



The Compassionate Friends

Lehigh Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



484-597-0240

Email: tcflehighvalley@gmail.com

www.lehighvalleytcf.org

facebook.com/TCFlehighvalley

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TCF Online Support Community

www.compassionatefriends.org
To participate, click on "Online Support" under the resource tab

Who We Are

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a national nonprofit self-help organization that offers friendship, understanding and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There are no religious affiliations and no dues.

About Our Meetings...

Meetings are held 2nd Monday each month from 7 to 9 pm at Sacred Heart Hospital (2nd Flr. Conference Center), 4th & Chew Sts, Allentown. Free parking deck passes are available at the meeting.

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and mature siblings. Younger siblings may benefit from one of the children's bereavement groups listed below. Meetings vary, from sharing, to guest speakers, to special presentations. Separate sharing sessions are offered to new members. Participation in group sharing is confidential and voluntary. Our hope is that being among other bereaved parents you may feel free to talk, cry and share, but it is okay to just come and listen too.

We invite you to bring a picture of your child to display at the meeting for their birth or anniversary month or at any time.

To Our New Members

Making the decision to come to your first meeting can be difficult. It can also be difficult to return for a second or third meeting, but we ask that you attend three meetings before deciding whether or not TCF will work for you. We cannot walk your grief journey for you, but we can take your hand and walk beside you if you allow us to. We have no easy answers or quick fixes, but we care, share and understand. Although our members circumstances may be different, we have all "been there"...we are all grieving the loss of a child and therefore we can truly say we understand. You are not alone.

Meeting and Events Calendar

Dec 8 TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting - More information on page 2

Dec 9 Joint Candle Lighting Remembrance Program - More information on page 2

Jan 13 Monthly Meeting - General Sharing

~~*~*~*~* Inclement Weather *~*~*~*~*~*

Cancellations due to inclement weather will be posted on the chapter facebook page (facebook.com/TCFLehighValley), on the website calendar and on voicemail message at 484-891-0823

Other Local TCF Chapters Meetings

Carbon County

1st Wednesday 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn.
501 Delaware Ave. Palmerton
610-826-2938
Email: pannibiss@aol.com

Easton

2nd Thursday 7 - 9 pm
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,
2115 Washington Blvd., Easton
610-866-5468
Email: szabojanos1@verizon.net

Quakertown

2nd Tuesday 7:30 - 9 pm
St. Lukes Quakertown Hospital
1021 Park Ave, Quakertown
215-536-0173

Email: tcfquakertownchapter@verizon.net

Local Children's Support Groups

Ryan's Tree for Grieving Children (ages 5-18)

Sessions are offered at various times throughout the year.
For information or to register contact Krista Malone @ 610-997-7120 or visit www.slnh.org/ryanstree

Children's General Bereavement Group (ages 5 - 13)

Jeanette Laube, MA facilitates a children's bereavement group on an as needed basis. Preregistration required. Meeting day, time & place coincide with TCF, LV meetings. To preregister or get further information contact Jeanette @ 610-762-5783

TCF Telephone Friends

For those times that you need to connect with someone between meetings, the following bereaved parents are available to listen and share

Infant Loss	Cathy McDonald... 610 391-1474	Suicide.....	John & Maria Szabo..... 610 866-5468
Multiple Children/ General Loss.....	Betty Thompson... 610 868-0303	Addiction.....	Nancy Howe..... 484-863-4324
Only Child.....	Shelly Garst..... 484 241-5396	Homicide.....	Ginger Renner..... 610-967-5113

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Events and Announcements



TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting

December 8, 2013

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles to honor and remember children who have died. Candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. We encourage you to participate by joining us at one of the local observances or in your own home.

Local Observances

Lehigh Valley - hosted by Tom & Eva Siebert. The social begins at 5:30pm with a covered dish meal followed by the candle lighting at 7 pm. All TCF members welcome! Covered dishes welcome but not necessary, candles provided. For Directions & to RSVP call Tom and Eva at 610-967-5886

Carbon County - 6:30 at The Zion UCC Church, 2nd & Iron Sts, Lehighton. The program includes readings, music & candle lighting, followed by refreshments and fellowship. Participants encouraged to create a photo ornament for the remembrance tree. For information: davelora@ptd.net or 610-826-2938

TCF Joint Chapter Candle Light Remembrance Service

December 9, 2013 6:45 - 9pm Sacred Heart Hospital Auditorium

We invite all TCF members as well as anyone who has experienced the loss of a child to join us as we celebrate the lives of our children, grandchildren and siblings in this very special service of remembrance. The program includes remembrance music, poetry, a slideshow of our children, a sibling candle wreath lighting, memorial scroll and more. The program starts promptly at 7 p.m., so please try to arrive 15-20 minutes prior.

The Memorial Scroll, inscribed with the names of our children and siblings who have died, will be on display. If your child's or sibling's name has yet to be inscribed, you will have an opportunity to add it. A memory table will be set up to display your photos. Following the program a reception will be held in the meeting room across the hall from the Auditorium. Please bring a favorite treat or finger food to share

Note: Volunteers are needed to help with the service and sibling volunteers for the sibling wreath lighting and readings. To volunteer please contact Kathy Collins at 484-891-0823

Hand Painted Personalized Ornaments & "Forever In My Heart" Wristbands available for purchase at Remembrance Service



Dawn Delong will be personalizing her own hand crafted Angel & Butterfly ornaments. Angels are available as a boy or girl as shown in the picture above. John Szabo will also be on hand selling TCF Wristbands

All proceeds benefit the chapter and the TCF Children's Memorial Garden

Important Information For Our Readers

Recently we lost the services of the printer who has been printing our newsletter at a reduced cost. We have been searching for another source of affordable printing. Although a few printers have offered us a discount, even the best discounted price represents a \$200.⁰⁰ a month/ 2400.⁰⁰ a year cost increase. Because this increase is more, at this time, than our typical monthly income (from love gifts, donations and fundraising) it is not something we can sustain.

We will continue to seek out an affordable printing solution or a business or individual willing to underwrite the cost increase. In the event that neither of these options pan out we are also actively discussing alternative solutions, some of which include Bi -monthly or quarterly newsletter, a yearly subscription fee, email newsletters & reduction of pages.

We prefer to not make any changes because we know that newsletter provides a important lifeline to our members especially those that those that are not able to attend meetings for face to face support.

So we are asking for your help. If you know someone who may be able to provide reduced cost printing or underwrite the cost of printing or if you have ideas about how we can cut down the cost please call Kathy at 484-891-0823

Our Children Loved and Remembered Always

Birthdays and Anniversary dates can be especially difficult.

Please keep the parents, grandparents and siblings of the following children in your heart this month

December Birthdays

Ryan Balliet	Son of Bruce and Pat Balliet	Dec 22
Robert Beidleman	Son of David and Margie Beidleman; Brother of Jill Metzger and David J. Beidleman	Dec 6
Hunter Bremmer	Son of David Bremmer; Brother of Heather Bremmer; Grandson of John Bremmar, Jr	Dec 12
Ryan Cole	Son of Terry and Michele Cole	Dec 4
Christine Conner	Daughter of Elaine Conner; Sister of Stephen Conner	Dec 15
Nathaniel Davis	Son of Ronald and Elizabeth Davis	Dec 9
Kelly Gallagher	Daughter of Marigrace Gallagher	Dec 31
Kevin Garrison	Son of Kathleen Garrison; Brother of Anthony Garrison; Uncle of Logan Garrison;	Dec 2
Brett Harris	Son of Chester & Carol Kinsey, Jr.; Brother of Terry & Lisa; Father of Shaun, Shannon, Nicole & Brett ; Grandfather of Chasity, Shaun Jr. & Justin	Dec 10
Justin Hilbert	Son of Robert and Joan Hilbert; Brother of Ashley & Kyle Hilbert	Dec 22
Richard "Rich" Hollabaugh	Son of Wayne and Linda Hollabaugh	Dec 20
Adam LaRizzio	Son of Teddy and Lori LaRizzio	Dec 17
Brian Lentz	Son of Gary and Judy Lentz	Dec 9
Doreen Meyers Ortiz	Daughter of Terry and Angeline Meyers; Sister of Dwayne T. Meyers	Dec 18
Jason Miller	Son of Phil and Pam Miller	Dec 10
Lisa Munjone	Daughter of Lorraine Parkhurst	Dec 5
Cody Myers	Son of David and Denise Myers; Brother of Travis, Crystal and Benjamin Myers	Dec 12
Gianna Natale	Daughter of Daniel and Jaclyn Natale; Sister of Jaden Natale	Dec 26
Amanda Rehrig	Daughter of Gary and Roseanne Rehrig; Sister of Ernie Rehrig	Dec 7
Matthew Snyder	Son of Robert and Elizabeth Snyder; Brother of Megan and Jesse Snyder	Dec 22
Travis "Bo" Tkach	Son of Jim and Sandi Tkach; Brother of Tristin & Tyler Tkach	Dec 25

December Anniversaries

Patricia Alliston	Daughter of Glen and Peggy Wessner	Dec 3
Salvatore Bartolotta	Son of Salvatore and Mary Bartolotta	Dec 27
Robert Beidleman	Son of David and Margie Beidleman; Brother of Jill Metzger and David J. Beidleman	Dec 26
Joshua Booth	Son of Les and Bonnie Booth	Dec 27
Justin Bramich	Son of Nancy Quinton; Brother of Ryan & Ian Bramich	Dec 31
Daniel Catino	Son of Stacie Catino; Brother of Hunter, Tanner & Joshua Catino	Dec 5
Christine Conner	Daughter of Elaine Conner; Sister of Stephen Conner	Dec 30
David DeLong	Son of Gene and Dawn DeLong; Brother of Jamie DeLong; Grandson of David Kaufman; Nephew of Jill Lichty	Dec 7
Wayne Ernst	Son of Julius and Doris Ernst; Brother of David Ernst	Dec 24
Rocky Fraccica	Son of Rocky and Sadie Fraccica	Dec 9
Jason Frey	Son of Lee Frey & Susan Center; Brother of Jared and Janel Frey	Dec 26
Kimberly Kissel	Daughter of Michael and Gloria Kissel, Jr.; Sister of Colleen; Micheal Kissel & Lisa Zelko	Dec 22
Randy Krieg	Brother of Ryan, Aaron, & Alicia Kreig; Grandson of Gloria Perlis	Dec 1
Todd Kuhns	Son of Shannon Kuhns & Leonard Kuhns; Brother of Leonard & Londa Kuhns	Dec 15
Trever Landis	Son of Robin Landis; Brother of Marlea, Dana & Kelsey Landis	Dec 9
Michael McLaughlin	Son of James and Julia McLaughlin; Brother of Matthew and Patrick McLaughlin	Dec 24
Cathy Mertz	Daughter of Franklin and Lucille Reinhard; Sister of Cheryl Ann McCue; Mother of Melissa Ann Gurdineer	Dec 17
Gianna Natale	Daughter of Daniel and Jaclyn Natale; Sister of Jaden Natale	Dec 26
Susetta Olewine	Daughter of Louis and Joyce Szoke	Dec 2
Bradley Peters	Son of Robert and Anne Peters, Jr.; Brother of Jessica Mohn and Morgan Peters	Dec 11
Lauren Schneck	Daughter of James and Lisa Schneck	Dec 2
Steven Seibert	Son of Thomas and Eva Seibert; Brother of Nick & Krista Seibert; Grandson of Eva Juhasz	Dec 22
Manya Shipreck	Daughter of Aline Shipreck; Sister of Carolina Shipreck	Dec 13
Travis Szerencits	Son of Craig and Cookie Harron	Dec 1
Chad Wagner	Son of Carl and Pamela Fehnel; Brother of Cori; Husband of Kelli Wagner; Father of Morgan & Hannah Wagner	Dec 23
Gregory Weiland, Jr	Son of Robin Weiland; Brother of Rozalyn Weiland	Dec 12

*May it comfort you to know that
death cannot diminish the important ways your loved one touched your life,
that grief cannot take away the happiness you shared, that sorrow will fade in time
but love remains forever.*

Unknown

Love Gifts

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Our largest monthly expense is the printing and mailing of newsletters to our 400 readers. Your tax deductible Love Gift donations enables the chapter to continue our mission of reaching out to the newly bereaved and providing ongoing support to all our members. Love Gifts are most often given in memory of a child who has died. They may also be given in memory of or in honor of a friend, relative or special person. To make a love gift donation please use form on page 11

We thank the following for their generous donations this month

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ♥ Mr & Mrs. August Kaufman | Gary Lichty
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ James & Linda VanHorn | Gary Lichty
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ Ester & Ed Beck | Gary Lichty
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ John & Mary Louise Labows | Gary Lichty
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ Friends and Co-workers at NAVSISA | Gary Lichty
<i>In Loving Memory</i> |
| ♥ Cindy & John Chryst | Benjamin Fry
<i>In memory of our son, Benjamin Fry. Loving you & missing you forever</i> |
| ♥ William & Elizabeth Arey | Patricia Arey
<i>Patti, remembering you and how much you loved Christmas</i> |
| ♥ David & Denise Myers | Cody Alexander Myers
<i>We love and miss you!</i> |
| ♥ Fern Gerth | Loren Holl
<i>In loving memory of my son</i> |
| ♥ Julia McLaughlin | Michael Patrick McLaughlin
<i>Missing you. Mom, Matthew & Patrick</i> |
| ♥ Stephen & Jeannette Viglione | Jeanne Catherine Hurley
<i>Daughter of Stephen & Jeannette Viglione; Mother of Cole Hurley; Sister of Michele Yankowky & Robert Wambold, Jr</i> |
| ♥ David Bremmer | Hunter Bremmer
<i>Happy Birthday. I love and miss you so much! Love, Dad</i> |
| ♥ Aline Shipreck | Manya Victoria Shipreck
<i>Our Love, Mommy & Carolina</i> |

Donations and Contributions

TCF Lehigh Valley Contributors

- ★ Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown
for meeting room and drinks
- ★ Mary Ann Donuts, Allentown
for meeting snacks
- ★ Giant Food Store Employees, Village West, Allentown
For United Way Contributions

- ★ Aetna Payroll Contributors

- ★ United Way Payroll Contributors

TCF Carbon County Contributors

- ★ Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn.
for meeting room
- ★ The Country Harvest, Palmerton
for meeting snacks

To contribute through the United Way to The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley, ask your employer for the appropriate form and use the number 12116 in the write-in area.

You Walked Through Our Lives

By Marilyn Auen,
West Central IA TCF

You took a walk into our lives,
And paused a little while.
You gave us love and happiness,
With every glowing smile.

This pause of only eighteen years,
Really wasn't long.

While you were here you gave us love,
A love so warm and strong.

A special gift for us to share,
A gift that was a treasure.
What you have meant to all our lives
We cannot really measure.

You stopped to brighten up our days,
To fill our hearts with love
You made our lives more worthwhile,
'Til God spoke from above.

Your walk continued on then,
Your visit here was done.
Our lives seemed filled with darkness,
For we lost our glowing sun.

Your footprints will remain,
They'll never fade away.
For they're secure upon each heart
And there they'll always stay.

So, once again this Christmas
You walk through every heart
We all still feel your presence,
And really aren't apart



The Island of Misfit Parents

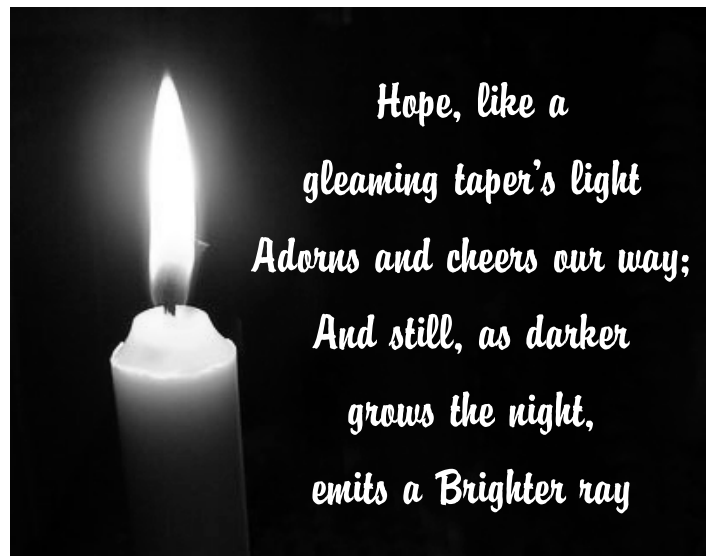
By Linda M. Trimmer, York, PA
As published in Bereavement Magazine 1997

In the Christmas animation "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer," Rudolph and his friends go to an island full of "misfit toys." The toys are stuck there because they are different. The choo-choo train has square wheels, and the jack-in-the-box doesn't have a spring. These toys are broken and left alone with no hope. As a bereaved parent, those have been my feelings exactly. For many years I too could not see beyond my island.

Eventually Rudolph returns safely to the North Pole. He tells Santa about the island and the broken toys. Santa goes to the island with his elves, and the toys are repaired. They don't look all shiny and bright like new toys, but they do have hope beyond the island now.

Had I written this article prior to this year, I'd have stopped at the fact that the toys were broken and saw no hope. For most bereaved parents, that is quite true for some length of time. Now my ending tells me (and you) that there is hope beyond our island. We won't be shiny and brand new, for we all have gone through many changes. But after much time for repair, we can experience the feeling of "hope" once more.

Holiday Blessings.



Continuing Reminders of Your Loss: Coping with the Holidays

By Helen Fitzgerald, Fairfax Va

- *Decide on how much of the holiday you can or want to handle and modify your traditions. Writing out greeting cards, for example, may be too much. In that case, pass them up this year. or at least trim your list down. If decorations are more than you can handle, put up what you can or ask for help from family.*
- *If shopping is too difficult, try giving cash, gift cards or ordering gifts from a catalog or online.*
- *Once you have thought the holiday through, have a conference with family members and or friends to let them know your plans and to hear theirs. Be prepared to compromise a bit to reach a plan that everyone can accept.*
- *You may decide to honor or your loved one by having a photo of him/her in a special place decorated with evergreens and brightly colored ornaments. Or perhaps a miniature tree could be purchased-and decorations added every year in his/her memory. Let your family know your idea and get their input.*
- *Know that there still may be friends who have not heard of your loved one's death and you may receive a Christmas card addressed to them or asking about him/her.*
- *Allow yourself time to think about and acknowledge your grief and realize your holiday may have both happy and sad moments.*
- *If others in your family are willing, take time out to talk about your loved one who has died.*
- *Set limits for yourself. Grief is exhausting work and you need to have quiet time to rest and to reflect.*
- *Be careful with excessive use of alcohol and overeating they can make you depressed.*
- *Some people elect to do something very different on the first Christmas without their loved one, something so different that the absence of the loved one won't be so obvious, maybe even going to a totally different place. People then often return to old traditions the following year perhaps developing some new traditions to add to the old.*
- *You may decide to work on the holiday if you have this option, giving a co-worker a chance to spend the holiday with his or her family.*
- *You may decide to do volunteer work on this day such as working in a hospital or with the homeless.*
- *Think of a response you can use to the greeting, "Merry Christmas" or "Happy New Year.*
- *The religious services of Christmas can be reassuring, or they can be upsetting. Think how they would affect you and then decide what would be best for you as far as attending or not attending them.*
- *Plan something you can look forward to after the holiday in January or February to lessen the post-holiday letdown and as reward for getting through them.*
- *Look for a lecture or workshop on how to cope with the holidays .*
- *Remember the anticipation of a holiday is often harder than the actual day.*
- *If you find the stress, anxiety and loneliness too overwhelming, it is always ok to reach out for help. Contact your clergy, a good friend or a professional.*

The Christmas Tears

Linda McInturff,
TCF/Southern Maryland

I will gather with the family,
Christmas Day is finally here.
But I will reserve a moment of time
To shed my Christmas Tears.

This special moment is just for us
A mother and her son
I'll laugh and cry about times gone by
And all the things we've done.

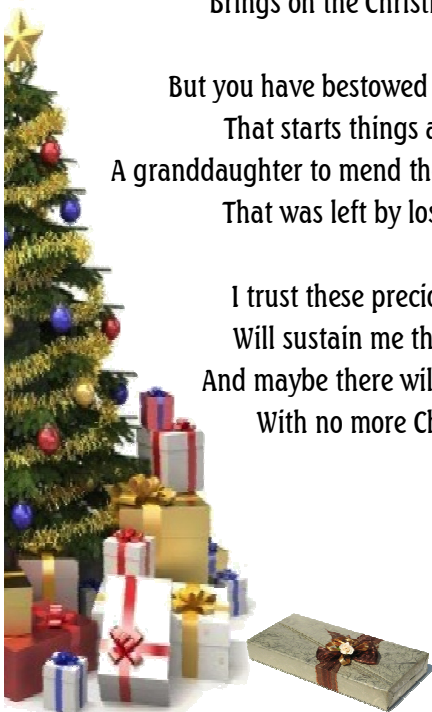
As I sing our Christmas carols
I'll open the gift you made for me.
This gift is more precious than gold itself,
It's the gift of your memory.

As I sift through the layers of tissue
That are in this gift of mine,
It takes me back to a Christmas past,
To a brighter and happier time.

I'll relive all the Christmases
That we had for twenty-two years,
Knowing that there will be no more
Brings on the Christmas tears.

But you have bestowed a second gift,
That starts things all anew,
A granddaughter to mend the hole in my heart,
That was left by losing you.

I trust these precious gifts of yours
Will sustain me through the years,
And maybe there will be a Christmas day,
With no more Christmas tears.



Memory Tree

Martha Grogan, Cumming, GA

My nephew, Alex, 18, was killed in a car accident January 31, 1996. He was like a son to me. My brother, Lowell (Alex's dad) died by suicide July 1, 1999. After Alex died, I decorated a "Memory Tree" and have continued to do so every Christmas since 1996. Now, I will do the same for my sweet, loving brother. I decorate the tree with cards, pictures of Alex, baby shoes, hand prints, angels, gifts, doves from the funeral and floral arrangements, little handmade ornaments given to me by Alex... anything personal I have received or collected over the years from him. Of course, I decorate with lights...lots of lights which make the "memories" stand out. The tree topper is a huge bow with the last picture of Alex attached to it. The tree gives me comfort each time I pass by it and it's a reminder to my friends and visitors that YES, this person lived and YES, this person made a difference in my life and his life counted as much as anyone's... and the memories live on.



CHANUKAH THOUGHTS

Stephanie Hesse
TCF Rockland County, NY
and North Palm Beach, FL

At this season of lights,
we remember the light you brought into our lives:
The light of your laughter
The light of your wit and intelligence
The light of your love
May the time not be distant
when the memory of these lights
will illumine our hearts and minds
And eradicate the darkness therein.

A Grandparent's Holiday Dilemma

By Margaret Gerner

Bereaved Grandmother and Mother , St. Louis, MO

A difficult part of being a bereaved grandparent at the holiday time is that we are expected to be all things to all our children. To those who have healthy and complete families we are expected to share in their joy. To our bereaved child we are expected to understand, empathize and, above all, be aware of the special difficulty the holidays bring for them. We are put in the middle between our children, happy families on one side, and a sad one on the other. In addition, we have our own pain to deal with.

It seems to me that this is an impossible situation and frequently we are expected to do the impossible, but I don't think we can, nor do I think we should try. Because I am a bereaved parent myself and I have experienced that special grief, I know my bereaved daughter's second Christmas without her Emily will be a hard one, maybe even harder than the first one. It will be especially hard for her because this year my oldest son and his (complete) family will come from Minneapolis to St. Louis for Christmas. He has three little ones; the oldest is the same age that Emily would be. Seeing Bob's children, especially Robbie, will remind Dorothy even more that Emily will not be physically a part of our holidays.

For weeks I have been tormented with thoughts on how I will handle this situation. Will I act at the holidays in a way that will make my son happy, or in ways that will be supportive of my daughter? Granted, there will be separate times when I can be happy that my son and his family are here and happy to see my grandchildren, whom I don't see often; and there will be a time when I can be totally supportive of my bereaved daughter. But this will not be possible for all the time, especially on Christmas Day. I have decided that, as hard as it may be to do. I must make a choice between them this year, and I choose to be supportive of my bereaved daughter. This may sound unfair, but is it? When our children were younger, weren't there

times, such as when one was sick and needed our special attention, didn't we give it to them, oft times to the neglect of the others? This didn't mean we loved the sick child more than the others. It simply meant that the sick one needed us more than the others at that time. Our bereaved child is experiencing the most pain he/she

will ever experience in his/her life and right now, needs us more.

Unfortunately, our child with the complete family may resent our attention to the bereaved child and feel neglected maybe even hurt, and for that we are sorry, but our child who has not lost a child has not experienced the constant pain and hurt our bereaved child has for a year or longer. We cannot let ourselves be too concerned that he/she may feel neglected or hurt for a few days.

River of Light

By Genesse Bourdeau Gentry

TCF N. CA Regional Coordinator

A river of light, flowing east to west
 lingering an hour, then moving on.
 Like the children, here too short a time,
 lighting our lives, then too soon gone.
 Gathering together, being here for each other
 on one special night this time each year,
 We light the candles with pride and sorrow
 reminding the world, they once were here.
 Their lives live on in us, the living,
 who guard their memories like precious gold.
 To have them back for just one minute
 we would give a thousand fold.
 Tonight we say they are loved,
 they're remembered, and they will always be.
 Like candle flames, they warm our souls
 and light our lives, to help us see.
 A river of light, flowing east to west
 lingering an hour, then moving on.
 Like the children, here too short a time,
 lighting our lives . . . then ... gone.

TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting

December 8th 2013, 7 pm

Whether you choose to join with other bereaved families at a local observance or to take part in your own home, we encourage you to light a candle and speak the name of a child gone too soon.

Sibling Page

DEAR SANTA CLAUS

By David J. Miller, TCF Lehigh Valley
for his brother, Daniel Sarley

If I might have just one wish,
this painful Christmas morn,
It would be for another day with my brother,
for whom I mourn.

See Santa, I lost him this year
on a horrid hot night in July
And worst of it all,
I never got to say "good-bye".

He never really got to know that to me
he was more than a "bro",
or the empty spot he left inside me.

So please Santa, if you truly live and
because in you I believe,
Just give me one last day
with the one for whom I grieve.

I promise not to ask
for even one more special gift,
Because to have another day with Danny
would truly give my life a lift.

I know now he's gone for good,
but in me he'll forever live,
Although it would be nice
to hear that old familiar voice.

Since now it seems so hard,
to have that old "Christmas cheer",
So all I can really say is,
I'll try harder next year.

As of now I understand that song,
the one called "Blue Christmas"
Because for me it has come true,
I know now that without my bro Danny,
it won't be white but blue.

Is This A Dream?

By Traci Morlock, Bereaved Parents Usa, St Louis, MO

My brother, Sean, died seven years ago. Over the year leading up to this anniversary I have often thought, is this a dream? If it is a dream, I wish I'd wake up.

One night a couple of months ago, I had a dream within a dream. The dream was the strangest I've ever had. It was about the day Sean died. I remembered every moment of that awful day. I woke up from this dream crying to find Sean sitting next to my bed. He was shaking me awake and asking me what was wrong. I told Sean I had a horrible dream. I told him every detail of my dream. He laughed at me and gave me a hug. Then Sean said to me, "How can I be dead? I'm right here with you!" Then we both started laughing. I woke from that dream laughing with Sean. I felt so good. Then I realized that I had dreamed the last part. When I realized that, I was so angry.

Even after seven years, the pain, the anger, and the hoping are still there. Even though the pain and anger don't come as often for me, it is still there and I know it's okay. Just like I know that I'm not crazy or dumb for holding on to the hope. I do realize that Sean is gone and the only place I will see him for a long time is in my dreams. I know that he loved me and always will and that he is with me every day. All I can do is welcome him into my dreams.

Note: Sibling volunteers are needed to light the sibling wreath and as readers for the Dec. 9th Candle Light Remembrance Service.

To Volunteer contact Kathy Collins @
484-891-0823 or
TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com

Love Gift Form

*Please consider making a Love Gift to support the Compassionate Friends today.
Your gift will help defray the cost of chapter expenses such as the newsletter mailings, meetings and our outreach to the newly bereaved.
The Compassionate Friends is a 501c(3) non-profit organization and your donations are fully tax deductible.*

MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE 1ST OF THE MONTH PRIOR TO THE MONTH YOU WISH YOUR GIFT PUBLISHED

Contributor Name _____

Mail to:

Address _____

**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER
P.O. BOX 149
BATH, PA 18014**

Phone _____

Email Address _____

I would like to make a donation In Memory of In Honor of A Chapter Gift (without memorial or honorarium)

Name of person gift given for _____

Edition Month _____ desired publication month . Deadline by the 1st of the prior month

Special Text - Brief Messages Please. Poems & story submissions are always welcome and should be sent directly to the Newsletter Editor for inclusion in the newsletter.

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____ Lehigh Valley Carbon County Easton

Note: Please mail Carbon County & Easton gifts to the addresses below

If your gift is for Lehigh Valley please designate which of the following your gift is for (you may circle more than one)

Newsletter Expenses Postage Office Expenses Outreach Program Special Events

Mailing Addresses for Carbon County and Easton Chapters

The Compassionate Friends, Carbon County
C/O Patti Bissell
365 Drift Rd
Palmerton, Pa 18071

The Compassionate Friends, Easton
C/O John Szabo
1514 Sculac Dr
Bethlehem, Pa 18020

Member Update Form

Please use this form to change or update information or permit publication of child's Birth and Anniversary dates in "Our Children Remembered" (OCR) newsletter section.

Mail this update form to: Kathleen Collins, 2971 Pheasant Dr., Northampton, PA 18067 **or email updates to:** TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com

The following is Change or Update of information Change of Address or Phone Number Permission (check this box to grant OCR publication permission)

Your Name _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Mailing Address (where your newsletter is to be sent to) _____

Child's Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Date of Death _____

Parent's Names _____

Child's Sibling's Names _____

If this is a information change ... please indicate what changes need to be made (i.e. name change, correction, sibling name addition etc...)

TCF Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.

We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that we feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source for strength; while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in a deep depression; while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts and help each other grieve as well as to grow.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends

Siblings Walking Together

(Formerly Sibling Credo)

We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters.

Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us.

Sometimes we will need the support of our friends.

At other times we need our families to be there.

Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be.

We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.

When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed.

About This Newsletter

This newsletter comes to you courtesy of The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley Chapter with the hope that it will be a helpful resource for you on your grief journey.

If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter please contact the newsletter editor by phone at 484-891-0823; by email: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com or by mail sent to TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA 18014

Please Note: Our newsletters are mailed through Bulk Mail and the Post Office does not forward or hold bulk mail. It is returned to us at our expense.

If you are moving or having your mail held please remember to inform the Newsletter Editor (see information above). If your newsletter is returned to us and we are not notified your name will be removed from the mailing list.



Newsletter Submissions

Submit articles and poetry to the editor by the first of the proceeding month. Include the author's name & your contact information.

Mail to: TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA 18014 or email to: [email: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com](mailto:TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com)