

February, 2014



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

PIKES PEAK CHAPTER  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



## Upcoming Events

February 20th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

March 20th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

### Pikes Peak Chapter Steering Committee

**Chapter Leader - Acting**  
LARAIN ASARO-ANDERSON  
Son, Michael Edward Anderson

**MAILINGS & DATABASE**  
JANE & STEVE GABRIEL  
Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

**SECRETARY**  
LEONIE CRAMER  
Son, Julian Anthony King

**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/FACILITATOR**  
CHAEA CHRISTIANSON  
Son, Damon Vincent Christianson

**SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR**  
LETA LEVETT  
Son, Aaron Paul Levett

## 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 February 20, 2014.**

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-ANDERSON 351-7653  
Mom of Michael E. Anderson

### TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS ★

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON 573-2743

### ADULT CHILD / SUDDEN DEATH ★

CHAEA CHRISTIANSON 687-6688

### SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT ★

RAYE WILSON (303) 814-9478

### DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS ★

STEWART & LETA LEVETT 531-5488

### LEUKEMIA ★

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL 282-1924

### SUICIDE

LARITA ARCHIBALD 596-2575



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



**LOVE  
GIFTS**

Sheila Slade  
in loving memory of her daughter  
***Karen-Jean Slade***

**LOVE  
GIFTS**

Betty Stiegelmeier  
in loving memory of her son  
***James Craig Stiegelmeyer***

**LOVE  
GIFTS**

Chaela Christianson  
in loving memory of her son  
***Damon Vincent Christianson***

**LOVE  
GIFTS**

Jean Young  
in loving memory of  
***Michael J. Waller***

**LOVE  
GIFTS**

Chaplain Gene Steinkirchner

***Karen-Jean Slade***

*February 2, 1950 ~ February 7, 1980*



This month's newsletter is sponsored in the memory of  
Karen-Jean Slade by her loving mother Sheila.

**Bits and Pieces of Grief**

"I can only bite off chunks of grief in bits and pieces. How else would I manage to get out of bed?" ~Desire' Aguirre

As with a four-course dinner, we must take our grief in small bites. The totality of our loss, the shattering of our psyche and the horrific blow to our brains is just too much to absorb at one time. Shock is nature's cushion. When shock subsides, our reality is a physical pain, an ache from deep inside that radiates throughout our bodies. Once this subsides, we endure the emotional agony and the kick in the gut that comes unannounced.

This quotation is very profound for both the newly bereaved and those of us who are much farther down the road of grief. The loss of our child will be the single most defining factor in our lives. However, if we do our grief work and all that this entails, we will eventually arrive at something akin to a new normal. Life will never be the same. We will never be the same. But we carry our children forward with us in our hearts and minds, imagining all that could have been and accepting that these things are no longer meant to be.

I have managed to find a serenity and a purpose in my life, yet the thrill of living is not the peaks, the sadness is not the valleys. Life now is "steady as you go." My compassion for others is almost automatic now, my understanding of the macro perspective of life is deeper and wider than ever before. I

acknowledge that there is much to be learned on this journey. But it is a painful education.

Annette Mennen Baldwin - TCF Katy, TX  
In Memory of my son, Todd Mennen



## Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
James R. Hurst	Feb 1	Kim Troeger
Ian Matthew Anderson	Feb 2	Joann & David Butler
Karen-Jean Slade	Feb 2	Sheila Slade
Kent Curtis Junglen	Feb 3	James Junglen
Stephen Merle Schmoker	Feb 5	Shirley & Ralph Greer
Michael William Sarmento	Feb 7	Donna (Sarmiento) Pugh
Kimberley Dawn Leir	Feb 8	Adaline & Herb Leir - TCF Regina Chapter
Tyler Glicker	Feb 8	Ginger Jones
Samuel Hesselberg	Feb 9	Steve & Leanne Hesselberg
Ryan Rickman	Feb 11	Jean Rickman
Lindsay Yvonne Davis	Feb 11	Susan & Jerry Davis
Jay Aguanno	Feb 12	Jean Aguanno
Claire Palmer	Feb 12	Jo & Lawrence Palmer
Kevin Edward Farley	Feb 15	Elizabeth Farley
Gary Carlson	Feb 15	Phil & Rose Carlson
Ember Maria Arthur	Feb 16	Jeanette Newville
Aaron Steffens	Feb 16	Lynn Nickel
Alyssa Eck	Feb 17	Patricia Eck
Zachary Dean Glenn	Feb 18	Kristin & Larry Glenn /Janice Bren
Chance Tyler Nichols	Feb 19	Charlie Nichols
Kendall Ford Young	Feb 20	Ford & Ann Young
Nikolas Chunn	Feb 21	Monica Chunn
Michelle Sandra Seal	Feb 23	Walter & Diana Seal
Jade Skye Baxter	Feb 24	Steven Baxter
Darrell Lewis Mitchell	Feb 27	George & Freda Mitchell
Fred Chavez	Feb 27	Annette Atchison
Michael Ramirez	Feb 27	Jennie Ramirez
Ariel Allen	Feb 28	Judy Allen
Jason Lamb	Feb 28	Jan Lyons-Lamb

### Death of a child

Death of a child can take the form of a loss in infancy such as miscarriage or stillbirth or neonatal death, SIDS, or the death of an older child. In most cases, parents find the grief almost unbearably devastating, and it tends to hold greater risk factors than any other loss. This loss also bears a lifelong process: one does not get 'over' the death but instead must assimilate and live with it.

Intervention and comforting support can make all the difference to the survival of a parent in this type of grief but the risk factors are great and may include family breakup or suicide.

Feelings of guilt, whether legitimate or not, are pervasive, and the dependent nature of the relationship disposes parents to a variety of problems as they seek to cope with this great loss. Parents who suffer miscarriage or a regretful or coerced abortion may experience resentment towards others who experience successful pregnancies. Because of the intensity of grief emotions, irrational decisions are often made. Source; *Wikipedia*



## Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Paul A. Behr	2 monthas	Feb 1	Cynthia & Steve Behr
James Craig Stieglmeyer	25 years	Feb 2	Betty Stieglmeyer
Craig Matthews	30 years	Feb 4	Cathy Genato
Scott Michael Gerwatowski	21 years	Feb 4	Linda Gerwatowski
James R. Hurst	5 days	Feb 5	Kim Troeger
Jaclyn Williams	14 years	Feb 6	Sandy & Rob Williams
Tristan Millman Troeger	25 years	Feb 7	Lisa & Joel Millman
Karen-Jean Slade	30 years	Feb 7	Sheila Slade
Jade Skye Baxter	1 year	Feb 9	Steven Baxter
Patrick Casey Hildebrand	21 years	Feb 9	Dr. Jan & Judi Hildebrand
Darrell Lewis Mitchell	20 years	Feb 9	George & Freda Mitchell
Yancy Hufford	26 years	Feb 11	Patty & Larry Hufford
Steven Miller	17 years	Feb 11	Mike Miller
Amy Feight	30 years	Feb 12	Patty & Bill Feight
Noelle Pearl	17 years	Feb 13	Michelle Fleming
Peter Joseph Noel	20 years	Feb 16	Janet Noel Starritt
Eric Cowles	3 months	Feb 17	Doug & Leah Cowles
Alyssa Eck	1 day	Feb 17	Patricia Eck
Stella Elliott	6 months	Feb 17	Donna Elliott
Kent Curtis Junglen	31 years	Feb 18	James Junglen
Graham Stingley	23 years	Feb 18	Mary Winter-Stingley
Logan Lawrence	23 years	Feb 22	Janet & Edward Lawrence
Kirsten Evelyn Cornell	9 years	Feb 23	Will & Marion Cornell
Marisa Nicole Pilant	2 years	Feb 23	Stephen & Julie Pilant /Richard & Elizabeth Jamison
Joshua Samuel Shelton	8 weeks	Feb 24	Cherie Berglund Henley
Reanna Maria Reedy	21 years	Feb 25	Carol Reedy
Jeremy Laurence	25 years	Feb 26	Ted & Sherrill Laurence
Sean Thompson	24 years	Feb 26	Rick Korcsog & Frankie Thompson
Richard Joseph Armstrong	4 years	Feb 27	Chuck & Helen Armstrong

Each person's

*grief journey*

is as *unique* as

a fingerprint or a snowflake.

~ Earl Grollman







## 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)  
National - [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://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](http://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, 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



## THOUGHTFUL POEMS

### First Encounter

~ by Sascha

When grief first enters our life,  
it tends to invade us –  
completely and relentlessly.  
We are without comfort, we do not feel pleasure,  
we find no joy.  
We ache in mind and body.  
We feel weak and numb.  
in the deepest core of our being,  
we are ready to accept  
that we will never know happiness again.  
What's more, we feel that this state  
is entirely appropriate, natural and irreversible.  
Nothing can convince us that,  
given time,  
we can learn to live again.

But we will.

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### *Borrowed Hope*

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,  
And I will end my renewed hope to others.

— Eloise Cole, TCF Ireland Chapter

### TO MY HUSBAND

My love, these past few months  
Seem to have paralyzed us In pain and anguish,  
And I know, in that state,  
The flow of communication becomes stilted.  
The love we are and share, Is forever, Darling.  
But I realize that you have felt,  
As have I, a separateness in our grief.  
It's all right, you know, Dear;  
I guess it is the nature of a loss so devastating

That no matter how we try to comfort one another  
Along the strange path of grieving  
We sometimes feel so alone.  
We have done marvelously; we, my love,  
Talked, cried, remembered our son  
With tears and smiles.  
I know we will laugh again, My dearest beloved.  
We will laugh again — I promise.  
By Molly Murphy ~ TCF, Winnipeg, Canada

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**THE  
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## HEALING WORDS

### The Hurt and Hope of Spring

POSTED ON [APRIL 19, 2013](#) BY [BETTIE-JEANNE](#)

*The month that my RobynApril was partially named for.....*

*When I posted on our **Compassionate Friends East of the River CT GROUP** Facebook wall about Spring – Help or Hurt- I was surprised by the responses. I had told an 87 year old friend of mine, who has been counting the seconds to embrace the full arrival of SPRINGTIME, that for many, many bereaved people, SPRING brings not only April Showers, but a Tsunami of Painful Reminders of What Is No Longer. But the only two responses on Facebook were from those who, too, embrace Spring's Light....*

DO YOU FIND SPRING MORE PAINFUL? THE AWAKENING AND REBIRTH OF NATURE, OF THE EARTH?  
DOES IT TUG AT YOUR HEART OR DOES IT GIVE YOU A SENSE OF HOPE AND LIGHTNESS?  
WHERE ARE YOUR EMOTIONS AS SPRING MOVES IN?

*I feel refreshed with the new birth and growth going on around us. Working in my yard is therapeutic for me and I talk to [my daughter] while out there. My neighbors may think I've lost it, but that's ok.*



*Spring I believe has a photogenic reaction with our bodies; when we embrace the rite of spring and rebirth and feel the sun and the longer lingering hours of light... it feels good because it does feel good; when we appreciate something our bodies release feel good chemicals that neurologically responds to an act of kindness and we feel good. Our body is so brilliant, we need to listen more to its input in our survival from trauma, from loss and with everyday living. Listen to your gut, its probably right.*

#### **Compassion:**

Compassion is such an easy word, yet it is not at all easy to achieve. Compassion means suspending one's own critical and advisory inclinations to help someone. Compassion is leaving oneself outside. Compassion is not approval.

What the other person may need is often not at all what the compassionate helper believes to be helpful. The helper may want to give advice, or talk about himself/herself. What the griever needs, however, may well be a listener, a focused attention on the griever and on the loss the griever sustained.

Often, compassion means not doing something – listening rather than speaking, crying rather than comforting with words.

Compassion is not an easy task, but it is among the greatest gifts we can give each other.

-Sascha



Did I offer peace today? Did I bring a smile to someone's face? Did I say words of healing? Did I let go of my anger and resentment? Did I forgive? Did I love? These are the real questions. I must trust that the little bit of love that I sow now will be many fruits, here in this world and the life to come.

Henri Nouwen

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**February, 2014**

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



**Pikes Peak Chapter  
The Compassionate Friends**