



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

June, 2009

Our newsletter and meetings would not be possible if it weren't for the kindness of the staff and volunteers at the **First Baptist Church of Colorado Springs**. We would like to thank them for their ongoing support of our Chapter by providing a meeting place every month and printing of our newsletters.



UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE	EVENT Topic of the Month	WHERE
June 18 7 pm	General Meeting Father's Day	First Baptist Church
June 21 All Day	Father's Day	Across the United States
July 16 7 pm	General Meeting Open Sharing	First Baptist Church



Welcome!

To those of you who are newly bereaved and receiving our newsletter for the first time, we warmly welcome you to The Compassionate Friends of the Pikes Peak Region.

We are other parents who have experienced the death of a child at any age and offer understanding and support through our monthly meetings and activities throughout the year.

Father's Day Issue

We often hide our feelings or fail to show our true emotion. We don't cry, at least we didn't until that day. Now there doesn't seem to be a day that goes by that we don't.

OUR TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

CHAPTER LEADER	LARAIN ANDERSON	351-7653
INFANT LOSS	COLLEEN & ART MANNON	535-9868
TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS	BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON	573-2743
LEUKEMIA	JANE & STEVE GABRIEL	282-1924
TEEN / YOUNG ADULT LOSS	BARB REYNOLDS	599-0772
SUICIDE	LARITA ARCHIBALD	596-2575
DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS	STEWART & LETA LEVETT	531-5488
SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT	RAYE WILSON	(303) 814-9478

Have you borrowed any books from our lending library? If so, please return them when you have completed reading them. If you found the books of some value, others may find

comfort in them as well. By returning borrowed items, you will help our Chapter keep its operating expenses to a minimum.

THANK YOU

This issue of our The Compassionate Friends newsletter will be the final "hardcopy" issue unless you have made prior arrangements with us. If you have been forwarded our newsletter or have been given a printed copy, you may request to be put on our distribution list by emailing Stewart Levett at Stewart@ArchangelGifts.com or Jane & Steve Gabriel at jsgabriel@pcisys.net.



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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:

*National - www.compassionatefriends.org
Colorado Springs - www.tcfcolorado.org/coloradosprings*

Do you have a poem or a prayer, story or picture that you would like to share? We welcome your contributions to our newsletter whether original or something you may have read. If submitting something you've read or know is copyrighted material, you must obtain written permission from the author prior to us going to publication. Please address any submissions to:

**Stew Levett
160 El Dorado Lane
Colorado Springs, CO 80919**

Or write to: stewlevett@msn.com

Submissions need to be received by the 10th of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter. Thank you.

A Father Mourns Too

I just watched another TV commercial for cologne, which is the first sign of the approach of Father's Day. Like other fathers, I know the gift I'd like to get this Father's Day, just as I know there is no way that it will happen--my son's life, an opportunity not to hurt when I see boys who are his age, a chance to dream those dreams for that little boy again. But that's not going to happen. Instead I will get up on that day, having called my own father the night before to wish him a happy Father's Day, and I will go to the cemetery to place flowers on my son's grave. I will stand alone and cry for a time and then return home to my wife and new infant son. This year we will have a greater measure of peace because of the birth of our son, but I shall always have a hole in my soul, a longing that I know I will have until I die.

Like many bereaved fathers, I have felt misunderstood about how a father should mourn and for how long. I do not understand how a society can

have such a belief in the strength of maternal love and do such a good job ignoring the intensity of paternal love. From the people whose only question at my son's memorial service was how was my wife dealing with this tragedy, to the longtime friend who didn't understand my choking up after watching a Hallmark commercial, it seems that many around us have difficulty understanding a father's grief

So, support and love is needed and needed badly. Of course, we have Compassionate Friends, but something more personal and closer to home is needed. I hope that bereaved fathers will not be forgotten on Father's Day. It is often said that we don't often talk of our emotional needs and are reluctant to show our pain, but we too need love when we hurt. Please remember us on Father's Day and remember that the cute little commercials that hurt mothers in May take their toll on fathers in June.

Doug Hughes - TCF Las Vegas, NV



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REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN ON THEIR BIRTHDAYS

On the advice of the TCF national office, we are only including the month and date – not year – of birthdays and anniversary dates.



<u>Child's Name</u> <u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u> <u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Parent /</u> <u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Benjamin Stewart Easton 22 years	Jun 3 Jul 28	Car accident	Susan Stewart
Madalynn Ann Bergevin 1 day	Jun 3 Jun 3	Unknown	Mollie Bergevin
John Doles 29 years	Jun 6 Sep 30	Sniper	James & Susan Appleman
Renee Lee Seiberlich 2 years	Jun 6 Dec 5	Reyes Syndrome	Joe & Leda Seiberlich
Tyler Schmidt 23 years	Jun 6 Nov 20	Fentanyl Intoxication	Valerie & Jeff Schmidt
Sandra Steckiel 4 days	Jun 10 Jun 13	Premature	Beth Steckiel
Yancy Hufford 27 years	Jun 13 Feb 11		Patty & Larry Hufford
Andrea Mischel 30 years	Jun 14 Jun 25	Cancer	Gary & Jerri Zimmerman
Jessica Robison 18 years	Jun 14 Mar 3	Car accident	Terri Robison
Jason Bradford Pfeif 18 years	Jun 17 Aug 1	Drowning	Chris and Brad Pfeif
Jim Eley 44 years	Jun 19 Jan 19	Flu symptoms	Judy Eley
Jeanne Burroughs Widmar 33 years	Jun 20 Jul 18	Cancer	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Dennis Lynn Gerringe 17 years	Jun 21 Apr 16	Car crash - drunk driver	Kim Gerringe
Patrick Clabeau 21 years	Jun 23 Jan 4	Car accident	Vince & Lori Clabeau
Robert Beynon 28 years	Jun 25 Sep 18	Cancer	Bill & Donna Beynon
Kirsten Evelyn Cornell 10 years	Jun 26 Feb 23	Catastrophic cardiac event	Will & Marion Cornell
Scott David Stieglmeyer 21 years	Jun 27 Nov 7	Cystic fibrosis	Betty Stieglmeyer
Jason Nathaniel Lurch 24 years	Jun 28 May 15	Murder	Kathleen & John Lurch
James Bishara 20 years	Jun 28 Apr 27	Lymphoma	Phebe Bishara
Jimmy Schmidt 13 years	Jun 28 Jul 30	Leukemia	Jim & Laurie Schmidt



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REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN ON THEIR ANNIVERSARIES



<u>Child's Name</u> <u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u> <u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Parent /</u> <u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Evan Carara 19 years	Nov 22 Jun 2	Car accident	Cindy & J.D. Carara
Billy E. Hendrickson 19 years	Mar 22 Jun 3	Cancer	Grace & Delbert Hendrickson
Madalynn Ann Bergevin 1 day	Jun 3 Jun 3	Unknown	Mollie Bergevin
Konrad Ferrar 20 years	May 31 Jun 4		Maria Hymes
Matthew Sperry 35 years	Nov 6 Jun 5	Bike / car accident	Harriet Sperry
Sean O'Connor 20 years	Jan 28 Jun 5	Car accident	Dennis & Tracy O'Connor
Anton George Horn 14 years	Sep 10 Jun 6	Ped / auto accident	Levi & Emma Horn
Sandra Steckiel 4 days	Jun 10 Jun 13	Premature	Beth Steckiel
Arthur Lipphardt Jr 25 years	Jul 23 Jun 15	Motorbike Accident	Art & Chris Lipphardt
Ryan Sayers 21 years	Jul 20 Jun 16	Lightning strike	Tom & Kate Sayers
Vinnie Franz 19 years	Nov 8 Jun 17	Accidental drug overdose	Barb Franz
Andrew Evan Neely 2 months	Apr 13 Jun 18	Spinal Muscular Atrophy	Tamara Noble
Kyle Joe Manning 12 years	Jul 7 Jun 19	Hurlers Syndrome	Carol & Don Manning
Jackie Sanchez 23 years	Sep 9 Jun 21	Lupus	Mary Sanchez
Tucker Ray Graef 15 years	Oct 10 Jun 21	Drowning	Kathy Graef
Nicholle Guy 15 years	Sep 11 Jun 22	Car accident	Lezlee Guy
Karen Sue Crawford 17 years	Jul 4 Jun 23	Cancer	Joy Andrews
James Michael Burroughs 44 years	Sep 29 Jun 24	Cancer	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Andrea Mischel 30 years	Jun 14 Jun 25	Cancer	Gary & Jerri Zimmerman
Tyler Joseph Budfuloski 3 years	Oct 23 Jun 28	Sudden Unexplained Death	Rob & Alice Budfuloski
Anthony James Pisor 26 years	Jul 10 Jun 28	Surgery complications	Cynthia Pisor-Zapel
Kimberly Ann Hayes 23 years	Nov 10 Jun 30	Amniotic Fluid Embolism	Patty and Patrick Hayes



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What My Child Taught Me

Since I've lost my child, I've learned how petty we can become; lose your child and you may find out what really matters in life. It is so much easier, and certainly more gratifying to turn the other cheek. Let others be the ones caught up in the B.S. and be the nit-pickers. I'm better than that. Share your love; what goes around, comes around. I probably would never have told friends how much I love and appreciate them prior to my child dying. There is no better time than the present. We're not guaranteed tomorrow. Do what's important. Think about what really matters and do it. Forget the trivial things or those that don't matter. Learn to set boundaries that do matter. Blue hair? So what, it will grow out. Tough love can't be too tough. Save your child at all costs. Your position in life doesn't mount to a hill of beans. Death is the great equalizer and taps equally regardless of who you are. Life isn't fair; why else did my child die?

I believe I've become a better person since my child died, at least I now try every day.

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

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 meetings will be June 18th and July 16th.

It is often difficult to attend your first meeting, but those who do find an atmosphere of support from other parents who understand a parent's grief. Nothing is asked of you; there are no fees; you do not have to speak a word if you do not care to. If you are more comfortable bringing a friend or relative along with you, please do.

Many find these meetings help them to heal; and together we learn to live with our loss. We learn that **we need not walk alone.**

Love Gift Donations

Our chapter exists entirely through your donations which are tax deductible. Our largest expense is the printing and mailing of this newsletter, which is distributed to over 325 readers. Love Gifts enable us to continue our outreach to bereaved parents through our many chapter activities. A Love Gift is money donated to the chapter in memory of a 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 in "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.

These items must be received by the 10th of the month preceding the issue in which you would like them to appear. Love Gift donations should be sent directly to our treasurer, Frank Schager whose address is listed on the Love Gift Donation form.

LOVE GIFT DONATION

Your Name _____

Child's Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Anniversary Date _____

Dedication _____

Picture Enclosed: YES NO

Mail to:
Frank Schager
2235 McArthur Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO 80909



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COME ON, DAD!

The sun's shining, not a cloud to be seen
A day made in Heaven, isn't it keen?
Wow, can you believe such a glorious sight,
A dream come true, a fantasy delight!
Dad! Hey, Dad! Something's not right.
Mom's upstairs crying, Did you have a fight?
No one is laughing or having any fun.
Dad, what's wrong? Is it something I've done?
Come on, Dad, this is your day.
Get up, get going, come on and play.
Why are you sitting and staring at space?
I'm here, Dad! Can't you see I'm right here?
I'm here in your heart, isn't it clear?
I'm here in your thoughts and all that you do.
I've never been gone from any of you.
Our love lives forever. It won't go away.
That's why we'll always share this day.
Put on a smile, not an ugly ole frown.
Come on, Dad...Don't let me down!
Enjoy your day. Share it with me.
Laugh and love our whole family.
I'm here, Dad, like I'll always be,
Come on, Dad. Do it! Do it for me!
By Carol Cichella
TCF Rockford, IL.

TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Have you had the desire to learn more about The Compassionate Friends but didn't know where to begin? The Pikes Peak Chapter will sponsor your registration at this year's conference to be held August 7 - 9 at the Doubletree Hotel Lloyd Center in Portland, Oregon. There will be a number of workshops, attractions and events this year for parents, siblings, relatives, professionals and more. Please call Loraine Anderson (our Chapter Leader) at 719-351-7653 if you would like additional information or go to the TCF website at www.compassionatefriends.org where you can find online registration and a listing of the workshops and events being held.

Walk to Remember 2009!

A very popular event at every TCF national conference is the Walk to Remember® which will be held the closing day of TCF's national conference in Portland, OR, Sunday, August 9 starting at 8 a.m. from the hotel.

Friends Asking Friends® Fundraising

Whether or not you walk to remember, you have an opportunity this year to once again help The Compassionate Friends fund its programs through the **Friends Asking Friends**. It's very simple to participate. First, visit the Walk to Remember website at www.tcfwalktoremember.org. At the site, you can choose your level of involvement—you can create an individual, team, or chapter group, support one of our already established teams, or make a general donation to the Walk to Remember in memory of a special child. Many local TCF chapters are participating in this fundraiser. All funds raised by chapters stay in the local chapter except for 15% which covers administration costs of the program.



Betty & Wally Stieglmeyer in memory of
James Craig Stieglmeyer
March 11—February 2

Scott David Stieglmeyer
June 27—November 7

FATHER'S DAY

Every father believes in his role as protector of his family. He has been assigned the job of fixer and problem solver. He has been told since his youngest days that he must be strong---must not cry.

But each father among us has had to face that point where no amount of fixing, problem solving and protecting has been able to stop our child's death. And inside, we must ask ourselves about our failure, and we must face our lack of omnipotence.

Father's Day is often a forgotten holiday, overshadowed by the longer-standing tribute to mothers. But for the bereaved father it is a poignant reminder of bitter sweetness; sweet in the memory of a loved, now lost, child; bitter for the death and pain and recognition of inability to stop what happened.

Fathers do not often have a chance to share their hurts and concerns. Oftentimes they are unable to do so, a remnant of childhood learnings about the strength and stoicism of "big boy." A father may even be uncomfortable opening up to his wife, and the wife who pushes him to talk may be pushing too hard.

Father's Day does not have to be a time when everyone pours out of the woodwork to say, "I'm sorry we haven't talked. Let's do it now." But it can be a time when the family gives Dad a hug, does something special, helps with the chores, and mostly, lets him know how important and needed and loved he is. It is some of these things that he has lost with the death of a child. And, like Mother's Day, the day set aside for Fathers does not have to be limited to a Sunday in June. It can be any day and every day. Fathers often show their hurts differently, often internally.

But They Do Hurt.

By Gerry Hunt, TCF White River Junction, Vermont.



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A Father on Father's Day

Fatherhood is a wonderful and privileged word. I am a father, a bereaved father, who lost a son. Although it will be eight years in August of this year, I still miss him every day. Maybe I should miss him a little more on Father's Day, because someone, somewhere once decreed that Father's Day be a special day to honor your father. So, according to that mandate one might suppose that I should because I may have subconsciously (or forcibly?) calibrated the threshold of that pain, of that missing, so it is constantly within me every day of the year, but at a lower level than in the beginning, and not as devastating. In life, and with minor fluctuations, it is there. Yes, I wish my son were here on Father's Day, but so do I wish he were here every day.

However, I will celebrate Father's Day this year, because, thank God, I have a remaining son whom I cherish. For you bereaved fathers who have lost your only child, more than one of your children, or all of your children, there are no words that can adequately express my sorrow for the depths of your grief and anguish. There is no way that I can truly feel the pain that you feel, but as someone wisely and compassionately said to me in my despair, "I wish I could take your pain away from you."

Perhaps some of us might agree that Father's Day is a cruel day for bereaved fathers, just as Mother's Day is a cruel day for bereaved mothers. If that be so, I hope we can elicit some sweet memories of our beloved children from kinder days to treasure, to help alleviate the pain, and to enable us to pass the day with some degree of serenity. May I repeat that which was said to me, which was of consolation to me when I desperately needed it: "I WISH I COULD TAKE YOUR PAIN AWAY FROM YOU."

And bereaved fathers, may you find peace, as much as is possible, on Father's Day and on every day of the year. I hope next Father's Day will be better.

**Dave Ziv - TCF
Bucks Mont Chapter, Warrington, PA**

Men do Cry

I heard quite often "men don't cry"
Though no one ever told me why
So when I fell and skinned a knee
No one came to comfort me.
And when some bully boy at school
Would pull a prank so mean or cruel
I'd quickly learn to turn and quip
"It doesn't hurt" and bite my lip.
So as I grew to reasoned years
I learned to stifle any tears.
Though "Be a big boy" it began
Quite soon I learned to "Be a man."
And I could play that stoic role
While storm and tempest wracked my soul.
No pain nor setback could there be
Could wrest one single tear from me.
Then one long night I stood nearby
And helplessly watched my son die
And quickly found to my surprise
That all that tearless talk was lies.
And still I cry and have no shame
I cannot play that "big boy" game.
And openly without remorse
I let my sorrow take its course.
So those of you who can't abide
A man you've seen who's often cried
Reach out to him with all your heart
As one whose life's been torn apart.
For men do cry when they can see
Their loss of immortality.
And tears will come in endless streams
When mindless fate destroys their dreams.

**Ken Falk
TCF, NW Connecticut Chapter**



Cape Fear Chapter TCF, Wilmington, NC

Father's Day
Father's Day...not a big holiday, but one that holds a lot of meaning to those to whom it applies. For first-time fathers, it brings a sense of joy and pride. For a long-time dad, it is a reminder of the fulfillment which children have brought to his life. For those men who have lost a child, no matter what the child's age, Father's Day can be a painful time. It can be a horror for those who must endure their pain in secret and silence, due either to their desire for that approach or society's expectations that they be strong and controlled. We wish to acknowledge the day because the death of a child does not negate the parenthood of a dad who loved him/her. We wish that all bereaved fathers experience a taste of good memories and remembered love for your child.

The Compassionate Friends
Pikes Peak Chapter
P.O. Box 26239
Colorado Springs, CO 80936

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