

December, 2013



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

PIKES PEAK CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



Upcoming Events

December 19th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

Pikes Peak Chapter Steering Committee

Chapter Leader

Laraine Asaro-Boyd - Acting
Son, Michael Edward Anderson

MAILINGS & DATABASE

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL
Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

TREASURER

FRANK SCHAGER
Daughter, Kira Ann Schager

NEWSLETTER EDITOR & EMAILINGS

STEWART LEVETT
Son, Aaron Paul Levett

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON
Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

SC MEMBER

LEONIE CRAMER
Son, Julian Anthony King

SC MEMBER

CHAEA CHRISTIANSON
Son, Damon Vincent Christianson

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 December 19, 2013.

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.

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

CHAPTER LEADER - ACTING

LARAIN ASARO-BOYD
Mom of Michael E. Anderson

★ 351-7653

TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON

★ 573-2743

SUICIDE

LARITA ARCHIBALD

596-2575

DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS

STEWART & LETA LEVETT

★ 531-5488

LEUKEMIA

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL

★ 282-1924

SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

RAYE WILSON

(303) 814-9478

★ Please feel free to contact any Steering Committee member if you are unable to reach our Chapter Leader.



Blue Christmas: 6 Tips for Coping with Grief During the Holidays

Ashley Davis Bush, LICSW

The rest of the world seems overjoyed with holiday spirit and yet you just want to get in bed and pull the covers over your head. You're grieving. Perhaps your loss was quite recent or maybe it occurred years ago. All you know is that you dread this time of year and cannot wait for it to be over.

While the holidays are definitely a challenge for griever, using these 6 strategies will help you feel a little less blue.

Talk about your Loved One – Don't be afraid to mention your loved one when you're at a party or with friends and family. Often people are reluctant to mention the deceased because they are afraid to 'upset' you. They don't realize that your loved one is always on your mind and that it's healthy to reminisce. Be the one to share memories and to encourage conversation.

Express your Feelings – Holding in pent up emotion is not healthy. If you want to cry, let yourself cry. If you need to express anger, write in a journal. Try creative arts to express the many feelings you're experiencing. Use on-line sites to connect with other griever and talk about your feelings. Letting yourself feel the pain and then finding expression for that pain is an important aspect to healing.

Light a Candle – Light a memorial candle at the holiday dinner table to honor the light of your loved one. Remember that although their physical form has gone, they are very much still a part of your life. Hold that love close to your heart and remember that your life has been enriched by their love.

Shop and Share – A frequent sadness for griever is not being able to shop for their loved one. Try going shopping for things that you might have purchased for your dear one and then donating those items to a homeless shelter, a hospital, or a charity.

Cut Yourself Slack – Be extremely gentle and kind to yourself. If you don't feel like going to a party, don't go. If you don't want to send cards, then don't send them. Do the absolute minimum necessary for you to celebrate the holidays. Grieving is exhausting and you simply won't have extra energy to expend. When possible, ask friends and neighbors to help you with tasks that feel overwhelming. Try to do your shopping on-line. Set your bar low and give yourself permission to take it easy.

Simple Pleasures – Even if your heart is broken, you can look for simple pleasures to savor. See if you can find one tiny thing each day for which you can be grateful. Notice your health, your loved ones who are still living, even small sensory pleasures like tastes, smells, and sounds. Try shining the focus of your attention on small things in your life that bring you some happiness.

Using these tips will help ease you through the holidays. Remember that grieving is one of the most universal of all experiences – you are not alone.



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Joshua Aaron Munkirs	Dec 1	Dana & Laura Munkirs
Robbie Rickman	Dec 1	Jean Rickman
Abraham Daniel Boukhari	Dec 2	David & Deborah Woodrow
Dwayne Stoppel	Dec 3	Pearl Stoppel
John Walther	Dec 8	Joseph Walther
Zachary Nathaniel James McClary	Dec 9	Gloria & James Olsen
Daniel J. Whisler	Dec 11	JoAnn Mowdy
Matthew Stockwell	Dec 11	Mark & Sally Stockwell
Kristen Amanda Teran	Dec 12	Donna Loughridge
Bradly Garrard	Dec 12	Sally Garrard
Rachael Samulenok	Dec 12	Megan Samulenok
Kristopher Lohrmeyer	Dec 13	Dan & Lori Lohrmeyer
Gavin Perez	Dec 14	Shannon Paolini
Noelle Pearl	Dec 15	Michelle Fleming
Chris Reiter	Dec 18	Sharon Reiter
Nathaniel Hughes	Dec 19	Jim Hughes
Timothy Patrick Shea	Dec 22	Joe & Paula Shea
Nicolas Jay Broughton	Dec 23	Rose Broughton
Katie Kennedy	Dec 23	Van & Kathy Kennedy
Trevor "T.J." Franks	Dec 24	Penny Franks
Sheri Cavin	Dec 27	Susan & Alan Cavin
Dustin Bates	Dec 27	Troy Peyton
Megan Lane	Dec 28	Sandra Gail Lane
Joshua Samuel Shelton	Dec 28	Cherie Berglund Hensley
Anthony Anselmo	Dec 28	Vicki & Frank Anselmo
Chelsey Ann Kear	Dec 29	Tami Kear
Lindsay Jean Morris	Dec 30	Linda Morris

Christmas Memories

When snowflakes dance on winter
winds
And colored lights shine Christmas
cheer,
When children's laughter fills the air
And family gathers from far and near,
I try to celebrate with them
And not let my hurting show,
But the empty spaces within my heart,
At this season, seems to grow

'Till oftentimes it fills the days
And many nighttimes too,
With aching thoughts and memories
Of Christmases I spent with you.

Yes, memories do hurt, it's true
But I have this feeling too.

I'm so glad I hold these memories,
For with them I hold part of you.
So for now I'll wipe away the tears
And join with loved ones dear
To celebrate this Christmas time,

For I know that, in my heart, you're
here.

Arden Lansing
TCF Monmouth County, NJ



Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Mia Allyson Gardiner	16 years	Dec 4	Peri Gardiner
Eric Sutton Skinner	19 years	Dec 4	David & Gail Skinner
Lisa Marie O'Briant	22 years	Dec 5	Gary & Mary O'Briant
Renee Lee Seiberlich	1 year	Dec 5	Joe & Leda Seiberlich
Jackson Ahrold	9 years	Dec 12	Doug, Tina & Gretchen Blenkarn
Marc Darby	12 years	Dec 12	Lori & Steve Darby
Joseph Gentry Richardson	1 year	Dec 13	Miriam Gentry
Isaac Sartain	12 years	Dec 14	Gregory Sartain
Logan Riley		Dec 17	Heather Claypool
Ember Maria Arthur	30 years	Dec 17	Jeanette Newville
Samuel Hesselberg	17 years	Dec 18	Steve & Leanne Hesselberg
Audrina Elyse Escano	18 years	Dec 20	Chris & Christina Pearson
Anthony Anselmo	22 years	Dec 21	Vicki & Frank Anselmo
Tyler Glicker	19 years	Dec 22	Ginger Jones
Patrick Niedringhaus	18 years	Dec 22	Leah & Dave Niedringhaus
Robbie Rickman	21 years	Dec 25	Jean Rickman
Henry Rael	37 years	Dec 26	Maria Rael, Isabelle & Ron Rael
Henry Rio	37 years	Dec 26	Isabelle & Ed Rio
Chris Reiter	28 years	Dec 27	Sharon Reiter
Kristen Amanda Teran	23 years	Dec 28	Donna Loughridge
Ariel Allen	3 years	Dec 29	Judy Allen
Rebekah Cano Moore	20 years	Dec 29	Janis Cano
Brian Jensen	28 years	Dec 29	Deborah Jensen
Mary Hope Burton	7 years	Dec 30	Jim & Betty Burton
Julian King	21 years	Dec 31	Carl Reese & Leonie Cramer
Matthew Flint	26 years	Dec 31	Cathy Flint
Michael Zwirlein	25 years	Dec 31	Chris Zwirlein

ONE LITTLE CANDLE

I lit a candle tonight, in honor of you
Remembering your life, and all the times we'd been
through.

Such a small little light the candle made
until I realized how much in darkness it lit the way.

All the tears I've cried in all my grief and pain
what a garden they grew, watered with human rain

I sometimes can't see beyond the moment, in hopeless
despair

But then your memory sustains me, in heartaches repair.

I can wait for the tomorrow, when my sorrows ease
Until then, I'll light this candle, and let my memories run
free.

~written by Sheila Simmons, Dallas, GA
In Memory of Steven Simmons
3-24-70 - 10-19-99



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
National - www.compassionatefriends.org

Online Support

The Compassionate Friends offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship.

The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. Please check the schedule for dates and times of the sessions.

Note: Times posted on the schedule are based upon Eastern Time.

www.compassionatefriends.org

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, Frank Schager 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 Frank Schager, 2235 McArthur Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80909** ⇒

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: Frank Schager – 2235 McArthur Ave – Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Contributor Name & Address: _____

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

Photo Enclosed: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Photo To Be Returned: ☐ Yes ☐ No



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

Holidays in Heaven

The Holiday Season is just not the same,
A smile is missing when saying one name.

For parents who've lost a daughter or son,
Nothing can bring back the delightful fun,
Of watching them talk, laugh, or just run.

The memories are all that we do have now,
We do go on.....only God knows how.

A New Year comes as midnight arrives,
Our Angels still a big part of our lives.

If only we could trade the presents we receive,
For one more day with those whom we grieve!

But nothing can bring back our beloved child,
The one that laughed, cried, and often smiled.

They are together in a much better place,
Watching us cry.....touching our face!

Although we miss them on Holidays to share,
Be assured their loving presence fills the air,
At home, in church, at New York's Times Square!

So celebrating the Holidays are now hard to do,
But always remember they are thinking of you too,

Wishing you happiness and showing their love,
Not on this Earth, but from Heaven above!

-Dan Bryl, Lawrenceville, GA TCF
In Memory of his daughter, Jessica

Santa Lost a Child

You can see it in his eyes.
There's a spot of deep dark wisdom there.
Behind the krinkling brightly twinkling
hides the tender sadness of a long lost love.

Santa lost his only child.
You can see it in his hands.
They are soft and sure when he holds a young first
born.
They are folded firmly with respect when he counsels
an only on what the future may bring.

Santa lost a daughter.
You can see it in how he is with girls.
He beams bright with glee as he beholds the princess
in each,
the pretty one who will live long ... and healthy ...
and happily ever after.
May theirs be the dreams that come true.

It was well before the days of yore
when Santa was just a mortal man,
when his soulmate Jess could bear but a single child,
when that child blossomed into a practically perfect
little girl,
when that cherished little girl had just turned nine.
That's when the illness took its wretched hold
and reduced her to a wisp.
And, on a cold gray day, she blew away in the wind.

Santa lost a child, his only child,
his darling daughter, the love of his life.
Now you know why Santa and his wife forsook the
mortal world.
And now you know why Santa loves every child as if
each were his very own.

Used by Permission
R.M. Mebane





HEALING WORDS

While searching for articles, poems and writings for this months issue I came across information about a campaign started this year in the United Kingdom which I thought was just terrific called "Say Their Name At Christmas." Here is an excerpt from the article I read and a link to the short film mentioned. S.L. - Editor

SAY THEIR NAME AT CHRISTMAS

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS (TCF), the charity that supports families after the death of a child, is launching a campaign under the banner "SAY THEIR NAME AT CHRISTMAS."

The campaign coincides with TCF awareness week, starting on December 1st and culminating with a Worldwide Candle Lighting Ceremony on December 8th. And it is supported by the charity's wonderful new short film, also entitled "SAY THEIR NAME", which highlights the problems parents and siblings face after the death of a child, whatever their age, and the help and support they have found from THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.

"Christmas is one of the most difficult times for any family that is grieving for the child that was such a vibrant part of their lives," says Shaun Hewitt, TCF trustee and participant in the film. "The conflict between pressure to celebrate and the pain of missing someone so special at this time can be unbearable."

Other things that bereaved families struggle with at this time of the year are insensitive Christmas cards, with messages such as "Have a great Christmas" with no mention of the person who has died or the difficulties the family are experiencing. And family get-togethers, office parties etc where there is tremendous pressure to be festive. These things are all much more manageable if some understanding of the situation is shown to the bereaved person.

The vast majority of families who have lost a child keep that person with them for the rest of their lives and need to have them acknowledged, especially at Christmas. But in our culture talking about a young person who has died is one of the last taboos. Despite best intentions, many people do not know what to say and a common reaction is to say nothing at all. But that is the worst thing and leaves many bereaved families feeling isolated.

So please if you know someone who has lost a child or young person, don't be frightened to "SAY THEIR NAME AT CHRISTMAS." And make sure they know about THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, where they can find ongoing help and support in the years to come.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GS9z3dwMhZs>



**Pikes Peak Chapter
The Compassionate Friends**



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Pikes Peak Chapter
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Colorado Springs, CO 80949-1345**

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