



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

April, 2011 Newsletter

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Upcoming Events

April 14th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
 May 19th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
 May 28th - Picnic, Alan Pedersen Concert & Memorial Balloon Launch - 1:00 p.m.
 (SEE NEXT PAGE)

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

CHAPTER LEADER		
LARAINÉ 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

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 14th, 2011.

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.**

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.tfccolorado.org
 Colorado Springs - www.tfccolorado.org/coloradosprings

Love Gift Donations

Our chapter exists entirely through your donations which are tax deductible. 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 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?*



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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS MEMORIAL DAY CONCERT & PICNIC BALLOON LAUNCH

The Compassionate Friends of the Pikes Peak Region is very excited to announce a special event on Saturday, May 28th, Memorial Day Weekend. Alan Pedersen will be in concert at 2:00 p.m. singing his personal and very moving songs of love, hope and healing for members of our TCF family. For those who are not familiar with Alan or were unable to attend our concert last year, Alan is a National Singer/Songwriter who has dedicated his music in the healing of others who are on their grief journey. Alan will be doing this as part of his "Angels Across The USA 2011 Tour".

We will start the afternoon at 1 p.m. with a barbecue potluck for all in attendance. The event will be held at TCF Board Members Bob & Yvette Thompson's house with the meats and drinks being provided by The Pikes Peak Chapter of TCF. Our Memorial Day Balloon Launch honoring our children which will start immediately after the concert. RSVP's are suggested so we may plan seating and food. Be sure to mark your calendars now for this event which you won't want to miss.

To RSVP you may email Laraine Anderson at lason56@yahoo.com or Stew Levett at stewart@archangelgifts.com. Please let us know how many in your family will be attending. For those who continue to receive our newsletter the old fashioned way, you may RSVP directly to Laraine by leaving her a message at 719-351-7653.

Should you forget to RSVP, no worries; We would like for you to come and enjoy the concert and fellowship of the other TCF members.

Last years picnic and concert were a huge success so don't miss this years opportunity to have a nice picnic lunch, talk with friends, listen to Alan sing his touching songs and help memorialize your child with our balloon launch.

Please bring a side dish or dessert, enough to feed your family and to share with a few others. We hope to see you there!





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Our those who read our newsletter on a regular basis, you'll notice that we've changed our child's birthday and anniversary format. In the past we've included a "cause of death" column with the hopes that new viewers to the newsletter might connect with someone else who has experienced a similar loss. Our National headquarters has requested that any cause of death listing be removed for privacy consideration. We thank you for your understanding.

Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Christie Fike	April 2	Shirley & Dan Emerson
Michael Robert Pugh	April 2	Robert & Donna Pugh
Kaitlin Bartlett	April 3	Kim Bartlett
Michael Zwirlein	April 3	Chris Zwirlein
Steven James Gantz	April 4	Diana Gantz
Mike Mozo	April 5	Valerie Kirchhofer
Heidi Susanne Wolfe	April 6	David & Karen Wolfe
Joseph Gentry Richardson	April 6	Jack & Miriam Gentry
Angel Leah Kelley	April 7	Shirley McCleary / James L. Kelley
Acacia Barbara Clen	April 8	Cindy Santarte
Mitchell Lynn Faires	April 8	Sammie White
Tommy Kinslow	April 9	Pam Kinslow
Jonathan Frazier	April 9	Kimberly & Michael Argo
Andrew Evan Neely	April 13	Tamara Noble
Julie Bankston	April 13	Peggy Bankston
Zachary Nicholas Hoke	April 16	Debra & Steve Hoke
Patricia Spain Boden	April 18	Margie Spain
Jonathan Steven Gabriel	April 19	Steve & Jane Gabriel
Tyrone Elliott Bautista	April 22	Rosemary Devne
Zach Joseph	April 22	Garry & Renee Joseph
Ja-Mickeal James Lane	April 23	Lara & Kenneth Lane
Sean William Staat	April 23	Susan & William Staat
Miguel Meza	April 24	Susan Meza
Steven Miller	April 27	Mike Miller
Juan Marine	April 29	Pamela Marine
Kaden France	April 30	Jeremy & Sarah France
Sara M. Losasso	April 30	Cindy Losasso
Micah David Smilser	April 30	Robin Myers

Is This Your Child's Birthday Month?

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday, bring pictures or favorite items that belonged to your child to our monthly meeting!

You may also bring a dessert or other food to celebrate... If you plan on doing this, please let Laraine know ahead of time so that we can allow enough time for the celebration.



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Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Douglas Radowski	40 years	April 1	Patricia Radowski
Richard McShan	23 years	April 1	Paul & Angelika McShan
Erin Marie McCallister	3 weeks	April 2	Steve & Carol McCallister
Matthew John McCallister	22 years	April 3	Steve & Carol McCallister
Skylar Lynn Boyle Ringland	22 years	April 4	Cathleen Boyle
Brian Patrick Adair	13 years	April 4	Duane & Mary Adair
Abraham Daniel Boukhari	18 years	April 4	David & Deborah Woodrow
Ronald Eugene Peterson	15 years	April 5	Ron Peterson
Sarah Jo Card Ferrara	32 years	April 7	Carol & Andrew Ferrara
Kristie Diaz	26 years	April 7	Julie Diaz
Toby Ferrer	4 years	April 8	Maria Hymes
Douglas Radowski	41 years	April 8	Renee Roettger
Lindsey Everding	18 years	April 10	Trena Everding & Dave Kiefer
Patrcia Elliott	19 years	April 11	Connie and Dave Elliott
Rocke Lee Corley	42 years	April 11	Jeanne Corley
Michael Robert Pugh	13 years	April 12	Robert & Donna Pugh
Lindsay Jean Morris	20 years	April 12	Linda Morris
Eric Johnson	22 years	April 13	Gary Johnson
Sarah Sunshine Wedekind	30 years	April 16	Lorry Pearson
Acacia Barbara Clen	13 years	April 16	Cindy Santarte
Richard "Richie" Petras	3 years	April 16	Richard Petras
Dennis Lynn Gerringe	16 years	April 16	Kim Gerringe
Naomi Katherine Schwartz	1 year	April 16	Tim and Sonoko Schwartz
Dawn Michelle Wiley	21 years	April 18	Luanne Wiley
Miguel Meza	20 years	April 19	Susan Meza
Jalynn Cameron	4 months	April 19	Jessica Cameron
Leah Rae Wiley	23 years	April 21	Russ & Kelly Wiley
Gary Carlson	44 years	April 25	Phil & Rose Carlson
James Bishara	19 years	April 27	Phebe Bishara
Micah David Smilser	Stillborn	April 30	Robin Myers





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Seasons of Grief

Jeanne Davis, Chapter Leader - Green Bay, WI

Do you ever wonder “when is winter going to end?” When is it going to get warmer? When will the snow melt and the spring flowers come up? When will they bloom?

Grief can be compared to the seasons. All of those questions can also be asked of grief. When will my pain end? When will I feel something other than pain? When will the shock and numbness go away? When will I be able to remember and smile?

Autumn is a sudden frost – the first moments of our child’s passing. Life has changed forever and everything feels strange and unfamiliar. Our emotions shift like the wind; one moment we feel the warmth of fond remembrance and the next we are startled back into our horrible reality. Our child who we love is gone! We drift through most of those first days in a fog. We become exhausted to the point of numbness and time stands at a strange angle to the rest of the world.

In the winter of our bereavement, one of the most tragic points in our life will come when the gripping reality of what it means to lose our child crashes down around us. Life changes so much that it is almost unrecognizable to us. This is the time when we might fall down and not find a reason to continue on. Depression and illness run rampant at this time because we feel helpless. The grief can cast a harsh, ugly light onto everything around us. We may be mad and angry at anything and everything.

The emotions we begin to experience in the spring of our grief are the first signs of our re-awakening from the winter of that grief. Our loss is like a wind or hail storm, where everything we knew and understood is battered by furious waves of despair that threaten to consume us at any moment. Somehow, though, something happens within us – some instinct to survive rises up within us to help carry us forward. We literally allow life to begin again for us; not quite the life that we knew; but, a life that we are still able to live.

Summer is a warm wind of peace, of sunshine, warm showers, blue skies, fluffy clouds. It is the time in our loss that we can actually look forward to what we have gained, rather than look back to what we have lost.

Just as the seasons of the earth go full circle, so will the seasons of our grief. Life will not be normal again; normal is a word that passes with our loved ones. But, we will eventually find a new normal, a new reality. Grief doesn’t go away, it changes. Life won’t ever be the same; but, it can become bearable and livable. We will be able to laugh again without feeling guilt and to take loss from its position of being our sole reason to live to a reason for having lived. To move forward after loss is not to forget our child; but, rather, to remember the life of that child with feelings of love, joy, fondness, and peace.

Our grief doesn’t necessarily follow the seasons in order. It may mix them up and repeat them in no understandable order. Be gentle with yourself, give your grief the space it needs; but, open your heart and your mind and go forward into your new reality. You will smile, laugh, and feel again.





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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

Going Home Angel



This angel, sculpted by Artist Marco Grove, is now being offered for sale through Archangel Gifts. Inspired and dedicated to my son Aaron Paul Levett, this angel depicts the soul of your loved one returning to the arms of the Father. The angel is cast from crushed selenite, quartz and angelite crystals. The sculpture is 3 1/2 inches tall and is finely polished.

We will be donating 25% of the proceeds from the sale of these angels to The Compassionate Friends and one will be given away at this years Memorial Balloon Launch.

You may pre-order your own angel by going to our website at www.Archangelgifts.com. Angels will be delivered at the Memorial Balloon Launch or can be shipped to any location. If you would like further information please feel free to email me at stewart@archangelgifts.com

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

Angel Eyes: Giving Comfort, Providing Hope

Our group offers bereavement services for parents, families, friends and caregivers who have been affected by the sudden unexpected loss of an infant or toddler. This group offers you a comfortable place to heal and learn how to live with your loss. Nothing is asked of you; you do not have to speak if you choose not to.

People who have received bereavement services report that it is very helpful for them to have people to talk to who can understand the grief of losing an infant or young child. This group is a safe place where you can talk about both your grief and the precious memories you have of your child. Each month we will begin with a particular topic, talk about how you might be affected and have time for general sharing.

The group is led by an ANGEL EYES social worker whose mission is to help families and others cope with the sudden, unexpected death of an infant or toddler throughout the state by providing a range of bereavement services. For additional help and information: **Angel Eyes 1-888-285-7437**

Web site: www.angeleyes.org

Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of the Month

Location: Colorado Springs Penrose Library, 20 N. Cascade Ave

Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

There is no cost and parking is free at the meters after 6:00 p.m.



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THOUGHTFUL POEMS

EASTER THOUGHTS

One more winter overcome, one more darkness
turned to light and promise.
Winter is the price for spring.
Struggle is the price for life.
Even in sorrow, remember to prepare your heart
for celebration -
next spring perhaps.
Or the spring after that ...
Sascha

BECAUSE

Because you can't feel me,
Doesn't mean I'm not there.
Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm not near.
Because you can't hear me,
doesn't mean I don't speak.
Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm out of reach.
Because I am dead,
doesn't mean I'm gone.

Beth Oldan
TCF, Arlington Heights, IL

By Jennifer L. Page - 08/April/01
*Jennifer wrote this poem two years before she died, but her mother
didn't find it until one year after she died.*

I made a wish for you tonight
That the stars would sparkle in your eyes
That tomorrow the sun would shine for you
Flowers would bloom, birds would sing
And your heart would heal.

I made a wish for you tonight
That your lips would smile again
That laughter would tickle up from inside you
And let yourself feel again.

I made a wish for you tonight
That life would be good
That you would find peace and joy
That your wishes and dreams came true
And that I am part of them.

Boise, ID TCF

For the Newly Bereaved

One day you wake up and realize
you must have survived it because
you are still here, alive and breathing. But, you
don't remember the infinitely small steps and
decisions you took to get there.
Your only awareness is that you have shed
miles of tears on what seems to be an endless
road of sorrow.

One day...one glorious day,
you wake up and feel your skin
tingle again and you forget,
just for an instant,
that your heart is broken...
and it is a beginning.

- Susan Borrowman, TCF/Kingston, Canada

The Day The Earth Stopped Spinning

When I lost my child the earth ceased to spin.
The moon will not rise, the tide won't come in.

The sun insists on having its way,
Blasting its rays and rising each day.

Another day comes, my child is not here;
Another day comes, I live my worst fear.

Each morning I wake with the same painful thought;
Why am I here when my sweet child is not?

All moments that pass I question this fate;
While other lives carry on, I sit and I wait.

I wait for an answer, for some reason why...
Praying for it to be me that could die.

Through my sorrow and grief I have made a life choice;
To keep my son's memory alive and give him a voice.

I share stories of my son and the man he would be;
a boy who lived life and was a hero to me.

Who would grow up and make the world a better place;
Who would save the seas and the oceans from the human race.

When I lost my child the earth ceased to spin.
But the moon still must rise and the tide must come in.

And since the sun insists on having its way,
I will live in my child's memory each and every day.

~By Kim Turner, TCF, Heart of Florida Chapter



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HEALING WORDS

Humor and Grief

It has been my pleasure over the past year to write about the joy and sorrow my family has experienced with the loss of our son/brother four years ago. I know everyone who reads this has humorous stories to tell about their brother/sister. I want to encourage each of you to dig deep and contribute a story. I can't tell you how it has relieved my sadness and lightened my heart at times when my only thoughts brought tears. Our son, Cooper, loved spring. It brought renewal, spring break at school, slush, and the early crocuses that grew at our neighbors' house.

Coop knew these flowers were just for admiring for making such a lovely show during what sometimes were extremely cold conditions. And because they were our elderly neighbor's flowers they absolutely, positively were not to be picked.

One particularly trying day with my two sons, Cooper decided that flowers were what I needed. He sneaked next door, picked those beautiful purple crocuses and brought them home to me in his tiny hand and said, "I know you really needed these today, I love you."

A bad day never melted away so fast. We miss him every day of every week of every year.

May you find humor somewhere in your journey.

~ Georgia Schroeder
Green Bay Chapter, TCF

Handling Easter and Passover

This is the season of celebrating Easter and Passover, family holidays and family gatherings. Again, as bereaved parents, especially if we are newly bereaved, we pause and must make a decision as to how and if we are going to proceed, as we have in former years, before the death of our children. For both holidays, there is the "CHILDREN'S HOUR" so to speak for Easter, there have always been the Easter parade, Easter eggs, and the Easter bunny. For Passover, there has been matzoth, the Seder with the participation of the youngest Child. So again what to do?

Both Easter and Passover are holidays in which children are strongly involved. To see that empty chair at the table, to know that the missing child is no longer with us can be devastating, especially after the first and second anniversary of the death; as with other holidays. There are no magic formulas. If you can, talk about your child during the holidays. At our home we have made it a ritual to remember our son at the beginning of the Passover Seder.

Please handle the holidays any way you can; there are no rules.

Dave Ziv - TCF Bucksmont, PA

My Thoughts on Mrs. Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln has always been my most admired and respected figure in the history of our country. After standing in front of his statue at the Lincoln Memorial, no one could ever forget the terrible marked sadness in his face, his forlorn and melancholy attitude.

I have been picking up from other chapter newsletters the many pieces of prose and poetry attributed to Lincoln, which speak so poignantly of grief, and I have researched the Lincoln life. It is for his wife, Mary, for whom I cringe now when I read how life dealt with her.

Washington gossip circles referred to her "mental state", that she was "deranged" and "eccentric". The Lincoln's lost their second son, Edward, almost 4, in February 1850. Their third son Willie was born in December of that year and died in February 1862 at the age of 11. And then, the tragedy of tragedies. In April, President Lincoln was assassinated in front of Mrs. Lincoln's eyes... her grief must have been worse than inconsolable.

How could life deal such a terrible fate to one woman? How could any one of us deal with such multiple tragedies?

We know how easy it is to feel as if we are "going crazy" and how common that feeling is. To share that feeling in Compassionate Friends is more than wonderful...to be assured that it is common, to learn and understand from other bereaved parents why we feel that way, and that it will pass helps immeasurably.

But tragedy stalked Mary Lincoln's footsteps, for not quite six years later, her son Tad was killed at 18 in January 1871. History books do not say, but I pray that Mrs. Lincoln had ONE compassionate friend who understood her grief over the death of her three sons and her husband. One friend wrote of her: "Poor Mrs. Lincoln. She has been a deranged person."

Yes, of that I am sure. And then I thank God for The Compassionate Friends.

Mary LaTour, TCF/Dallas, TX



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VULNERABLE

I have found in the years that have passed that I am most vulnerable at times of remembrance. The word "Anniversary" no longer holds a promise of celebration. Instead, holidays and birthdays, family gatherings and otherwise joyous occasions contain an undertow of sorrow.

If I get caught up in it, I quickly get pulled under and wind up gasping for breath. It is ironic that the presence of the absence can be emotionally devastating.

You'll excuse me if the bounce is gone from my step; or the depth of my laughter has changed. Issues that were once monumental now seem insignificant. Please excuse me if I don't commiserate that your car needs repair or the faucet leaks. My focus on life has forever changed.

You'll excuse me if my spirit seems lost during holidays of any kind. They are now days "to bear" rather than days to share and enjoy.

You'll pardon me if I bring you down or make you feel discomfort, and I'll pardon you for not understanding that my life will never be the same, that although I'll survive, there will always be sorrow.

-Joan Fischer,
Nassau County Chapter, NY



Save the Date: TCF's 34th National Conference will be held in Minneapolis/St. Paul July 15-17, 2011 at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel. You will find it to be another great conference with around 100 workshops, sharing sessions, special keynote speakers at the Opening, Closing and Friday Afternoon and Saturday Evening banquets, Hospitality Room, Butterfly Room, Reflection Room, a completely stocked bookstore, special Friday evening entertainment and a Remembrance Candle Lighting. TCF's Walk to Remember will be held Sunday morning. Reservations can now be made at special conference rates for hotel rooms for the 2011 TCF National Conference at the host hotel, the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel, Minneapolis South. Reservations can be made online or by calling a special reservation number. For more information, please see our [TCF 2011 National Conference - Minneapolis](#) page.

Easter

Passover

Spring

Easter signifies the Risen Christ, the most hopeful and positive symbol in Christendom, and the Jewish Passover celebrates escape from oppression and slavery into the promised land.

As winter ends and the trees, shrubs and flowers of our valley burst into bloom, many bereaved parents feel their spirits lift a bit at last, and the pall of gloom sub-sides for many.

Some of our parents, in fact, leap into spring by planting a memorial garden for their child, which gives them something positive to do, and provides them with the pleasure of creating a little spot of beauty for them and their friends and family to enjoy.

The exercise and getting out into these rare and beautiful spring days are an added health bonus.

And to have flowers from your child's garden to bring inside to brighten your kitchen soon gives a special joy.

Whatever the approaching religious season holds for you, pitch in and welcome it! And don't forget the power of flowers--especially a spot of your own creation.

Jackie Rohr
TCF, Ventura, CA

April 2011

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



An Open Invitation to Our Members

34th Annual TCF National Conference and 12th Walk to Remember

July 15th - 17th in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Room rate is \$129 per night for a King Room or Double Bed Room, single or double occupancy;

\$139 for triple and \$149 for quad.

These special reduced rates are available on stays from July 10-19

if the reservation is placed by June 21 (subject to availability).

These are specially negotiated rates available only for those attending the national conference.

Reserve your accommodations online at Sheraton Bloomington Hotel Minneapolis South

or telephone 952-835-7800 and mention you are with The Compassionate Friends.

Arrangements are being made for free shuttle pick-up to and from the hotel and the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport.

Those driving to the conference will have complimentary free parking at the hotel .

