November, 2013



# **Upcoming Events**

November 21st - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church December 8th - World Wide Candle Lighting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church 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**

CHAELA 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 November 21, 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** 

LARAINE ASARO-BOYD Mom of Michael E. 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

SUICIDE

LARITA ARCHIBALD 596-2575 SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

**RAYE WILSON** (303) 814-9478

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



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS PIKES PEAK CHAPTER

Supporting Family After a Child Dies





We are quickly approaching December and with it our annual Worldwide Candle Lighting.

The date this year is December 8th and once again will be held in the sanctuary of the First Baptist Church at 7:00 p.m.

Now is a good time to look through your photos to submit for our slide show. Old slides may be updated or a new one created for your child. More information about this special event will be forthcoming in next months newsletter or you may write to me should you have any questions at <a href="mailto:PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com">PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com</a>.

Stew Levett - Editor

# PIKES PEAK TCF CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE

Once again we request that you contact us to have your child's slide included in our memorial. Slides from previous years may be used again this year or you may submit new photos. Please limit your photos to (3) three along with a short dedication so everything will be viewable on the slide. Please remember, the better the photo you submit, the better your dedication will look. Prior years' submissions will be read as a dedication if we don't hear back from you.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS SAT., NOV. 30th, 2013 To see a short sample of our Candlelight Service, go to this YouTube link: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8g4uTWPbGCI">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8g4uTWPbGCI</a>



# **Worldwide Candle Lighting**

Held annually the second Sunday in December, this year December 8, 2013, The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age from any cause. As candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual wave of light, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

Your Name				
Your Address				
Your Phone				
Child's Name As You'd Like it to Appear				
Cause of Death (Optional)				
Child's Birthdate				
Child's Memorial Date				
Number of Pictures Included				
Dedication				
		_		
Please create my slide with info	ormation and pictures provided.			
Please use last year's slide	Please return pictures when finished			





# Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Robert Howie	Nov 1	Annette Howie
Rebecca Ann Reynolds	Nov 1	Ken & Barbara Reynolds
Chloe Faith Gafford	Nov 3	Brian & Jocelyn Gafford
Patrcia Elliott	Nov 4	Connie & Dave Elliott
Carlos Martinez	Nov 6	Vicki Struckle & Marilyn Martinez
Michael Keeney	Nov 6	Charlotte Keeney
Kristie Diaz	Nov 7	Julie Diaz
Nicole Johnson	Nov 7	Sherry Turner
Vinnie Franz	Nov 8	Barb Franz
McKenzie Boutin	Nov 9	Colleen Boutin
Kimberly Ann Hayes	Nov 10	Patty & Patrick Hayes
Judy Gambill	Nov 13	Andrea Gambill
Colin Peter Baerman	Nov 14	Paul & Kerry Baerman
Eric Cowles	Nov 15	Doug & Leah Cowles
Shannon Diane McMahon	Nov 17	Robert & Jeanette McMahon
Joshua W. Lewis Gohlke	Nov 19	Karen Swank
Travis Grimmer	Nov 20	Mary Lou Grimmer
Richard "Richie" Petras	Nov 21	Richard Petras
Leah Ann Trutna	Nov 22	Steve & Phyllis Trutna
Evan Carara	Nov 22	Cindy & J.D. Carara
Branden Howland	Nov 23	Julianne Howland
Patrick Roger Pennington	Nov 24	Roger & Joan Pennington
Savannah L. Burke	Nov 25	Herman & April Burke
Danae Lynne Marie Mannon	Nov 26	Colleen & Art Mannon
Mark Van Matre	Nov 27	Patricia Van Matre
Jalynn Cameron	Nov 28	Jessica Cameron
Michael Christopher Rushmore	Nov 28	Bob & Carol Rushmore
Paul A. Behr	Nov 29	Cynthia & Steve Behr

# WE HAVE A WEBSITE!



We now have a web presence which will allow newly bereaved parents to view information about our local chapter, our activities, donation options with much more planned for the future.

To visit our web page please load into your browser <a href="https://www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org">www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org</a> or hit the link as displayed here.

We hope that many won't need to find us but it is comforting to know we are there if they do.





# Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Michael Williams Greist	12 years	Nov 1	Judy Greist
Jaden Alexander Founds	1 month	Nov 3	Kimberly Founds
Chloe Faith Gafford	1 day	Nov 3	Brian & Jocelyn Gafford
Justin William Winner	13 years	Nov 5	Dale & Rosanne Winner
Ayla Amaya Sanchez	5 years	Nov 7	Jennifer Sanchez
Scott David Stiegelmeyer	21 years	Nov 7	Betty Stiegelmeyer
Seth Fieser	9 months	Nov 8	Megan Fieser
Dwayne Stoppel	45 years	Nov 8	Pearl Stoppel
Alexander Pegler	3 years	Nov 9	Eric & Lisa Pegler
Emma Renee Younger	3 months	Nov 9	Adam & Mindy Younger
Robert Howie	12 days	Nov 12	Annette Howie
Mike Mozo	27 years	Nov 12	Valerie Kirchhofer
Steven Warren	23 years	Nov 17	Linda & Mark Warren
Michael Keeney	45 years	Nov 18	Charlotte Keeney
Stephen Merle Schmoker	39 years	Nov 19	Shirley & Ralph Greer
Tyler Schmidt	23 years	Nov 20	Valerie & Jeff Schmidt
Aaron Lee Gallob	28 years	Nov 21	Lou & Erma Gallob
Susanna Jeanette Scruggs	23 years	Nov 22	Patricia Beard
Joseph Michael Chavez	29 years	Nov 22	Herman & Patty Chavez
Tommy Kinslow	20 years	Nov 22	Pam Kinslow
Conri Lee Barber	8 months	Nov 23	Sean Barber & Cherie Barledge
Kimberly Benson	16 years	Nov 24	Debbie Diekman
Wade Lehman	19 years	Nov 24	Lori Lehman
Jonathan Ell-Duncan	17 years	Nov 25	Dan & Becky Duncan
Frankie Padilla	18 years	Nov 27	Frances Lucero
Michael Ornelas	2 months	Nov 27	Annette & Chris Ornelas
Adriano Bermudez	19 years	Nov 29	C.J. LaPointe
Sheldon Pasca	20 years	Nov 30	Norma Watkins

# A VETERANS DAY STORY

My lead flight attendant came to me and said, "We have an H.R. On this flight." (H.R. Stands for human remains.)

"Are they military?" I asked.

'Yes', she said.

'Is there an escort?' I asked.

'Yes, I already assigned him a seat'.

'Would you please tell him to come to the flight deck. You can board him early," I said..

A short while later, a young army sergeant entered the flight deck. He was the image of the perfectly dressed soldier. He introduced himself and I asked him about his soldier. CONTINUED ON PAGE 8





# **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> National - <u>www.compassionatefriends.org</u>

# **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

# YOU'RE STILL HERE

At the finest level of my being,
You're still with me.
We still look at each other,
At that level beyond sight.
We talk and laugh with each other,
In a place beyond words.
We still touch each other,
On a level beyond touch.
We share time together in a place
Where time stands still.
We are still together,
On a level called Love.
But I cry alone for you,
In a place called reality.

By Richard Lepinsky - Boise, ID TCF

# Please Ask

Someone asked me about you today. It's been so long since anyone has done that. It felt so good to talk about you, to share my memories of you, to simply say your name out loud. She asked me if I minded talking about what happened to you or would it be too painful to speak of it. I told her I think of it every day and speaking about it helps me to release the tormented thoughts whirling around in my head. She said she never realized the pain would last this long. She apologized for not asking sooner. I told her, "Thanks for asking." I don't know if it was curiosity or concern that made her ask,

But told her, "Please do it again sometime — soon."

- Barbara Taylor Hudson - Tiffin, OH TCF

# **Humor For the Day**

One Saturday morning a man came to our door. He introduced himself as he stared at the floor. He said he had news that was not easy to share So we'd better go in and get out of the air.

Once inside, I noticed his hand had a slight shake. It looked like whatever this news was, it made his heart ache. The news that he brought was what all parents dread, It was that, of our two sons, the youngest was dead.

At first we just sat there in stunned disbelief, Unable to breath or even think about grief. Our hearts were broken; never again to be the same. For into our lives had come a sorrowful rain.

Humor was now a thing of the past. Something this hurt was sure to outlast. The Proverb says, "A merry heart doeth good..." But we couldn't imagine how anything could.

Oh time did move on, but at a very slow pace, But soon, memories of our son began to take his place. Now some of those memories were happy ones, for sure. And remembering them seemed to act as a cure.

So could it be that the Proverb is true? That a merry heart really is good for you? We remember a boy with a smile on his face, A smile that no one could ever replace.

Now I hope you have heard every word I have spoken, And not taken them lightly, as some sort of token. For truer words I have never expressed, As this myth against humor I now put to rest.

So, please listen now, as I have something to say, Without a little humor, we'd not make it through the day.

TCF - Greenville, SC

# A Winter Thought

As snow covers the earth with its whiteness and coldness, so grief has covered our hearts and taken away the brightness and warmth of our hopes and dreams. As the snow protects the earth from too much cold, so our grief insulates us from feeling too much too soon. We are only part way through the winter of our grief, each of us at a different place in our journey. For some of us, the snow has begun to melt, our grief has begun to ebb a little, so that we can feel some warmth, see some color, hear some music returning to our hearts and homes. We remember our loved ones, our losses, and the changes that have come unbidden as we make our way through Winter, steadfastly toward Spring.

~Mary A. Miller, TCF – Lindstrom, MN





# HEALING WORDS

# A FORGIVING THANKSGIVING

By: Jim Hobbs - Bereaved Father, Denton, Texas

Thanksgiving was always an easy holiday. Unlike Christmas, there was no pressure of giving just the right gift! Thanksgiving Day brought family gatherings and good food. Late on those afternoons, we would return home full from over-eating and satisfied that our family relationships were intact. It was also a day that reminded us of everything for which we were thankful.

We are supposed to be thankful for our health, our families, our comfortable life, etc. The death of a child changes our perceptions, however. When the family now gathers around the Thanksgiving table, I now see a missing plate that no one else sees. When our nieces and nephews are laughing or crying. I hear a voice that no one else hears. When a family member recounts a story about something his or her child did last week. I wish for a story to tell. (Of course, when I say no one else, I exclude my wife and daughter. I'm sure they see, hear and wish what I do, although probably at different times.)

We still have much to be thankful for, we bereaved parents; and we should remember that. But now Thanksgiving Day has an additional observance for us, too, doesn't it? It is a day of forgiveness, also. We must forgive others who cannot acknowledge the missing child, for whatever reasons. If family and friends cannot understand us, then we must try to understand them, especially on holidays.

If we can exhibit tolerance, forgiveness, and understanding on a day on which we offer thanks, we can climb another step on our ladder to recovery.

I hope you have a forgiving Thanksgiving.

Lovingly lifted from the Boca Raton, FL. TCF Newsletter

# Thanksgiving

You may ask, "What do I have to be thankful for now that my child is dead?" After the death of a child, where is the joy in a day off from work? What pleasure can we derive from sitting around a table when someone is missing, and an uttered prayer of thanksgiving echoes hollow in our hearts?

Maybe we have been concentrating on the loss which has brought the overwhelming sorrow of death, and have forgotten the complete joy of life. When I remember laughing brown eyes, a mischievous grin, a scraped knee that Mommy could fix, a new word learned, even the memory of the realization that I had a baby boy, I have a great deal to be thankful for. I had 1 1/2 years of a dream come true, and I'm truly thankful I had my child.

Sure, the agony of grief, the anguish of losing my precious child to death, the torture of wanting to see that child grow and mature and the pain of never knowing, rips me up.

There is no Thanksgiving in entertaining these thoughts, so this month I am going to concentrate on the Living of my child, the Life that brought me so much joy. In this I am thankful that Evan was born, thankful that he lived, thankful that even for those short 30 months—I lived them too. Even so, as he lived once, I live now and want a productive life. I am thankful I have come that far in my grief work to know I want to live and remember the good times without sorrow. And, I am thankful for my husband, who stood by me during the rough times. The husband who is the father of the child of our love. In him I have found my child, in our marriage I have found love, and that love taught us how to love that child. I am also thankful for you, my real friends-Compassionate Friends.

Edie Kaplan, TCF Ft. Lauderdale, FL ~ In Memory of my son, Evan





#### A VETERANS DAY STORY - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

The escorts of these fallen soldiers talk about them as if they are still alive and still with us. 'My soldier is on his way back to Virginia,' he said. He proceeded to answer my questions, but offered no words.

I asked him if there was anything I could do for him and he said no. I told him that he had the toughest job in the military and that I appreciated the work that he does for the families of our fallen soldiers. The first officer and I got up out of our seats to shake his hand. He left the flight deck to find his seat.

We completed our preflight checks, pushed back and performed an uneventful departure. About 30 minutes into our flight I received a call from the lead flight attendant in the cabin.

'I just found out the family of the soldier we are carrying, is also on board', she said. She then proceeded to tell me that the father, mother, wife and 2-year old daughter were escorting their son, husband, and father home. The family was upset because they were unable to see the container that the soldier was in before we left.

We were on our way to a major hub at which the family was going to wait four hours for the connecting flight home to Virginia. The father of the soldier told the flight attendant that knowing his son was below him in the cargo compartment and being unable to see him was too much for him and the family to bear. He had asked the flight attendant if there was anything that could be done to allow them to see him upon our arrival. The family wanted to be outside by the cargo door to watch the soldier being taken off the airplane.

I could hear the desperation in the flight attendants voice when she asked me if there was anything I could do. 'I'm on it', I said. I told her that I would get back to her.

Airborne communication with my company normally occurs in the form of e-mail like messages. I decided to bypass this system and contact my flight dispatcher directly on a secondary radio. There is a radio operator in the operations control center who connects you to the telephone of the dispatcher. I was in direct contact with the dispatcher. I explained the situation I had on board with the family and what it was the family wanted. He said he understood and that he would get back to me.

Two hours went by and I had not heard from the dispatcher. We were going to get busy soon and I needed to know what to tell the family. I sent a text message asking for an update. I Saved the return message from the dispatcher and the following is the text:

'Captain, sorry it has taken so long to get back to you. There is policy on this now and I had to check on a few things. Upon your arrival a dedicated escort team will meet the aircraft. The team will escort the family to the ramp and plane side. A van will be used to load the remains with a secondary van for the family.

The family will be taken to their departure area and escorted into the terminal where the remains can be seen on the ramp. It is a private area for the family only. When the connecting aircraft arrives, the family will be escorted onto the ramp and plane side to watch the remains being loaded for the final leg home.

Captain, most of us here in flight control are veterans.. Please pass our condolences on to the family. Thanks.

I sent a message back telling flight control thanks for a good job. I printed out the message and gave it to the lead flight attendant to pass on to the father. The lead flight attendant was very thankful and told me, 'You have no idea how much this will mean to them.' CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



# $\mathsf{THE}$ **IPASSIONATE**



# A VETERANS DAY STORY - CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Things started getting busy for the descent, approach and landing. After landing, we cleared the runway and taxied to the ramp area. The ramp is huge with 15 gates on either side of the alleyway. It is always a busy area with aircraft maneuvering every which way to enter and exit. When we entered the ramp and checked in with the ramp controller, we were told that all traffic was being held for us.

'There is a team in place to meet the aircraft', we were told. It looked like it was all coming together, then I realized that once we turned the seat belt sign off, everyone would stand up at once and delay the family from getting off the airplane. As we approached our gate, I asked the copilot to tell the ramp controller we were going to stop short of the gate to make an announcement to the passengers. He did that and the ramp controller said, 'Take your time.'

I stopped the aircraft and set the parking brake. I pushed the public address button and said, 'Ladies and gentleman, this is your Captain speaking I have stopped short of our gate to make a special announcement. We have a passenger on board who deserves our honor and respect. His Name is Private XXXXXX, a soldier who recently lost his life. Private XXXXXX is under your feet in the cargo hold. Escorting him today is Army Sergeant XXXXXXX. Also, on board are his father, mother, wife, and daughter. Your entire flight crew is asking for all passengers to remain in their seats to allow the family to exit the aircraft first. Thank you.'

We continued the turn to the gate, came to a stop and started our shutdown procedures. A couple of minutes later I opened the cockpit door. I found the two forward flight attendants crying, something you just do not see. I was told that after we came to a stop, every passenger on the aircraft stayed in their seats, waiting for the family to exit the aircraft.

When the family got up and gathered their things, a passenger slowly started to clap his hands. Moments later more passengers joined in and soon the entire aircraft was clapping. Words of 'God Bless You', I'm sorry, thank you, be proud, and other kind words were uttered to the family as they made their way down the aisle and out of the airplane.

They were escorted down to the ramp to finally be with their loved one.

Many of the passengers disembarking thanked me for the announcement I had made. They were just words, I told them, I could say them over and over again, but nothing I say will bring back that brave soldier.

I respectfully ask that all of you reflect on this event and the sacrifices that millions of our men and women have made to ensure our freedom and safety in these United States of America .

This story was sent to me on FACEBOOK on Veterans Day. I included it because it seems appropriate. Stew Levett - Editor



# Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly - Return Service Requested

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

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The Compassionate Friends Pikes Peak Chapter PO Box 51345

November, 2013



Pikes Peak Chapter
The Compassionate Friends