



June, 2018

STEERING COMMITTEE

CHAPTER LEADER
Currently Open

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

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR
Ron Agee
Daughter, Melody Victoria Agee

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS STEWART & LETA LEVETT - 719-531-5488 *

LEUKEMIA
JANE & STEVE GABRIEL - 719-282-1924 *

ADULT CHILD / SUDDEN DEATH
CHAELA 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 June 21, 2018.

The death of your child is probably the most traumatic, life-changing event that you will ever The Compassionate Friends is an experience. 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.







We are One, Forever Bonded

It was Father's Day 2011. It had only been 14 weeks since our youngest son Tony had drowned in our swimming pool at home in Savannah, Georgia. I can remember sitting on the back porch in a rocking chair looking out over the yard, the trees, the bird feeders, and the tall grass of my unmown yard, waving in the easterly breeze. This was in stark contrast to the well-manicured #16 fairway of the Magnolia Golf Course that our house abutted. THAT Father's Day meant nothing. I felt I was a failure as a father ... for I had, somehow, in some way, allowed one of my brood to die.

For many years, I dreaded Father's Day. It's not because my other two children didn't celebrate me or make me feel very awesomely special on THAT day, but because it had lost the significance of coming together for one day a year, with ALL of my children that I fathered. A 100% attendance to show the love, devotion, and admiration of ME. DAD. POP. PAPA BEAR. OLD MAN.

I used to enjoy their stories about me and how they perceived me in their growing, youthful, innocent years. It was laughingly obvious my recollections of their stories and events were not as they remembered. There were many hearty laughs and, on some occasions, raised eyebrows as secrets of past "adventures" finally came to light. Now, there I am...14 weeks after the death of one of my children. Saddened beyond description. Broken deep within. I felt like a failure. I was a failure.

I couldn't do Father's Day for several years after that. I just wanted to be left alone, with no one making a fuss over me; the father who had not done his job. I had failed one of my children; therefore, I was not deserving of any celebration or accolades from my other son and daughter. I simply wanted Father's Day, the second Sunday of the month of June, to come and go without anyone reminding me that I had only been two-thirds successful at Fatherhood; 67% may be great in baseball, but not at being a great dad.

It is now seven years later and I'm in a different place, emotionally, spiritually, and even physically, then I was in 2011. I now find myself thinking of Father's Day as a special time to remember Tony and to continue to share his stories, as my son and daughter continue to share their stories and memories (as well as wishes and hopes) of me.

I find it extremely difficult to still "celebrate" on that day, but I now find it enjoyable that my grown son and daughter still come to our house and show a special kind of love on a special kind of day. But, it is still not without a tear being shed. In my mind, my family circle is still fractured. A third of my children is no longer with us. I find it difficult with the things I say or react to towards the other two children. I do not want to slight them in anyway. I still love them dearly, but I still love and miss their brother so terribly much.

So, for THIS Father's Day, June 14, 2018, I no longer dread but I look forward to it. I do want to see my older son and daughter on that day, and I do look forward to their hugs and their expressions of love, but I do not intend for it to be, nor want it to be, a celebration. Yes, I am a father. Yes, I have three children. And yes, I will always have three children. As I watch Tony's brother and sister grow older and wiser and more settled into their midlife routines and raise their own children, I do feel a sense of accomplishment and pride to call myself their Father and a Grandfather to their children! I love each one separately and dearly. But for Tony, my third and youngest offspring--forever 29--I'll always have that tinge of failure and sadness on Father's Day. To use a line from a Kenny Chesney song, "I wonder what he'd be today."

I am a Father. I am forever a bereaved Father, on a journey of grief that I know will last until my last breath. So, Father's Day, every year hence, will be a bittersweet day for me. Happy to see my son and daughter in their ever-changing family trials and tribulations, but in the same breath, still thinking of what could've been and should've been stories of Tony's maturity in life, his family, and his purpose.

Just as each of us grieve differently than our wives, and just as each of us dads grieve different from each other, I acknowledge that Father's Day across the nation, in all the different households of our many compassionate friends, Father's Day will be different ... different perspectives of reflection, lost-love, and grief.

For the grieving fathers of our wonderful TCF family, I wish to extend love, light, and the hope for renewed happiness this Father's Day 2018. Let us never forget the child that is no longer with us. May all of you be warmed by the memories of good times, laughter, expressions of love, smiles, and the gleam in their eyes. As Darcy Sims once said, "It's not how they died, it's how they lived."

God bless every Father out there who knows what I'm talking about. I am you and you are me. We are one, forever bonded. If you come to this year's conference in St. Louis, July 27-29, be sure to find me and share a hug. Tony's Papa Bear

Mark Rambis







Welcome New Friends.

Julieanna Bala - Chris Keenan, Brother

Pia Schalin - Daniel Mopper, Son

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 - <u>www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org</u> Facebook - <u>https://www.facebook.com/</u> <u>TCFPikesPeak</u>

National - www.compassionatefriends.org



Carol and Dan Manning in memory of Kyle Joe Manning

Lorretta Chancellor in memory of Carl and Jay Simco

Chaela Christianson in memory of Damon Christianson

The Hill family in memory of Kyle Curtis Hill

Dwight (Ike) Schneider in memory of Janelle L Abate



OK to crv.

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Dad makes it his mission to show other fathers it's OK to grieve

Kelly Farley dreamed of being a dad. But after his dreams of fatherhood ended in two agonizing pregnancy losses, he buried his grief deep down and tried to be strong for his wife.

That worked — until it all came crashing down.

"I found myself not being able to get out of bed," Farley says, his voice deep and scratchy over the phone. "I kind of went into a tailspin. I was not able to run from it anymore."

Since then, for more than 10 years, Farley has dedicated himself to letting other dads know that it's OK to grieve. In fact, it just might save your life.

"I thought I needed to be a pillar of strength, to help my wife. 'Don't cry, that's a sign of weakness.' You're taught that as a kid and you believe it," Farley said. "The loss of a child is the most profound thing. People will say, 'How's your wife doing?' No one asks your wife how you are doing."

"It can eat you alive," he added. Farley created a website called GrievingDads.com, where he's created a safe space for men to pour out their hearts and get support. He also wrote a book, "Grieving Dads: To the Brink and Back."

What brought Farley back from the brink was a casual remark from a lay leader at his church. Farley spoke to the man about his grief after losing both his son and his daughter in pregnancy, and the man replied, "That's a heavy load, brother."

Those five words meant the world to Farley. It was the first time someone he really respected acknowledged his pain and loss, and indicated to him that it was OK to mourn.

As Farley notes, men often feel like they need permission to show emotion and vulnerability. "I know that sounds so simple, but for me it was confirmation that it was OK for a guy to tell another guy about the pain he was feeling," Farley said. He started going to support groups. He started talking about his pain. And only then did he start to feel better. "I made a commitment to myself that I was going to do something to help other guys," Farley said. He publishes his personal phone number on his website, and he still gets calls in the middle of the night from anguished fathers — sometimes, he can only hear sobs

"I don't say things like, 'Things will get better," Farley said. "I say, 'Things CAN get better." Farley notes that there's not much difference in the way moms and dads feel when they lose a child — for any parent, the grief is a black hole. But there's a big difference in the way men and women are expected to handle that emotion. "We're taught to be the protectors of the family. So you feel, 'I let them down.' There's this shame and guilt."

on the other end of the line. He tells them it's

Father's Day is hard, just like any significant anniversary or holiday. For Farley, who has no surviving children, seeing happy posts from friends on social media can hurt. It's a challenging day, and he just tries to get through it.

Yet, over time and through his work to help other fathers, Farley has seen a glimmer of hope. Ten years ago, he says, he might have felt only pain on Father's Day. But now when he thinks of his children — daughter Katie and son Noah — it also brings him joy, along with the pain.

"The darkness is so profound. Everything I do every single day is to make sure my children are proud of me," Farley said. "Now, when I think of them, I smile."

Taken from GRIEVINGDADS.com





Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays - June

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Child's Name	Birthday	Compassionate Friend
Jacob Foreman	Jun 1	Jan Foreman
Benjamin Stewart Easton	Jun 3	Susan Stewart
Madalynn Ann Bergevin	Jun 3	Mollie Bergevin
Paul Kovacevic	Jun 3	Mary Kovacevic
Jake Matthew	Jun 5	Malcolm Matthew
Renee Lee Seiberlich	Jun 6	Joe & Leda Seiberlich
John Doles	Jun 6	James & Susan Appleman
Douglas Chadwick, Jr.	Jun 6	Deborah Chadwick
Tyler Schmidt	Jun 6	Valerie & Jeff Schmidt
Mindy Baker	Jun 10	Terri Baker
Sandra Steckiel	Jun 10	Beth Steckiel
Clinton Boland	Jun 13	Velda Fields
Yancy Hufford	Jun 13	Patty Hufford
Matthew Flint	Jun 14	Cathy Flint
Andrea Mischel	Jun 14	Gary & Jerri Zimmerman
Jessica Robison	Jun 14	Terri Robison
Carl Simco	Jun 14	Loretta Chancellor
Daniel Prickett	Jun 14	Jim & Elaine Prickett
Gryphen Barber	Jun 16	Sean & Cherie Barledge
Forrest Kelly	Jun 16	Cindy Bronner
Nathan Gentry	Jun 16	Susan Gentry
Giorgiana Elizabeth Gordillo	Jun 16	Jennifer Gordillo
Jason Bradford Pfeif	Jun 17	Chris and Brad Pfeif
Laura Dean	Jun 17	Barbara Dean
Chris Barns	Jun 17	Bonnie Barns
Michael Jeffery Micke	Jun 18	Alice Micke
Jay William Sheridan	Jun 18	Mary & Tim Sheridan
Jim Eley	Jun 19	Judith Eley
Jeanne Burroughs Widmar	Jun 20	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Richard McShan	Jun 20	Paul & Angelika McShan
Dennis Lynn Gerringer	Jun 21	Kim Gerringer
Robert Beynon	Jun 25	Donna Beynon
Kyleigh Peltzer	Jun 26	Ashleigh Peltzer
Kirsten Evelyn Cornell	Jun 26	Will & Marion Cornell
Noah R. Wilkerson	Jun 26	Sarah Wilkerson
Amy Feight	Jun 27	Patty & Bill Feight
Jimmy Schmidt	Jun 28	Jim & Laurie Schmidt
Jason Nathanial Lurch	Jun 28	Kathleen & John Lurch
James Bishara	Jun 28	Phebe Bishara
Mike Petersen	Jun 30	Doug & Shelli Petersen





Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries - June

Child's Name	Age	Anniversary	Compassionate Friend
Evan Carara	18 years	Jun 2	Cindy & J.D. Carara
Madalynn Ann Bergevin	1 day	Jun 3	Mollie Bergevin
Billy E. Hendrickson	19 years	Jun 3	Grace & Delbert Hendrickson
Colin Robert Spangenberg	31 years	Jun 3	Lois Spangenberg
Aaron Steffens	36 years	Jun 5	Lynn Nickel
Sean O'Connor	20 years	Jun 5	Dennis & Tracy O'Connor
Anton "Andy" George Horn	13 years	Jun 6	Levi & Emma Horn
Mindy Baker	41 years	Jun 7	Terri Baker
Robert (Robby) George, Jr.	48 years	Jun 7	Robert & Margaret George
Ashley Meston	14 years	Jun 7	Jerry Meston
Sarah Ness	24 years	Jun 8	Mary Ness
Jon Van Pelt	21 years	Jun 8	Claudette Van Pelt
Nicole Johnson	34 years	Jun 10	Sherry Turner
Sandra Steckiel	4 days	Jun 13	Beth Steckiel
Arthur Lipphardt Jr	24 years	Jun 15	Art & Chris Lipphardt
Austin Sutton	22 years	Jun 15	Labe & Jenny Sutton
Gryphen Barber	1 day	Jun 16	Sean & Cherie Barledge
Erica Lynn Groat	26 years	Jun 16	Linda Groat
Ryan Sayers	20 years	Jun 16	Tom & Kate Sayers
Bruce White	16 years	Jun 16	Gordon White
Scott White	12 years	Jun 16	Gordon White
Megan White	15 years	Jun 16	Gordon White
Vinnie Franz	18 years	Jun 17	Barb Franz
Michael Jeffery Micke	1 day	Jun 18	Alice Micke
Giorgiana Elizabeth	4 days	Jun 19	Jennifer Gordillo
Sara Hernandez	21 years	Jun 19	Kathy Hernandez
Kyle Lyon	31 years	Jun 19	Tami Lyon
Kyle Joe Manning	11 years	Jun 19	Carol & Don Manning
Abbi Rose Starzynski	2 years	Jun 20	Sherry Starzynski
Tucker Ray Graef	14 years	Jun 21	Kathy Graef
Nicholle Guy	14 years	Jun 22	Lezlee Guy
Daniel Prickett	32 years	Jun 22	Jim & Elaine Prickett
Karen Sue Crawford	16 years	Jun 23	Joy Andrews
Anthony Paul Gratton	35 years	Jun 24	Luci Abrahamson
James Michael Burroughs	43 years	Jun 24	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Andrea Mischel	30 years	Jun 25	Gary & Jerri Zimmerman
Jay Simco	58 years	Jun 26	Loretta Chancellor
Nickolas Robert Vingren	3 years	Jun 26	Dale Vingren
Daniel J. Whisler	38 years	Jun 27	JoAnn Mowdy
Tyler Joseph Budfuloski	2 years	Jun 28	Rob & Alice Budfuloski
Anthony James "Tony" Pisor	25 years	Jun 28	Cynthia Pisor-Zapel
Stephen Lucas Tyler	19 years	Jun 28	Catherine Tyler
Kade Riefenberg	19 years	Jun 29	Andy Gibson
Liam N. McDougal Lasher	11 years	Jun 29	Ashley Snyder
Kimberly Ann Hayes	22 years	Jun 30	Patty and Patrick Hayes
Nick Naples	17 years	Jun 30	Laurie Naples
Colby McCarley	17 years	Jun 30	Tami Sisneros
Noah R. Wilkerson	5 days	Jun 30	Sarah Wilkerson





THOUGHTFUL POEMS

IN LOVING MEMORY OF OUR SON, AUSTIN

3/20/95 - 6/15/17

We will never forget that Thursday in June When you were taken from us far too soon. Time seemed to stand still, and in shock we stood, We would turn back time, if only we could!

Panic, anguish, and a searing pain A grief so intense felt again and again!
We cried as we shook our heads in disbelief
And held to each other for comfort in our grief.

"How could this happen?" we cried out loud, We will never, ever understand, we vowed! Our lives were shattered, and our world torn apart Oh, how will we survive with this pain in our heart?

There was so much to do in those very first days And we floated through that time in a foggy haze. When the day came to honor your life Oh, how we tried, with pain as sharp as a knife!

Hundreds came, and as people arrived We heard over and over how you had touched their lives.

It brought such comfort as we always knew What a special boy into a young man you grew.

Now days and months go by in a blur We remember and miss so much how things were! How much we miss your smiling face Your jokes, your laughter, your sauntering pace.

You are never out of our daily thoughts, Where the warm memories connect from dot to dot. We search the night's sky for some sort of sign, That you are with Jesus and doing just fine.

We have faith that you are in Heaven, happy and whole.

And to feel that within ourselves is our personal goal. So, until we see you again, Dear Son, We will hold you tenderly in our hearts ... until our lives here are done.

FOREVER LOVED AND SADLY MISSED Mom, Dad, and Sister Amanda

Jenny Sutton - TCF, Colorado Springs

A TRIBUTE

I think you in silence, But my feelings seldom show, But how it hurts to lose you Know 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.

Marta King TCF, Concorde, NH

No words I write can ever say,

Missing You

How much I miss you every day.
As time goes by the loneliness grows,
How I miss you, nobody knows!
I think of you in silence, I often speak your name.
But all I have are memories and photos in a frame.
No one knows my sorrow. No one sees me weep.
But the love I have for you,
Is in my heart to keep.
I've never stopped loving you—I know I never will.
Deep inside my heart, you are with me still.
Heartaches in this world are many,
But mine is worse than any.
My heart still aches as I whisper low,
"I love you and I miss you so."

The things we feel so deeply, are often the hardest things to say.

But I just can't keep quiet any more, so I'll tell you anyway.

There is a place in my heart, that no one else can fill. I love you so, my precious girl And I always will.

~ Author unknown - TCF Facebook Page







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.

TCF asks for donations in memory of our children who have died.

Our chapter is funded solely through donations; therefore we sincerely appreciate your support. Your generosity helps us send newsletters, purchase brochures and cover the many expenses to help grieving families in our community. All donations are tax deductible. You and your child's name will be noted in the next newsletter. Workplace "Matching Gift" programs can increase your donation by 50-100%. Please help us help others by making a LOVE GIFT today.

Seasons

Renee Little TCF, Fort Collins, CO

The change of seasons is difficult. It reminds me that I must change if I am to live again. We can become stuck in our grief, full of self-pity and overwhelmed with pain. I do not believe our children would want us to live the rest of our lives in pain and misery. It is so easy to fall into the "black pit" and never have the strength or courage to crawl out - because crawl out we must - on our bellies.

We are different now, with different priorities and goals. We must find a new purpose for going on, and we must accept the changes in our lives including ourselves, for we are different now. We cannot go backward, though there are times we yearn to. We must go forward. If we don't, we stay stuck at the point our world changed. I used to say "ended." Change is difficult. To accept the loss of our child is the most difficult of all. Our comfort comes from believing that the love we share will go on for all eternity and that we will be reunited again - and each day brings us closer. We must learn to live again, love again, feel joy and peace again - or our survival will be without value to ourselves or others.





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.

\$25 up to \$50 - A picture, if available, and dedication to be listed in the newsletter.

\$0 up to \$25 - A Love Gift acknowledgement. All 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!





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

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