

April, 2013



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**

PIKES PEAK CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



Upcoming Events

April 18th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

May 16th - 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 & LETA LEVETT
Son, Aaron Paul Levett

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON
Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

SC MEMBER

LEONIE CRAMER
Son, Julian Anthony King

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 April 18, 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

TEEN / YOUNG ADULT LOSS

BARB REYNOLDS

599-0772

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.



Grief: Our Act of Love

“I had a child who died.” How simple these words are, yet how painful they are to say. The death of a child is the harshest blow life has to offer; it destroys our trust in the world at the most basic level. Grief is our total response to the death of a child; our body, mind, emotions and spirit all react to the loss. While many of us wish to stop the intense grief work we are doing, we find it impossible for many reasons.

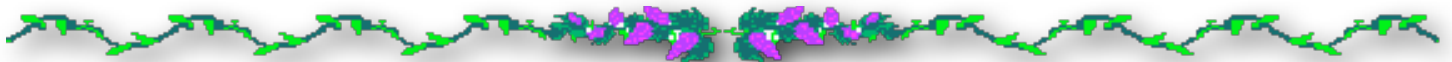
First, grief is an act of love, not a lack of strength or faith. The more we love our child, the greater will be our grief. The more integrated our lives were with the life of our child, the more we will miss his or her very presence. The intensity of our grief is often representative of our love.

Second, grief is a necessary process that we must go through in order to maintain our wholeness and sanity. If we do not grieve, we will not heal. One of the earliest and hardest lessons we bereaved parents learn is that men and women grieve differently; women, in general, grieve more openly than do men, and women on the whole, are more comfortable verbally expressing their feelings of loss. While segments of our culture indicate it is more “manly” not to cry, we know this is not true.

Grief work also helps us to complete unfinished business with our child and close the past relationship that we had. We will never “get over” the loss of our child, nor would we ever really want to. We are who we are partly because of our relationship to that child. Our lives will always be influenced by our son or daughter, but most of us will eventually learn to live a meaningful life, despite our tragedy. Our child will *always* be with us in spirit and in love, and we often feel a need to hold on to tangible items, such as toys or clothes, to maintain that feeling of closeness. But intense grief work allows us to let go of the relationship we had and create a new relationship with our child. Our remembrances, love and feelings of oneness with our child can never be destroyed. I cannot see nor touch my Philip, but I vividly remember him. I have completed earthly mothering, but I still have an intense mother-child relationship with my son.

Grief over the death of a child is the hardest work that most of us will ever do. While we all wish for pain to stop, we need to remember that we grieve intensely because we loved intensely. It is unrealistic to expect that grief will ever (totally) go away, because the love we have for our child will never go away. Our grief is an act of love and is nothing for which we should be ashamed.

Elaine Grier
TCF Atlanta, GA



Given in memory of

Jaclyn Marie Williams

by

Rob, Sandy & Mike Williams
(Mom, Dad and Bubba)



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Christie Fike	Apr 2	Shirley & Dan Emerson
Michael Robert Pugh	Apr 2	Robert & Donna Pugh
John Andrew Schoen	Apr 2	Joyce Schoen
Kaitlin Bartlett	Apr 3	Kim Bartlett
Michael Zwirlein	Apr 3	Chris Zwirlein
Steven James Gantz	Apr 4	Diana Gantz
Mike Mozo	Apr 5	Valerie Kirchhofer
Heidi Susanne Wolfe	Apr 6	David & Karen Wolfe
Joseph Gentry Richardson	Apr 6	Miriam Gentry
Angel Leah Kelley	Apr 7	James L. Kelley
Acacia Barbara Clen	Apr 8	Cindy Santarte
Tommy Kinslow	Apr 9	Pam Kinslow
Julie Bankston	Apr 13	Peggy Bankston
Andrew Evan Neely	Apr 13	Tamara Noble
Zachary Nicholas Hoke	Apr 16	Debra & Steve Hoke
Patricia Spain Boden	Apr 18	Myra Spain
Jonathan Steven Gabriel	Apr 19	Steve & Jane Gabriel
Zach Joseph	Apr 22	Garry & Renee Joseph
Tyrone Elliott Bautista	Apr 22	Rosemary Devney
Miguel Meza	Apr 24	Susan Meza
Steven Miller	Apr 27	Mike Miller
Juan Marine	Apr 29	Pamela Marine
Kaden France	Apr 30	Jeremy & Sarah France
Sara M. Losasso	Apr 30	Cindy Losasso
Micah David Smilser	Apr 30	Robin Myers

A FATHER RETURNS TO WORK

After Kathy died, I, of course, went back to work. Some of my co-workers made the stop at my desk to express their sympathy. I know I turned them off, as my pain and my denial were so great. I could not talk about what had happened and how I felt. I thanked them. Although nobody ever talked to me about it, that was okay as my pain was such, I thought, I could not bear to talk. I threw myself into my work and on occasion was confused because I could not make the kind of decisions I had been making for years. I never made the connection that this inability to concentrate was part of my grief and was normal.

Lunch was the worst time. My habit was to eat with my associates, but often in the middle of the meal I would just have to get up and walk away. Although nobody ever said anything to me about this odd behavior, I do thank them at least for their tolerance. Slowly I readjusted (I thought) and in time (a long time) I was able to perform well again.

But I never really grieved until I found THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS and it was here that people helped me to talk. It was almost twelve years before I found TCF as there was no such organization in 1967. My friends, let The Compassionate Friends help you....don't wait twelve years to talk!

Bill Errnatinger, Kathy's Dad
TCF - Baltimore. MD



Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Richard McShan	23 years	Apr 1	Paul & Angelika McShan
Erin Marie McCallister	3 weeks	Apr 2	Steve & Carol McCallister
Matthew John McCallister	22 years	Apr 3	Steve & Carol McCallister
Brian Patrick Adair	13 years	Apr 4	Duane & Mary Adair
Skylar Lynn Boyle Ringland	22 years	Apr 4	Cathleen Boyle
Abraham Daniel Boukhari	18 years	Apr 4	David & Deborah Woodrow
Ronald Eugene Peterson	15 years	Apr 5	Ron Peterson
Kristie Diaz	26 years	Apr 7	Julie Diaz
Sarah Jo Card Ferrara	32 years	Apr 7	Carol & Andrew Ferrara
Toby Ferrer	4 years	Apr 8	Maria Hymes
Douglas Radowski	40 years	Apr 8	Patricia Radowski & Renee Roettger
Dustin Bates	9 years	Apr 9	Troy Peyton
Lindsey Everding	18 years	Apr 10	Trena Everding & Dave Kiefer
Rocke Lee Corley	42 years	Apr 11	Jeanne Corley
Patrcia Elliott	19 years	Apr 11	Connie and Dave Elliott
Lindsay Jean Morris	20 years	Apr 12	Linda Morris
Michael Robert Pugh	13 years	Apr 12	Robert & Donna Pugh
Eric Johnson	22 years	Apr 13	Gary Johnson
Michael Eck	2 weeks	Apr 14	Patricia Eck
Dennis Lynn Gerringer	16 years	Apr 16	Kim Gerringer
Sarah Sunshine Wedekind	30 years	Apr 16	Lorry Pearson
Richard "Richie" Petras	3 years	Apr 16	Richard Petras
Acacia Barbara Clen	13 years	Apr 16	Cindy Santarte
Naomi Katherine Schwartz	1 years	Apr 16	Tim & Sonoko Schwartz
Dawn Michelle Wiley	21 years	Apr 18	Luanne Wiley
Jalynn Cameron	4 months	Apr 19	Jessica Cameron
Miguel Meza	20 years	Apr 19	Susan Meza
Leah Rae Wiley	23 years	Apr 21	Russ & Kelly Wiley
McKenzie Boutin	17 years	Apr 25	Colleen Boutin
Gary Carlson	44 years	Apr 25	Phil & Rose Carlson
James Bishara	19 years	Apr 27	Phebe Bishara
John Andrew Schoen	55 years	Apr 27	Joyce Schoen
Micah David Smilser	1 day	Apr 30	Robin Myers

Are You Interested?

Would you like to become more involved in the Pikes Peak Chapter of The Compassionate Friends?
We'd love to have you contact us and sit in on a Steering Committee meeting to see what we do.

Many of our regular meeting members are just the type of people we're looking for to help us move our chapter forward with new and exciting ideas. Are you interested?



Please consider submitting an article or poem for our newsletter. Whether you would like to tell us about your child, about your feelings, or just submit something you have read somewhere else that you found helpful or meaningful, the newsletter is for you and your input is most welcome. Contact your editor, or bring your article or poem to a meeting and give it to the facilitator and we'll see that it gets published. Testimonials about how TCF has helped you are always needed. It does not have to be lengthy; a paragraph or two would be just fine. It is important to let people know that TCF exists and that it is helpful to those who have suffered the loss of a child, grandchild or sibling.



SUGGESTIONS FOR REMEMBERING YOUR CHILD ON THEIR BIRTHDAY OR ANNIVERSARY

- – **Remember that this is your grief and your pain and to honor it in a way that is comfortable and helpful to you.**
- – **Some find it comforting to visit the cemetery and take flowers or other items to leave.**
- – **Invite friends/family to a balloon release with notes to your child or a birthday celebration in their honor.**
- – **Take a hot bath, a long walk or do something to pamper yourself and relax – often the anticipation of the day is worse than the actual day itself.**
- – **Get out the old photos and remember happier days – share the memories with others or work on a memory book or write in a journal.**
- – **Spend the day serving others – through whatever community service you find helpful and rewarding to you.**
- – **Plan the day in advance with the understanding that changing your mind at the last minute is perfectly acceptable. Do not hesitate to change your plans if you so desire.**
- – **Attend a religious service, mass or church activity that you find help or healing to you.**
- – **Stay at home and do absolutely nothing. Remember there are no correct ways to grieve....as long as you do not bring harm to yourself or others; there is no right or wrong.**
- – **Remember that compassionate friends everywhere are thinking of you and praying for you and attending a TCF meeting will always bring you to others who care.**



The Love Gift Donation

I think that most of us, when we lose our child, look for comfort in knowing that our child will not be forgotten, that their brief time here on earth had value and will be honored by others. Some people will start their own organization to raise awareness to the cause surrounding the death of their child while others seek volunteer work within existing organizations to pay tribute to their loved one.

Many sit back, mourn and reminisce the life of their child feeling lost in the emptiness of their loss without knowing where to turn.

For me, volunteering for The Compassionate Friends was almost a no brainer. It was a way that I could keep the name of my son alive while at the same time giving back to an organization that gave so much to me during my initial grieving process. Learning to understand myself and how others react to the death of a child has been invaluable for my healing. And because I like to play with computers and pictures and writing, I found gratitude in putting together our Candlelight slide show and then taking on the newsletter. And I have different friends now, friends that I don't necessarily socialize with, but friends that know my heart, that know my loss. These are my friends through The Compassionate Friends.

For many of us volunteering is difficult, our best intentions get put on a back burner due to work obligations, family responsibilities or not wanting to commit to an ongoing activity. Have you considered a small monetary donation to TCF? A monetary donation helps to keep our chapter alive and well plus it's a great way to honor your child and your heart will feel better for doing it. A Love Gift donation of \$5 is as important to us as a gift of \$100. We continue to send around 35 newsletters a month through the U.S. Mail and at a cost of just \$.46 each, that's still the better part of \$200 a year.

Each year we do our annual Balloon Launch & Barbecue, provide snacks and drinks during our general meetings and host and provide candles for our Candlelight Service with the various add-ons required in making these events nice and meaningful for you. Lastly, though we get our meeting facility and newsletter printing donated by the church, it is necessary to show our appreciation to the folks at The First Baptist Church by a giving a donation in kind.

So it's time for a donation folks. Give of your time or money (what's the cost of a fast food meal out?). If The Compassionate Friends have helped you through their meetings, the newsletter or one of our remembrance events, it's time to say thanks.



Stew Levett - Editor
Pike Peak Chapter of TCF



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 - www.tcfcolorado.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

The Kite

Dedicated with Love to my son Jeremy

I loved that kite,
Its bright colors blazed freely against the blue sky
It soared ever higher effortlessly
Suspended between heaven and earth
By only a thin piece of string.
I know it would have gone even higher
had there been more string or more time,
But somehow the day had slipped away.
As I began to reel it in the winds picked up and a splice in my
line gave way.
I think somehow that's the way it was supposed to happen.
We are still tethered together that kite and I,
You just can't see the string.
When the wind blows and I feel the sun on my face I remember.
Yes I loved that kite and the days we spent flying together.
When I think about it, I picture it with its colors running so very
true
Soaring freely through the sky, past the sun and beyond

By: Steven Semanoff- Abington, PA TCF

Missing You

I just can't believe it...
The sun still rises and sets,
The moon and stars still shine,
The flowers still bloom, The birds still sing.
I expected a change in everything.
I just can't believe it...
It still gets dark and light,
The ocean still has waves,
The rain still rains, The wind still blows,
Is it because they do not know?
I just can't believe it...
I thought the world would stop
When in my house I found
an empty chair, a missing smile.
I thought it would stop for just a while.
I just can't believe it...

Gretta Viney - TCF, Yakima, WA

Life's Bargain

Life made us a bargain when we first came into the world: That as sure as we live, someday we will die, as surely as we laugh, someday we will cry. All of the assets that life and health and joy bring are balanced on earth by hate, disease, and sorrow. Our sorrow is the price we pay for all the love and joy we took so freely. We wouldn't weep such bitter tears if our laughter had not been so sweet for years. If the price I pay for loving David is the pain and sorrow I now have, I still think I got a bargain to have had him for thirteen years. If the only way to avoid the pain is to also avoid the pleasure of loving someone, then love with all your heart and soul, and mourn their loss the same, and count your life a bargain for having loved.

Dale Trevathan
TCF Tulsa OK

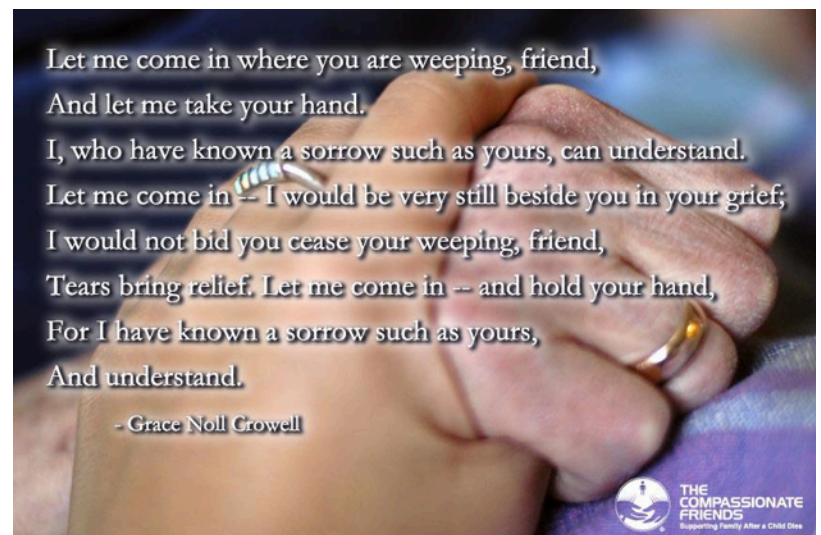
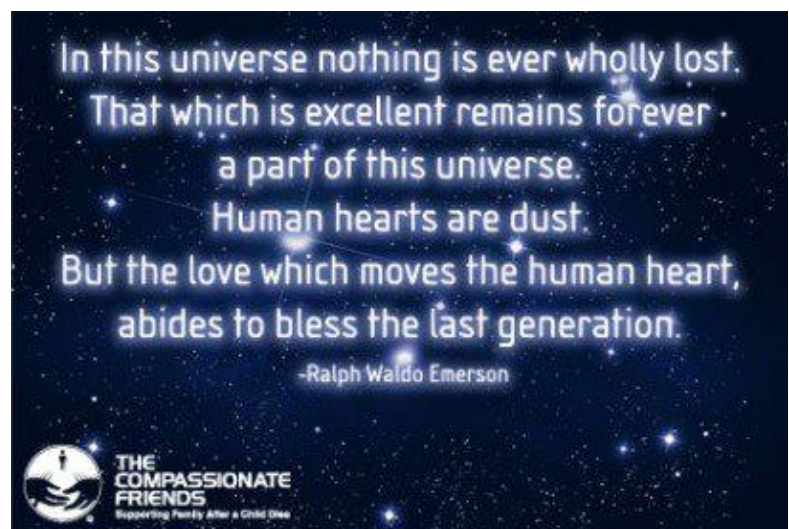
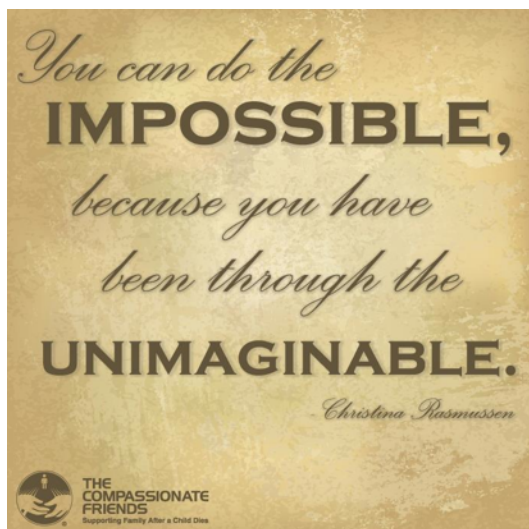
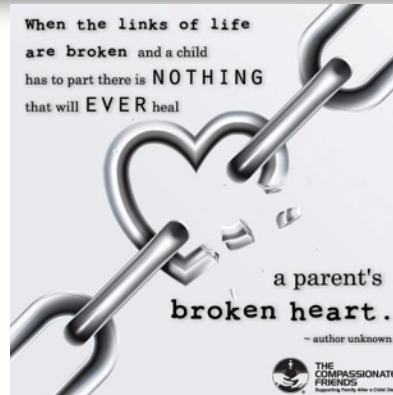
I Am Spring

I am the beginning
I am budding promise
I spill cleansing tears of life
from cloudy vessels
creating muddy puddles
where single-cell
creatures abide
and splashing children play.
I am new green growth.
I softly flow from winter's
barren hand.
On gentle breeze I fly
embracing sorrow.
With compassion,
we feather nests
Where winged voices sing
spring duets
As frozen ice transforms to
playful stream
I whisper truth
life is change.
I am spring.
I bless long, dark wintry days.
I crown mankind's pain
with starry skies
in deepest night
lighting solitary paths from
sorrow to joy
as the wheel of life turns
round and round.

Carol Clum - TCF, Tucson, AZ



HEALING WORDS



**Pikes Peak Chapter
The Compassionate Friends**



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

April, 2013

*Copyright © 2013 - All Rights Reserved
The Compassionate Friends, Inc.*

Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly - Return Service Requested