears—for awhile.
They come now while I'm brushing my teeth.
Or making coffee
And are always gone before I say "Good
morning."
Is this a sign "I'm getting better"?
Yes, I think so—but when does the pain end?
Perhaps when I no longer ask
Is this a sign I'm "getting better"?

Shirley Blakely Curle - TCF Central Arkansas

The seasons change and people change but the
heart knows that love stays the same. What we
wouldn't give to hear "*Hey Mom and Dad,
guess what?*" We parents all have special
moments. They stop our world. And for that
moment we're with our child. We cherish the
memories and whisper.....

WE LOVE YOU.....FOREVER!

~TCF Seacoast, NH Chapter~



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 electronically scanned and added to our electronic Child Remembered "Picture Frame" displayed at monthly meetings and then returned to you.

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, Ruby Doyle 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 Ruby Doyle, 6552 Lange Drive Colorado Springs, Co 80918 ⇐
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: Ruby Doyle – 6552 Lange Dr. – Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Contributor Name & Address: _____

Relationship: Son Daughter Grandson Granddaughter Friend Other

Photo Enclosed: Yes No

Photo To Be Returned: Yes No



HEALING WORDS

ADULTS GRIEVING THE DEATH OF A SIBLING (Continued from page 2)

for nieces and nephews. Remaining family members may look to surviving siblings for guidance. All these situations are possible reasons to feel anger over a sibling's death.

- Fear of mortality. When a brother or sister dies, it is natural for the surviving sibling or siblings to look at their own lives and what their deaths would do to the family.
- Surviving siblings may find positive changes within their lives. These may include greater emotional strength, increased independence, and a soul-searching reexamination of spiritual beliefs. Some survivors feel the need to make a change in their life's work, such as becoming a therapist, or working to effect a change in the area that took the life of the sibling.
- Even when a sibling has died, a connection still remains. Surviving brothers and sisters think about them; talk about them; remember them at special times such as birthdays, holidays, and death dates; and may create a memorial of some type. This connection with the sibling who died does not have to be given up to move forward in life.

Understanding from Others

Society often encourages bereaved individuals to feel guilty for grieving too long. This failure to receive validation of their grief can cause siblings to hide their feelings, causing a type of depression with which they may struggle.

If the surviving sibling is married, stress may also be introduced into the spousal relationship. Individuals grieve differently, and the spouse may be bewildered and even unsympathetic that this loss is causing so much sorrow in their own family. This situation may provoke comments such as, "Why are you so upset? You haven't been close to your family for years." While this may sound reasonable, the emotions of grief and mourning are seldom reasonable—or even rational. Spouses may need to be told how they can be supportive. One woman simply asked her husband for a hug whenever she felt especially sad about the death of her sister.

College Students Who Lose a Sibling

Those away at college in an unstructured environment often find the death of a sibling particularly difficult at a time when they find themselves extremely stressed. This may be the first experience with death within the family,

and upon returning to college the bereaved sibling tends to find little support.

Instead of helping, these habits hinder the ability to confront the loss. Many colleges have counseling and support centers. Consideration also may be given to delaying college for a period of time, reducing stress by decreasing difficult activities, and enjoying creative pursuits that provide positive ways of releasing frustrations.

Senior Citizens Who Lose a Sibling

Too often no support or comfort is offered and the loss is not acknowledged. In reality, whether the sibling who died is nine or 90, the loss still wounds the heart. When a senior citizen is grieving the death of a sibling, their grief is oftentimes compounded by the fact that perhaps a spouse, other family member or good friend have preceded the sibling in death. This leaves a void for receiving comfort, and sharing memories with those who knew the sibling well.

Finding Support

Many siblings find help by talking with others about their brother or sister. However, even good friends can quickly become uncomfortable with the subject, often at just the point when their support is most needed.

Adult siblings (18 and older) are encouraged to attend meetings of The Compassionate Friends. A number of Chapters of The Compassionate Friends have separate sibling subgroups for 14 years of age and older. The national organization provides information through private Facebook groups, chat rooms in its Online Support Community and the national website. TCF National Conferences allow another opportunity for bereaved siblings to bond.

Often, simply finding another bereaved sibling with whom to share concerns and feelings provides a path toward healing. Adult siblings may be living in areas where no one knew their deceased brother or sister—or even of their existence. This can be painful at a time when the surviving sibling longs to share memories. When your parents die, it is said you lose your past and when your child dies you lose your future. However, when your sibling dies, you lose a part of your past, your present, and your future. Because of this tremendous loss, it is important that everyone works together to ease the path toward healing and hope.

Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly - Return Service Requested

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

Copyright © 2017 - All Rights Reserved

August 2017

The Compassionate Friends
Pikes Peak Chapter
PO Box 51345
Colorado Springs, CO 80949-1345



Annual Memorial Balloon Release

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

THURSDAY, AUGUST 17th

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.
Please join us for Fellowship and to Celebrate The Children!

