

July, 2013



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

PIKES PEAK CHAPTER  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



## Upcoming Events

July 18th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church  
August 15th - 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 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 July 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

#### 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.



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.

### 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?



*The  
Compassionate  
Friends*  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

## Introducing TCF/USA's Updated Logo

The Compassionate Friends/USA is pleased to share our updated logo with you, which you'll find above. With the original logo nearly 40 years old, it has served us well as an organization, but the board of directors has felt for several years that it needed to be refreshed to keep up with the ever-changing times and a rapidly growing and evolving organization. In creating the update we remained mindful of our history as a caring, compassionate organization and those very important hands from the original logo have been formed into a heart to reflect that we are truly an organization with a heart! The updated logo will co-exist with the original logo over the next couple years as brochures and other printed materials are reprinted in the natural course of operations.

What our local members think:

- I like the new logo ala heart. - HA
- I like it! - NS
- It's better with the hands forming the shape of a heart. - RS
- I like it although hope it will be clearer on the actual logo; it seems a little grainy. - BZ
- I like the new one better. - LC
- Very clever. Not a big change, but the heart says it all. - LG
- Personally, I like the old one more than the new. - LN
- The idea of the hands forming a heart is great. MS
- Yes, I do like the heart shape within the hands. - RP
- Not sure..like the heart but also like the hand reaching out with help. - EH
- I like the heart - - it signifies to me the love for my son that will never end - RSW
- Like it, especially that the hands forms a heart, child seems closer, not so far away, if only symbolically. Coming closer and yet the hands are letting go. - LAB



## Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

<b>Child's Name</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Compassionate Friend</b>
Charlie Josh Jones	Jul 1	Sue Jones, Angie Jones
Ryan Thompson	Jul 1	Yvette & Bob Thompson
Michael Jeffrey Waller	Jul 4	Jeanie Young
Karen Sue Crawford	Jul 4	Joy Andrews
Sean Thompson	Jul 5	Rick Korcsog & Frank Thompson
Lisa Elaine Berns	Jul 6	Robert (R.J.) & Lynn Berns
Kyle Joe Manning	Jul 7	Carol & Don Manning
Blake Smith	Jul 8	Brian Smith
Anthony James "Tony" Pisor	Jul 10	Cynthia Pisor-Zapel
Cristoval Ornelas	Jul 13	Annette & Chris Ornelas
Jack Lincoln Farrell	Jul 13	Pamela Welch
Travis Holappa	Jul 14	Kim & Terry Packa
Cris Cruz	Jul 19	Henrietta Madrid
Tiffany Maxwell	Jul 20	Diane Maxwell
Ryan Sayers	Jul 20	Tom & Kate Sayers
Brian Patrick Adair	Jul 21	Duane & Mary Adair
Justin William Winner	Jul 21	Dale & Rosanne Winner
Arthur Lipphardt Jr	Jul 23	Art & Chris Lipphardt
Amanda Stocchero	Jul 24	Sandy Stocchero
Craig Matthews	Jul 24	Cathy Genato
Keltryn Lenae Brinkman	Jul 25	Jim & Judy Brinkman
Alexander Pegler	Jul 26	Eric & Lisa Pegler
Michael Williams Greist	Jul 28	Allan & Judy Greist
Scott Michael Gerwatowski	Jul 28	Helen & Walter Rakocy, Linda Gerwatowski
Michelle Howie	Jul 31	Annette Howie



Chaela Christianson  
in loving memory of her son

**Damon Vincent Christianson**

**05/30/1977- 07/03/2010**



Steve and Jane Gabriel  
through who

**St. Patrick Roman Catholic Church**  
made their generous donation.



## Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

<b>Child's Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>	<b>Compassionate Friend</b>
Kyleigh Peltzer	1 year	Jul 2	Ashleigh Peltzer
Andrew Paul Whiteman	20 years	Jul 2	Lyle Whiteman
Damon Vincent Christianson	33 years	Jul 3	Chaela Christianson
Heidi Susanne Wolfe	20 years	Jul 3	David & Karen Wolfe
Adam Roy Hodges	5 years	Jul 4	JoAnn Ewing
Ramon E.G. Lucero	26 years	Jul 5	Diana & Kimber Michael
Nicole Megan Yagi	9 years	Jul 5	Jackie & Dennis Yagi
Jay Aguanno	19 years	Jul 7	Jean Aguanno
Kaitlin Bartlett	17 years	Jul 8	Kim Bartlett
Shannon Diane McMahon	16 years	Jul 9	Robert & Jeanette McMahon
Jack C. Jefferson	5 years	Jul 11	John & Dena Jefferson
Abigail Ruth Smelser	23 years	Jul 11	Robin Myers
Chance Tyler Nichols	17 years	Jul 11	Charlie Nichols
Cristoval Ornelas	1 day	Jul 13	Annette & Chris Ornelas
Christopher Skaggs	15 years	Jul 13	Ernest & Tanya Skaggs, Carl, Annette & Felicia Cordova
Jack Lincoln Farrell	1 day	Jul 13	Pamela Welch
Zachary Dean Glenn	3 years	Jul 14	Janice Bren, Kristin & Larry Glenn
Philip Dix	24 years	Jul 14	Ann Dix
Kristopher Lohrmeyer	17 years	Jul 16	Dan & Lori Lohrmeyer
Blake Smith	1 year	Jul 17	Brian Smith
Jeanne Burroughs Widmar	33 years	Jul 18	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Roy Polhemus		Jul 18	Kathleen Landry, Edward Pohlemus
David Scott Mueller	19 years	Jul 19	Sandy Eversole
Ryan Rickman	11 years	Jul 19	Jean Rickman
Amanda Stocchero	15 years	Jul 19	Sandy Stocchero
Michael Benjamin Decker	18 years	Jul 20	Mary & Jerry Decker
Veronika Olivia Baca	1 year	Jul 22	Sharon Baca
Travis Grimmer	29 years	Jul 23	Mary Lou Grimmer
Cathleen Bartlett Maxwell	6 years	Jul 24	Dick & Marty Maxwell
Travis Holappa	25 years	Jul 25	Kim & Terry Packa
Kari Ann Kirt	15 years	Jul 26	Lon & Andrea Kirt
Christie Fike	32 years	Jul 28	Shirley & Dan Emerson
Benjamin Stewart Easton	22 years	Jul 28	Susan Stewart
Nathan Gentry	7 years	Jul 29	Susan Gentry
Jimmy Schmidt	13 years	Jul 30	Jim & Laurie Schmidt
Jonathan Steven Gabriel	5 years	Jul 31	Steve & Jane Gabriel
Patricia Spain Boden	39 years	Jul 31	Myra Spain





### 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](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)

**WEBSITES:**

National - [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.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](http://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 PEN

I doubt I would have believed it  
No matter how many times I was told  
That at this point of time in my life  
I would have more to miss than I have to hold.  
It's hard to believe it's been seven years  
Since I watched him walk out that door.  
As I sit here now with this pen in my hand  
I'm not sure what to say anymore.  
He is the lens through which I view life now.  
He is the reason for this pen in my hand.  
His death has even altered the passing of time  
I can somehow feel each grain of sand.  
Somehow I am able to put in writing  
Thing I never dreamed I could say.  
As he left this world he gave me a gift.  
I never wrote much before that day.  
There are days it's easier to write than others.  
Somehow I begin to find my way.  
This pen must be connected to my heart  
It knows what I want to say.  
Lately I've thought about stopping these writings  
Not picking up this pen anymore.  
Then in my mind I hear the sound  
Of the closing of that door.

By Tom Murphy - TCF, Cincinnati, OH  
In memory of Brennan

Memory can tell us only what we were,  
in company with those we loved;  
it cannot help us find what each of us must  
now become.

Yet no person is really alone;  
those who live no more echo still  
within our thoughts and words,  
and what they did has become woven into  
what we  
are.

Jewish prayer

### Missing Dan for 6 years now and forever!

Six years now since you've been gone  
Caused by a bad decision...  
A pill called methadone.  
For all of us,  
Our lives turned to grief...  
How we came to hate...  
That drug... that thief!!  
Drugs robbed us of a beautiful son,  
One precious boy, his life undone.  
Our world now dimmed without our "sun"!  
We grieve for you, our so loved son..  
Our middle born, but second to none!  
For 23 years, you enriched our lives.  
Your love, your hugs, your spirit still abides.  
You were so fun, you made us laugh,  
The joys you brought remain in depth.  
With your life we were so gifted,  
And the memories of you keep our spirit lifted!!  
Imperfect life times, sometimes made us cry,  
But never, ever, did you, or us ....  
Think you could die.  
With no thought of dying that night in your room all alone...  
You suffered the consequences of that killer methadone!  
With loved ones so close, but not aware..  
Your breathing so shallow, you slept into death,  
Leaving us all in unending despair.  
Oh, Dan, with so much to live for and a future so bright,  
All of it lost because of a drug that last night.  
Methadone, forever, took you away....  
And left us in mourning these forever days.  
And though we know in spirit that you  
Touch us from the other side,  
And in our hearts forever,  
Your love will abide....  
You should be here to breathe, and live  
To talk, to hug and love, to grow  
To enrich our lives and make us smile,  
But without you here, our tears just flow.  
In missing you, Dan, we grieve ....  
For all the days, you'll never see,  
For the husband, and father you can never be  
If only drugs had set you free,  
To live, to love.....and with us to be!!!  
Love you forever, Dan!  
Missing you always and all ways!  
MOM - Linda Ann Staib - TCF, Blatimore, MD



## HEALING WORDS

### TEN HEALING RIGHTS FOR GRIEVING CHILDREN

By Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

Dr. Wolfelt is a clinical thanatologist and director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition, in Fort Collins, Colorado. This article is reprinted with permission from Bereavement Magazine, 8133 Telegraph Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920-7169, [719] 282-1850.

Author's note: This "bill of rights" for grieving children is intended to empower them to help themselves heal – and to help direct the adults in their lives to be supportive as well.

Someone you love has died. You are probably having many hurtful and scary thoughts and feelings right now. Together those thoughts and feelings are called grief, which is a normal (though really difficult) thing everyone goes through after someone they love has died. The following ten rights will help you understand your grief and eventually feel better about life again. Use the ideas that make sense to you. Post this list on your refrigerator or on your bedroom door or wall. Re-reading it often will help you stay on track as you move toward healing from your loss. You might also ask the grown-ups in your life to read this list so they will remember to help you in the best way they can.

1. I have the right to have my own unique feelings about the death. I may feel mad, sad, or lonely. I may feel scared or relieved. I may feel numb or sometimes not anything at all. No One will feel exactly like I do.
2. I have the right to talk about my grief whenever I feel like talking. When I need to talk, I will find someone who will listen to me and love me. When I don't want to talk about it, that's okay, too.
3. I have the right to show my feelings of grief in my own way. When they are hurting, some kids like to play so they'll feel better for awhile. I can play or laugh, too. I might also get mad and scream. This does not mean I am bad, it just means I have scary feelings that I need help with.
4. I have the right to need other people to help me with my grief, especially grown-ups who care about me. Mostly I need them to pay attention to what I am feeling and saying and to love me no matter what.
5. I have the right to get upset about normal, everyday problems. I might feel grumpy and have trouble getting along with others sometimes.

6. I have the right to have "griefbursts." Griefbursts are sudden, unexpected feelings of sadness that just hit me sometimes – even long after the death. These feelings can be very strong and even scary. When this happens, I might feel afraid to be alone.

7. I have the right to use my beliefs about my God to help me deal with my feelings of grief. Praying might make me feel better and somehow closer to the person who died.

8. I have the right to try to figure out why the person I loved died. But it's okay if I don't find an answer. "Why" questions about life and death are the hardest questions in the world.

9. I have the right to think and talk about my memories of the person who died. Sometimes those memories will be happy, and sometimes they might be sad. Either way, these memories help me keep alive my love for the person who died.

10. I have the right to move toward and feel my grief and, over time, to heal. I'll go on to live a happy life, but the life and death of the person who died will always be a part of me. I'll always miss this special person.

### Grieving in pairs

How many times have people said, "Well, thank God you have each other." How many times have you felt "each other" to be entirely inadequate at meeting your needs?

Alarming statistics are available telling us of the rocky road parents encounter in their marriage after the death of a child. We sometimes see in ourselves a touchiness or quickness to become irritated that wasn't there before. It always seems that my "bad" day is my wife's "good" day, or the day she wakes up crying was the day I had planned on playing tennis. Or sometimes, even more difficult, we both have a bad day and find no help from the other in pulling things back together. How can one person hold up another when he is himself face down in the mud?

Every person grieves differently. This is a rule that even applies within a family. And the needs of every individual are different. While you may need to talk and talk and talk, your spouse may need some time alone to reflect inwardly. You have both been through the worst experience of your life. And while at times you can face recovery as a team, sometimes you must develop the patience to be able to wait out certain needs alone or with someone else. Realize that no matter how it is shown, your partner hurts, too.

Gerry Hunt  
TCF White River Junction, VT



*Our apologies go out to Chaela Christianson who submitted her love gift and writing back in May. Due to a change in my email address the original was never received. - Editor*

**Damon Vincent Christianson 05/30/1977- 07/03/2010**

This is a copy of a note that Damon wrote to me on MY birthday, June 19<sup>th</sup>.  
I was just turning 30 when he was born, so it's always easy for me to remember how old I am.  
On the other hand, once Damon turned 30, he had difficulty remembering how old he was, not to mention me!

**Happy 62(?)nd B-Day**

**You'll always be "double m" to me!**

**Thanks for being "my mommy," and I love and cherish you in my life every day that we have together.**

**Love always,  
Damon**



**New Website Coming**

Earlier this month The Compassionate Friends national office announced that they had partnered with CharityAdvantage to build for free, complete websites for local chapters. They do websites for many nationally recognized non-profits.

The Pikes Peak Chapter had it's own website that was hosted on the Colorado TCF website but sadly that website no longer exists. We have started work with CharityAdvantage to build our Pikes Peak Chapter website and by doing so became the 26th chapter nationally to do so.

We hope to have our website up and rolling by the end of this month. In the meantime you can look at a few of the other TCF websites designed by CharityAdvantage.

<http://tcfmarin.org/home.aspx>

<http://houstonnorthwesttcf.org/home.aspx>

<http://www.thecompassionatefriendspinellascounty.org/home.aspx>

<http://netextcf.org/home.aspx>

<http://tcfnorthwestcoast.org/home.aspx>

<http://compassionatefriendssohum.org/home.aspx>

<http://tcfmohawkvalley.org/home.aspx>

<http://compassionatefriends-katy.org/home.aspx>





## **The Death of a Child**

I remember a few years back hearing a story which really got me thinking. The story was told by a parent who had lost their child by stabbing while in prison. The parent was, like so many of us who have lost our children, horrified, distraught, and depressed. The parent conveyed that the real hurt came from those who claimed he had it coming, after all he was in prison wasn't he? Well, forget for a moment the circumstances that put this young man in prison and forget for a moment the circumstances that ended this young mans life. There is now a mother and a father who no longer have their child.

You see for most of us the love of our child, in most cases, out weighs any wrong that child may have created in their life. We will often deny that our child was anything but an angel, one who simply didn't deserve the fate handed to them. And why? Because the love we hold for our children is on a different plane and can't be compared or attached with any other act, thought or feeling that we may have. It just can't.

The recent verdict in the George Zimmerman, Trayvon Martin case has divided the nation along differing lines of right and wrong, murder or self defense and racial profiling. The media has been quick to point out the injustice of the verdict or how well justice was played out and, depending on your own personal take on how the events went, will side one way or another. Yet we only skim the surface of understanding the parents grief and anguish through all this.

At The Compassionate Friends it's not so much the circumstance that matters, it's the love and understanding given to the newly bereaved to help them heal in their time of sorrow and pain. In my eight years of attending meetings not once have I heard judgement passed on a parent or a child that has died regardless of the circumstances. Instead there is acknowledgement of the cause of death and then the offers of how we can help you heal.

May I offer a suggestion? As you get caught up in the hoopla of the next big trial, look at renewing your commitment of helping other parents as (hopefully) The Compassionate Friends has done for you. And for those of you that have put in your time, I say thank you because without your help in the past I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing today.

Stew Levett - Editor, Pikes Peak TCF



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**July, 2013**

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



**Pikes Peak Chapter  
The Compassionate Friends**