

March, 2013



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

PIKES PEAK CHAPTER  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



## Upcoming Events

March 21st- General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

April 18th - 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 March 21, 2013.**

The death of your child is probably the most traumatic, life-changing event that you will ever experience. The Compassionate Friends is an organization of parents who have also lost a child to death. Each of us has experienced the deep, searing pain that you are feeling now. Each of us has turned to other parents who were farther into their grief journey for guidance, support and understanding. This is done through our monthly meetings, our newsletter, our website, our Telephone Friend program, our library and our e-mail program. Each month parents find our meeting to be a safe place where they can talk about their pain and problems with others who are uniquely qualified to understand; bereaved parents offer gentle suggestions or often simply listen. We invite you to bring a friend to your first few meetings until you feel a level of comfort with the group. Do not be surprised if we talk about the happy times with our children, the wonderful memories and the various methods we have created to keep our children close to us. It is here that many bereaved parents find hope as those who are more seasoned in their grief shine the light of experience to help illuminate each grief path. We have no dues. We are self-sustaining through donations and the generosity of so many in our community.

**You Need Not Walk Alone.**

## TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

#### CHAPTER LEADER - ACTING

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

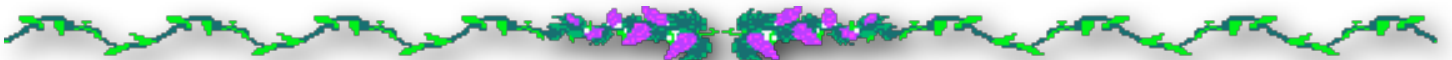
RAYE WILSON

(303) 814-9478

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



Seeing this beautifully carved bench which is located somewhere in Kurdistan reminds me of our gift to the city of Colorado Springs in 2009. The Compassionate Friends donated a beautiful park bench which is located in Monument Valley Park right next to the children's playground. Have you seen or visited our park bench?



## Spring is Coming

If you are newly bereaved and looking toward your "first" spring, you may be surprised by some of the feelings you may experience during the next few weeks. We hear so much about the beauty of spring - the new life and the feelings of renewal that are supposed to accompany this lovely time of year.

During my "first" year, I expected that spring would cheer me up, and make me feel lots better. How surprised and frustrated I was when, on one of those truly magnificent spring days as life seems to burst forth everywhere, I was "in the pits." When a friend said to me, "Doesn't a day like this really lift your spirits and make you feel better?" I had to reply honestly that I was having a really bad day --that the sense of loss and emptiness was greatly intensified.

Gradually, I began to realize that my expectations for spring were unrealistically high. I had looked forward to spring with the wrong kind of hope. When we are newly bereaved, we are constantly looking for something to take away the pain and make our lives all right again. Unfortunately, there is no magical event or moment when this takes place. It does happen, but only with time and the grief work which we all must do before we can be healed. The coming of spring cannot make everything okay again. What it can do, however, is remind us that regardless of what happens in our lives, nature's process will continue, and that can offer us hope. I am looking forward to spring this year. I welcome the sun's warmth, the return of the birds from their winter in the south, and forsythia, the daffodils and the greening of the world. Know that someday you will once again welcome spring. Be gentle and patient with yourself and with nature.

Don't expect too much. Be ready to let a little of the hope that spring can offer into your heart.

-Evelyn Billings, TCF Springfield, MA



## Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Wayne Allen Garrett	Mar 4	Joyce and Greg Garrett
Desiree D'Gornaz	Mar 4	Louie & Edna D'Gornaz
Logan Lawrence	Mar 5	Janet & Edward Lawrence
Steven Warren	Mar 6	Linda & Mark Warren
Erin Marie McCallister	Mar 7	Steve & Carol McCallister
Keith Andrew Barrett	Mar 8	Ree Barrett
Samuel Christensen	Mar 9	Stacy Christensen
Owen William Howard	Mar 10	Mike & Carol Parker
James Craig Stieglmeyer	Mar 11	Betty Stieglmeyer
Ava Rose Wolfe	Mar 12	Kristy Wolfe
Conri Lee Barber	Mar 13	Sean & Cherie Barber
Marisa Nicole Pilant	Mar 14	Stephen & Julie Pilant, Richard & Elizabeth Jamison
Cathleen Bartlett Maxwell	Mar 17	Dick & Marty Maxwell
Julian King	Mar 18	Carl Reese & Leonie Cramer
Megan Huyge	Mar 21	Stan & Rebecca Huyge
Billy E. Hendrickson	Mar 22	Grace & Delbert Hendrickson
Clayton Champion	Mar 24	Jessie & Phyllis Roark
Christopher J. Novich	Mar 24	Susan & Joe Novich
Marc Darby	Mar 25	Lori & Steve Darby
Scott Martinson	Mar 26	JoAnn Martinson
Justin A. Clayton	Mar 26	Terry & Sharon Clayton
Kira Ann Schager	Mar 28	Frank & Lori Schager
Sarah Jo Card Ferrara	Mar 28	Carol & Andrew Ferrara
Kari Ann Kirt	Mar 28	Lon and Andrea Kirt
Michael Eck	Mar 31	Patricia Eck



For The Compassionate Friends  
to honor the life of

**Christopher L. Perret**

December 10, 1982 ~ November 11, 2011

Jeff & Jeri Perret & Family

Death leaves a heartache  
no one can heal,  
Love leaves a memory  
no one can steal.

~ Found on a headstone in Ireland ~





## Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Kevin Michael Burns	16 years	Mar 3	Stan & Willie Burns
Jessica Robison	17 years	Mar 3	Terri Robison
Steven James Gantz	13 years	Mar 4	Diana Gantz
Brian Michael Gregory	16 years	Mar 6	Roy & Phyllis Gregory
Terry A. Shank	28 years	Mar 6	Carol Vierling
Tiffany Maxwell	34 years	Mar 7	Diane Maxwell
Michelle Sandra Seal	3 years	Mar 7	Walter & Diana Seal
Jay William Sheridan	27 years	Mar 9	Mary & Tim Sheridan
Michael Jeffrey Waller	25 years	Mar 10	Jeanie Young
Andy Cope	27 years	Mar 14	Debbie & Kurt Adelbush
Adam J. Hurst	32 years	Mar 14	Kim Troeger
Kevin Edward Farley	27 years	Mar 15	Elizabeth Farley
Jim Agnew	31 years	Mar 17	Tom Agnew
Jody Elizabeth Houtz	17 years	Mar 18	Jane & Chris Houtz
Danae Lynne Marie Mannon	3 months	Mar 18	Colleen & Art Mannon
Keltryn Lenae Brinkman	2 years	Mar 19	Jim & Judy Brinkman
John Daniel Bernard Ringo	8 years	Mar 21	Angela Randle & Paul Ringo
Christopher Calegar	10 years	Mar 22	Kevin & Linda Calegar
Megan Huyge	2 days	Mar 22	Stan & Rebecca Huyge
Gary Michael Owens	32 years	Mar 27	Freda Maria Garcia
Colin Peter Baerman	32 years	Mar 28	Paul & Kerry Baerman
Timothy Patrick Shea	21 years	Mar 31	Joe & Paula Shea

### 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.



## Christopher L. Perret





## WHEN FRIENDS HELP

In 1992 I was experiencing strange achy feelings in my neck and after nearly a month of trying to figure out the cause, the doctors confirmed their belief that I had artery blockage that needed to be fixed. After double bypass surgery I was restricted from the normal lifting and pushing a lawn mower, especially over a quarter acre of grass and prairie grass was out of the question.

I am an instructor and Karate school owner of which we have 28 in the city. Instructors, students and parents within our school consider ourselves family, "ohana" as they say in Hawaii where our school is headquartered. It is not unusual within our school to reach out and help ohana when the circumstance is needed. After my surgery many friends came forward to help out during my recovery. Two, a firefighter father and his son, both karate students from one of our other locations, came to the house to aerate our yard and mow the lawn and plow through the now overgrown prairie grass that over the back half of our yard. Jeff and Chris stepped up, did the job needing to be done because, I believe, it was the right thing to do. I'll never forget that act of kindness.

Jeff retired as a firefighter and for awhile tried his hand as an instructor and school owner, then moved on to other fulfilling endeavors. Chris, a strong, good looking young man worked odd jobs like most kids do as they're growing up. But his real passion was the martial arts, and he was good at it. Chris, unfortunately was also troubled with ill health and we nearly lost him a couple of times over the years. It seems he always sprang back and as soon as he was up to snuff he'd be back on the karate mats doing what he loved. He was always happy, smiling, and encouraging with a kind word for everyone. He always addressed me as Mr. Levett, asked me how I was doing, how was I feeling and was there anything he could do for me.

In November, 2011 Chris didn't wake up, his health had finally failed him. I reached out to Jeff and his wife Jeri not only as a friend wanting to show my gratitude for their kindness in my time of need, but as a father who had also lost a son knowing they would soon be facing the unknown feelings, emptiness and uncertainties that I had already experienced.

We don't see each other often but we message each other and on occasion Jeff calls; He knows he can call at any time. I will be there for him and his family as they were and, if needed, would be for me.

That's what we do in The Compassionate Friends, we help each other and we become friends. Bereaved parents have a certain bond that connects them differently than it does with their other friends. They know the rules, the foolish things not to say like, "It's been a year, aren't you over it yet?" and the things to say, like their child's name they hope is never forgotten.  
Think compassionately.

Stew Levett - Editor  
The Pike Peak Chapter of The Compassionate Friends





## 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)  
Colorado - [www.tcfcolorado.org](http://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](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

### ASK MY MOM HOW SHE IS

My mom, she tells a lot of lies, she never did before,  
but from now until she dies, she'll tell a whole lot more.

Ask my mom how she is and because she can't explain,  
she will tell a little lie because she can't describe the pain.

Ask my mom how she is, she'll say, "I'm alright"  
If that's the truth then tell me, why does she cry each night?

Ask my mom how she is, she seems to cope so well,  
she doesn't have a choice you see nor the strength to yell.

Ask my mom how she is, "I'm fine, I'm well, I'm coping,"  
For God's sake mom, just tell the truth, just say your heart is broken.

She'll love me all her life, I loved her all of mine,  
But if you ask her how she is, she'll lie and say she's fine.

I am here in heaven, I cannot hug from here,  
If she lies to you don't listen, hug her and hold her near.

On the day we meet again I'll smile and I'll be bold,  
I'll say, "You're lucky to get in here, Mom, with all the lies you told!"

- Author Unknown -

### Spring Waiting

Winter's end is almost here.  
Crocus struggle in the snow.  
Sunlight has a softer glow.  
Is the winter long this year?  
Spring waits, watching for a cue...  
Not to rush your grief away.  
But to be there, when you say.  
Spring is waiting, friend, for you.  
Find a little time for Spring,  
Even if your days are troubled.  
Let a little sunshine in  
Let your memories be doubled.  
Take a little time to see  
All the things your child was seeing –  
And your tears will help your heart  
Find a better time for being.  
Sascha Wagner



I can tell by that look friend, that you need to talk,...So come take my hand and let's go for a walk.  
See, I'm not like the others – I won't shy away, because I want to hear what you've got to say. Your child has died and you need to be heard, but they don't want to hear a single word.  
They tell you your child's "with God", so be strong. They say all the "right" things that somehow seem wrong.  
They're just hurting for you and trying to say, they'd give anything to help take your pain away.  
But they're struggling with feelings they can't understand so forgive them for not offering a helping hand.  
I'll walk in your shoes for more than a mile. I'll wait while you cry and be glad if you smile.  
I won't criticize you or judge you or scorn, I'll just stay and listen 'til your night turns to morn.  
Yes, the journey is hard and unbearably long, and I know that you think that you're not quite that strong.  
So just take my hand 'cause I've got time to spare, and I know how it hurts, friend, for I have been there.  
See, I owe a debt you can help me repay; for not long ago, I was helped the same way.  
As I stumbled and fell thru a world so unreal, so believe when I say that I know how you feel.  
I don't look for praise or financial gain, and I'm sure not the kind who gets joy out of pain.  
I'm just a strong shoulder who'll be here 'til the end-  
I'll be your Compassionate Friend.

~with permission

© Steven L. Channing  
The Compassionate Friends  
Winnipeg, Canada





## HEALING WORDS

### SLIPPING UP THE SLIDE

Did you ever try to climb up a slide when you were a child?  
Skip the stairs - once you've mastered the slide that way.  
It seems impossible to pass up the challenge of climbing up the slide itself.  
Up an inch or two, then back, and on it goes until you finally reach the top.  
The more bereaved parents I talk to, the more I know that life after a child's death is like that venture up the slide.  
Daily decisions and trials push us backwards on that slide.  
Faith and courage shove us up toward the top.  
Set a goal to live and work with spirit even though you lose your footing and slide backwards now and then ... we will reach the top - TOGETHER.

*Mary Pauley TCF LaGrange, GA*

### *WHEN THE BOTTLE IS BROKEN - By Richard Auletta*

The common folklore is that even in today's generation, men are the strong and stoic ones with their emotions tightly bottled up. They are supposed to be the stronger of the sexes and have to be there for their spouses and children and show strength. And then, their child dies.

What happens then? Does the bottle break?

I often wonder why more men do not come to Compassionate Friends meetings. Is it a group primarily for women? I don't think so, yet, the numbers are shocking. Why? Surely, the loss, the pain, the anger is there in equal portions amongst the sexes. Why is it that a man can not cry and suddenly finds himself after the death of a child, watching a tender moment in a movie and tears flow?

I often say that since the death of my daughter, "Winter is wonderful because as you are walking the streets you can always blame the tears falling down your face on the cold winter wind." Many men I have spoken with will admit that they want to cry but don't know how. For those who can't, Compassionate Friends surely seems to be an answer. The pent up emotions often flow in break-out sessions and who but the most callous can sit in the room and listen to the reasons why parents are there without a tear being brought to their eyes.

We walk a road that only those who have shared the horrible tragedy of the loss of a child can ever understand. But, those of us who find it easy to open the flood gates, prompted by the memories of our lost child, have a responsibility to reach out to others and help them learn the gift of a good cry.

***Richard Auletta is a member of the NYC Compassionate Friends Chapter and is on the NYC Chapter Steering Committee. . He serves as a group facilitator and often leads a Father's Group. He is the bereaved father of Kelly.***

**Pikes Peak Chapter  
The Compassionate Friends**



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

**March, 2013**

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