

May, 2012



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**

PIKES PEAK CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



Upcoming Events

May 17th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
Special Guest - Alan Pedersen previewing his DVD *Walking Through Grief*
May 26th - Annual Balloon Launch & Bar-b-que

The Pikes Peak Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is please to announce the advanced screening by ALAN PEDERSEN of his new DVD *Walking Through Grief*. In addition Alan will perform a few of his song which made him internationally recognized and talk about the making of the DVD.

Walking Through Grief is a powerful documentary style DVD presentation on the subject of grief and loss, hosted by Alan Pedersen and Dr. Darcie Sims. Alan is nationally recognized as one of the most inspirational speakers and presenters on grief and loss. As a bereaved father and an award winning singer/songwriter, Alan has recorded 4 successful CD's of original songs about the grief journey. Dr. Darcie Sims is a top selling author and one of the foremost educators and presenters on bereavement in the world.

Walking Through Grief is unlike any program ever produced. This 70 minute DVD tenderly chronicles the journey of several contributors who have experienced great loss in their lives and have once again found hope. It is informative, inspirational, and entertaining, filled with wit and wisdom wrapped around practical tools and advice. This program will greatly benefit anyone who has experienced the death of someone they love, and all who want to better understand the grief journey.

Be one of the first to view **Walking Through Grief** at this special advanced screening.

www.GriefAndBeyond.com

[www.Facebook.com/GriefAndBeyond](https://www.facebook.com/GriefAndBeyond)



Pikes Peak Chapter Steering Committee

CHAPTER LEADER

LARAINÉ ANDERSON

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/FACILITATOR

LEONIE CRAMER

Son, Julian Anthony King

Don't miss this opportunity to watch this special DVD presentation and get a chance to hear Alan sing.

Space will be limited so please arrive promptly to insure your spot.



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 May 17th, 2012.

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.tcfcolorado.org

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS MEMORIAL DAY & PICNIC BALLOON LAUNCH

The Compassionate Friends of the Pikes Peak Region is very excited to once again host our annual barbeque picnic and balloon launch on Saturday, May 26th, Memorial Day Weekend.

We will start the afternoon at 1 p.m. with our barbeque potluck for all in attendance. The event will be held once again at TCF Steering Committee 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 following our lunch and time to socialize. RSVP's are suggested so we may plan seating and food. Be sure to mark your calendars now for this annual event.

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 food and fellowship of the other TCF members anyway.

Last years picnic and was a huge success so don't miss this years opportunity to have a nice picnic lunch, talk with friends 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!





Online Support

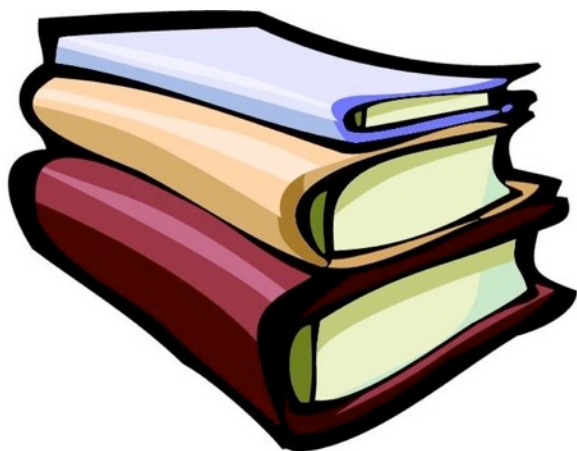
The Compassionate Friends offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, 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

Lending Library

Our chapter offers a lending library with a variety of books on grief and bereavement. We encourage you to browse our library and feel free to check out a book to take home with you. We only ask that you sign out the books and return them in a timely manner so others can have the benefit of them as well. If you have read a book that was helpful to you and would like to share it with others, donating that book in your child's name is a wonderful way to honor them. Stickers are placed in these books to note whose memory they are given in.



TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

CHAPTER LEADER LARAINE 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

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



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Cody Darby	May 1	Lori & Steve Darby
Robyn Kulas	May 2	Patty Kulas
Susan Gordon	May 3	Mr & Mrs Arthur Gordon
Martin Joseph Lanoue	May 4	Judy Lanoue
Patrick Niedringhaus	May 5	Leah & Dave Niedringhaus
Angela Gisela Martinez	May 5	Maria Hymes
Abbi Rose Starzynski	May 5	Sherry Starzynski
Douglas Radowski	May 7	Patricia Radowski & Renee Roettger
Jose N. Camacho	May 8	William & Veronica Camacho
Gregory Randall Davis	May 9	Cora Davis
Henry Rio	May 13	Isabelle & Ed Rio
Henry Rael	May 13	Isabelle & Ron Rael, Maria Rael
Jacob Hunter Smathers	May 14	Patty, Becky & Renee Smathers
David Allen McGough	May 14	Lillian McGough
Ashley Meston	May 15	Jerry Meston
Michael Benjamin Decker	May 16	Mary & Jerry Decker
Denise Elaine Bear	May 16	Dona & Tanya Flores
Andrew Paul Weaver	May 16	Valerie Lightbody
Reanna Maria Reedy	May 17	Carol Reedy
Rocke Lee Corley	May 18	Jeanne Corley
Jeremy Laurence	May 20	Ted & Sherrill Laurence
Jonathan Ell-Duncan	May 20	Dan & Becky Duncan
Brian Michael Gregory	May 20	Roy & Phyllis Gregory
Joshua C. Attardi	May 23	Paula Attardi
Jeffrey Russell Schumaker	May 23	John & Vera Schumaker
Skylar Lynn Boyle Ringland	May 24	Cathleen Boyle
Gary Michael Owens	May 24	Freda Maria Garcia
Audrina Elyse Escano	May 25	Chris & Christina Pearson
Tristan Millman Troeger	May 25	Lisa & Joel Millman
Josh Huston	May 27	Rodney & Michelle Moreno
Damon Vincent Christianson	May 30	Chaela Christianson
Konrad Ferrar	May 31	Maria Hymes





Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Julie Bankston	25 years	May 4	Peggy Bankston
Martin Joseph Lanoue	1 day	May 4	Judy Lanoue
Jason Lamb	32 years	May 5	Jan Lyons-Lamb
Joshua Cesar Menendez	15 months	May 10	Dianna Castellanos & Julio Menendez
Kendall Ford Young	14 years	May 11	Ford & Ann Young
Justin A. Clayton	16 years	May 12	Terry & Sharon Clayton
Genevieve Sucharski	18 years	May 12	Mark & Karen Sucharski
Branden Howland	17 years	May 13	Julianne Howland
Kaden France	2 weeks	May 14	Jeremy & Sarah France
Jason Nathaniel Lurch	23 years	May 15	Kathleen & John Lurch
Matthew Stockwell	25 years	May 15	Mark & Sally Stockwell
Gavin Perez	2 years	May 16	Shannon Paolini
Tyrone Binnebose	2 years	May 18	Natasha Binnebose
Kimberley Dawn Leir	6 years	May 18	Adaline & Herb Leir
Anthony Lopez	21 years	May 18	Paul & Trudy Lopez
Michael Williams, Jr.	28 years	May 18	Carmen Randall
Kira Ann Schager	5 years	May 19	Frank & Lori Schager
Eric Evans	26 years	May 21	Linda & Dick Evans
Christopher Clayton Hodson	22 years	May 22	Eric & Janice Hodson
Christopher J. Novich	15 years	May 22	Susan & Joe Novich
Zachary Nicholas Hoke	6 years	May 24	Debra & Steve Hoke
Kenny Lanza	27 years	May 25	Chuck & April Lanza
Zack Orr	12 years	May 25	Dave & Sharon Orr
Leah Ann Trutna	21 years	May 28	Steve & Phyllis Trutna
Nicholas Clare Cousineau	3 years	May 29	George & Chris Cousineau
Gina Marie Geffre	14 years	May 29	Joann Jahraus
Michael William Sarmento	46 years	May 29	Donna (Sarmento) Pugh
Nicolas Jay Broughton	18 years	May 30	Rose Broughton
Mallory Paulene Hendrickson	1 year	May 30	Celine & Gary Hendrickson

*You were my mother and my friend,
Which was unusual.
Somehow our characters still blend:
Your wisdom and my will.*

*I turned, and you were there for me;
I spoke, you understood.
I felt cared for, but also free;
You loved, and I was good.*

*I'm fortunate that I was born
To someone just like you;
I love you still. Though I am gone,
I live in what you do.*



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

Dear Mr. Hallmark®

I am writing to you from heaven, and though it must appear a rather strange idea, I see everything from here. I just popped in to visit your stores to find a card. A card of love for my mother, as this day for her is hard.

There must be some mistake I thought, every card you could imagine, except that I could not find a card, from a child who lives in heaven. She is still a mother too, no matter where I reside. I had to leave, she understands, but oh the tears she's cried.

I thought that if I wrote you, that you would come to know, that though I live in heaven now, I still love my mother so. She talks with me and dreams with me; we still share laughter too. Memories – our way of speaking now, would you see what you could do?

My mother carries me in her heart, her tears she hides from sight. She writes poems to honor me, sometimes far into the night. She plants flowers in my garden, there my living memory dwells.

She writes to other grieving parents, trying to ease their pain as well.

So you see, Mr. Hallmark®, though I no longer live on earth, I must find a way to remind her of her wondrous worth. She needs to be honored, and remembered too, just as the children of earth will do.

Thank you Mr. Hallmark®, I know you'll do your best. I have done all I can do; to you I'll leave the rest. Find a way to tell her, how much she means to me, until I can do it myself, when she joins me in eternity.

Happy Mother's Day to All the Mothers
Anne-Marie - Greenville, SC TCF

Memorial Day

For each grave where a soldier
lies at his rest

For each prayer that is said today
out of love

For each sign of remembering
someone who died

Let us also give thought to the
mothers and fathers,

The brothers and sisters

The friends and lovers

whom death left behind.

Sasha

Mother And Child Reunion

by Paul Simon

Mother And Child Reunion lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Group

*I know the songs of Paul Simon quite well having
sung them for over 40 years.*

*But singing the songs and seeing the lyrics in print
can be two very different things. Such is the case
with Mother And Child Reunion from his first solo
album. You can hear the original song on YouTube by
following the below link;*

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Pa5H_4lBXs

No I would not give you false hope
On this strange and mournful day
But the mother and child reunion
Is only a motion away
Oh, little darling of mine

I can't for the life of me
Remember a sadder day
I know they say let it be
But it just don't work out that way
And the course of a lifetime runs
Over and over again

No I would not give you false hope
On this strange and mournful day
But the mother and child reunion
Is only a motion away
Oh, little darling of mine

I just can't believe It's so
Though it seems strange to say
I never been laid so low
In such a mysterious way
And the course of a lifetime runs
Over and over again

But I would not give you false hope
On this strange and mournful day
When the mother and child reunion
Is only a motion away

Oh the mother and child reunion
Is only a motion away
Oh the mother and child reunion
Is only a moment away



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?*



Miriam Gentry in memory of

Joseph Richardson

DOB: April 6th - Anniversary: December 13th

Love to
"Our Special Angel"



Chaela Christianson in memory of

Damon Vincent Christianson

DOB: May 30th - Anniversary: July 3rd

You were born on Memorial Day and every
day is Memorial Day for me.
Happy Birthday, my sweet son.

Special Note to Siblings and Fathers:

An emotional and sentimental day is Mother's Day. It can be a very lonely day for Moms. Even if there are other children in the family, that one child is not there to wish her "Happy Mother's Day".

Siblings, if Mom does not respond as you would like her to on that day, give her a big hug and tell her you love her. Be gentle with her. She loves you. She is your mother, but she is also a mother who is lonely for the absent child.

Dad, hold your wife close and tenderly on that day. She may do a lot of daydreaming and crying and her mind may wander back to when ... if the child that dies was an 'only child', Dad, be extra kind and loving, maybe take her to lunch or dinner because even though that child cannot be here with her, she is still a mother and mother forever she will be.

Taken from TCF, Victoria TX





HEALING WORDS

As I think about Mother's Day this year I become very nostalgic. Every spring during my elementary school days, I looked forward to the day the order form for our plants for Mother's Day came from our local florist. I always ordered pansies for my mom, the ones with purple and yellow or yellow and brown. I could hardly wait for the delivery day to come, so that I could present them to my mother. She always received them with much surprise and appreciation, as if it were a gift she had never received before or even expected.

As a child, Mother's Day was an important occasion to my family. My dad always insisted we wear the traditional carnations: white if one's mother was deceased, red if still living. He would make a special trip to the florist to purchase them. We would attend church, then drive to a nearby city for lunch.

I remember clearly my first Mother's Day being "the mom." Our Anna was only about three weeks old, so I had a very limited idea of what it really meant to be "the mom." But I do remember being treated like a queen and enjoying every minute of it.

Over the next several years as we raised our two daughters, my husband continued to affirm the women of our family. On Mother's Day he always bought roses for each of his girls. Anna would get a yellow one. Debbie would get a peach-colored one. The red roses were for me. When the girls were young I would receive and treasure their hand-made cards. As they grew into young adults, their choices in purchased cards were just as significant. Every year as Mother's Day approached, we looked forward again to spending the day together as a family. We would attend church, go out for my favorite brunch, have lots of conversation, fill our bellies to the max, laugh until we cried, be silly, make memories... That was before...

Then the unthinkable happened. Our daughter, Anna, died. How could those special days of love and togetherness, laughter and fun become among the most dreaded days a mother must face? How could those days that we had once anticipated with joy and excitement bring such unbelievable heartache and confusion, loneliness and tears?

During those first few years we were simply lost. This was new, undesired, and certainly not requested, territory that we had been forced to enter. What were we supposed to do? How were we supposed to act? I just wanted to run away or stay in bed with the sheets over my head. The traditions we had come to love and enjoy became intensely painful. It became an impossible task to attend church services or go out for brunch. Seeing families enjoying their togetherness pierced my heart with an endless ache. My tear-filled eyes burned at the thought of being surrounded by "intact" families. Feelings of anger and resentment overwhelmed my heart. On the inside I wanted to lash out at all those mothers and fathers who were surrounded by all of their children and those sisters and brothers who had no clue what it would be like to lose a sibling. As the day drew to a close I felt tremendous relief that it was over. Exhausted, I would lay silently with my head on my pillow as quiet tears lulled me to sleep.

The feelings that I have shared are not uncommon in the early years of grief with those who have experienced the death of a child, grandchild or sibling. If you or someone you care about has experienced the death of a child, I offer some suggestions from those who have been there to help you do to make it through this time.

- **Realize this day is full of potential for a multitude of feelings to sneak up on you and catch you by surprise.**
- **Especially during those early years, do whatever works for you. This may be a time of being in "survival mode." Trying to please everyone else can cause undo stress.**
- **If you have surviving children who want to honor you, communicate your feelings to them. Let them know that while you are grieving the death of their brother or sister, you still love them.**
- **Try to keep things simple and uncomplicated.**
- **Visit the cemetery.**
- **You may choose to pretend the day just does not exist and do something completely unrelated to Mother's Day. Clean the house, take a nap, get out of town. One of my Compassionate Friends spends Mother's Day at Home Depot. No one bothers her there or mentions Mother's Day.**
- **Have a good cry. If you have trouble crying, just stop by a card shop and read a card or two. Maybe even buy the card that you believe your child would give you.**
- **Go to the recycle bin and break glass into the proper receptacle.**
- **Know that the days before the holiday may be worse than the actual day.**

As with all holidays, be reassured that what you do this year does not have to be what you do next year. As my Compassionate Friends and I have found, with proper grief work over time, the intensity of our feelings has softened. This will happen for you, as well. In the meantime, be gentle with yourself. And remember, "you need not walk alone."

*By Paula Funk
TCF Safe Harbor Chapter
Petoskey, MI*



Damon Christianson 5/30/'77 - 7/3/'10

This is a poem I cherish written one Thanksgiving by my son, Damon, for his precious friend,
Holli Henson, and me (Chaela Christianson)



For the Two that Mean the Most

For the two that mean the most to me
This poem I write for you.
I've never been good at loving either one
But my heart was always true
One she sits before me now
Her life she gave to me
And wiped my tears, and watched my pain
Still gently hugging me
The other one, she means so much
But I am not her dream
And even though she's lost the love
I'll always stand behind her dreams
One thing I've learned from each of you
Is that love still has a price
And to one I owe and the other too
For your hearts have been so nice.



**Pikes Peak Chapter
The Compassionate Friends**



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

May, 2012

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