



# The Compassionate Friends

## Lehigh Valley Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies



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November 2014

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#### TCF Online Support

www.compassionatefriends.org  
click on "Online Support" under  
the "Find Support" 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.

## 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.

## Meeting and Events Calendar

**November 10** Monthly Meeting - General Sharing

**December 8** Candle Light Remembrance Service *in lieu of monthly support group meeting*

**December 14** TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting

## Meeting Cancellations

All cancellations will be posted on our **facebook page** - [facebook.com/TCFLehighValley](http://facebook.com/TCFLehighValley), on our **website homepage & calendar** - [www.lehighvalleytcf.org](http://www.lehighvalleytcf.org) and on **voicemail** 484-891-0823. Please refer to these sources for updates on the meetings

## 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: pannbiss@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)** - [www.slhn.org/ryanstree](http://www.slhn.org/ryanstree)

Sessions are offered at various times throughout the year. Call Krista Malone @ 610-997-7120 for information or register

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

Jeanette Laube, MA facilitates a children's bereavement group on a as needed basis. Preregistration required. Meeting day, time & place coincide with TCF, LV meetings. Call 610-762-5783 to register or for more information

## 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 .....	Kim Szep.....	610-730-3111	Suicide.....	John & Maria Szabo.....	610 866-5468
Infant Loss .....	Cathy McDonald...	610 391-1474	Addiction.....	Nancy Howe.....	484-863-4324
Multiple Children/ General Loss.....	Betty Thompson...	610 868-0303	Homicide.....	Ginger Renner.....	610-967-5113
Only Child.....	Shelly Garst.....	484 241-5396			

# News, Events & Announcements

## Button Machine

November 10, 2014

The button machine will be at November's meeting from 6:30 - 7 pm.

To have a button made: Arrive early with a color or black & white COPY of a picture on Plain Paper (NOT photo paper) of your child. Buttons are 2 1/4 in diameter.

*Please Note: The photo you supply will be cut and used to make the button, please do not bring original photos*



## TCF Joint Chapter Candle Light Remembrance Service December 8, 2014

Sacred Heart Hospital Auditorium 6:45 - 9pm



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 one a favorite treat or finger food to share. Hand crafted memorial personalized ornaments and TCF "Forever In My Heart" wristbands will also be available for purchase. All proceeds benefit The Compassionate Friends



*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 or TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com*



## The 18th Annual TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting December 14, 2014

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the annual Worldwide Candle Lighting creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Started in the US in 1997 as a small internet observance it has since swelled in numbers. Hundreds of formal candle lightings are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

You are invited to post a message in the Remembrance Book, available during the event, at TCF's national website.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting gives bereaved families everywhere the opportunity to remember their children *so that their lights may always shine!*

**In Our Area:** Lehigh Valley members, Tom & Eva Siebert are hosting their annual Worldwide Candle Lighting Candle Lighting Social at their home on Dec 14th at 5:30. Everyone welcome! Covered dishes welcome but not necessary, candles provided. For Directions & to RSVP call Tom and Eva at 610 967-5886

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## 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.

## To Our Seasoned Members

Think back to your first meeting, You were hurt, confused and felt alone in your grief. Remember the comfort you felt when you found you weren't alone and that others that had been where you were and survived. Remember the love and support you felt as fellow members offered on your grief journey. Now you are stronger and may not feel the need to attend meetings for aid and comfort. We need you though. New members need you. They need your encouragement, support and wisdom. If you haven't attended a meeting in awhile please consider coming back to offer hope to those who now feel lost and see no hope.

*"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely help another without helping himself"*

*~Ralph Waldo Emerson*

## Why Should I be Thankful ?

By Kathy Hahn TCP, Lower Bucks, PA

The question tormented me the first year after my daughter died. I felt like my life was over and that I had been condemned to a miserable existence for however long I would be "stuck" on Earth. I couldn't think of a single thing that I wanted to thank God for. The whole idea infuriated me. In fact, I would have loved to slap him one if I could have.

This is now my 5th Thanksgiving without Colleen. I have a wonderful, supportive, and loving family. I have a roof over my head, food, a bed to sleep in, and-the best friends a person could want. The ironic thing is, I had all those things back then, too, I just couldn't see them because I was too busy concentrating on what I'd lost. The point I'm trying to make is that you can choose how you're going to feel. Of course, you'll be sad and miss your child; we all will. But you can dwell on what you do have. If you look, I'm sure that you'll find many things to be grateful for. The more of them that you can find, the healthier your whole life will be.

Whether you like it or not, life is going to go on. You can lock yourself in your room with the covers pulled over your head, or you can grab everything life has to offer and live it to its fullest. If there is anything we all should have learned from our children's short lives, it is that every moment is too precious to waste.

I wish all of you love, peace, and happiness on Thanksgiving and every day.

**There's a vacant seat by the fire those words of Dickens say,  
In place of a child no longer here to join the Holiday.  
So we'll open our precious memories like precious gifts you share.  
We'll rejoice in these and friends like you, who understand and care.**

*Vicki Douglas Otto, TCF Tucson AR*

# Our Children Loved and Remembered Always

**Birthday and Anniversary dates can be especially difficult.**

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

Please Note: Due to privacy concerns Birthday and Anniversary listings are only published with permission for Parents/Guardians, Siblings and Grandparents. If your child, grandchild or siblings name does not appear or a correction is needed please complete and sign the Update Form on page 11 and mail to the address indicated. Thank You

## November Birthdays

Aaron Abud	Son of Jose and Susan Abud; Brother of Ariana & Sophia and Susan Abud	Nov 14
Salvatore Bartolotta	Son of Salvatore and Mary Bartolotta	Nov 26
Natasha Bartosic	Daughter of Traci Jennings; Sister of Aaron Bartosic & the late Joshua Michael Bartosic	Nov 21
Carlos Berra	Son of Jose and Rita Familia; Brother of David Familia	Nov 2
David Betz	Son of Jennifer Betz	Nov 8
Christopher Carman	Son of Carol Carman; Brother of Bruce Virga, Fran Catino & The Late Brian Virga	Nov 22
Barry Donchez	Son of Edward and Olga Donchez; Brother of Linda Shive and Mike Donchez	Nov 28
Steven Fussner	Son of George and Linda Fussner; Brother of Kathleen Kowker and Jeffrey Fussner	Nov 5
James "Jim" Gum	Son of Sherwood and June Gum; Brother of Deborah Martini	Nov 21
Timothy Hamm	Son of Shirley Hamm	Nov 1
Jill Harris	Daughter of Fred and Pat Andrew; Sister of Jeff	Nov 5
Molly Hude	Daughter of Rex and Yvonne Hude; Granddaughter of Nancy Kornafel	Nov 2
Jordon Hyndman	Son of Robin Hyndman; Brother of Shawna & Briana Hyndman	Nov 14
Brandon Jesse	Son of Cathi Jesse	Nov 2
Kimberly Kohl	Daughter of Lyndon and Linda Kohl	Nov 17
Matthew Kolb	Brother of Sarah and Andrew Kolb	Nov 26
Todd Kuhns	Son of Leonard Kuhns & Shannon Kuhns; Brother of Leonard & Londa Kuhns	Nov 9
Joy Laube	Daughter of Barry and Jeanette Laube	Nov 3
Nathan Loicano	Brother of Andrea Loiacano	Nov 17
Kevin Martin	Son of J. Ronald and Linda Martin	Nov 7
Jacob Miller	Son of William R and Caroline P Miller	Nov 15
Thomas Miller	Grandson of Emma Butz	Nov 21
Glenn Miller, Jr.	Son of Lin Miller; Brother of Lorrie Woolever	Nov 20
Daniel Rostkowski	Son of Shirley May Rostkowski; Brother of Janet Wise and Andrew Rostkowski	Nov 28
Matthew Solderitch	Son of Brenda Solderitch & the Late Stephen Solderitch Sr.; Brother of Tina Saginario	Nov 24
Jason Steigerwalt	Son of Sandra Steigerwalt	Nov 8
Debra Sweeney	Daughter of Richard and Doris Hosler; Sister of Donna Mallard	Nov 16
Richard "Rick" Wetherhold	Son of Franklin and Eleanor Wetherhold; Brother of Michael Wetherhold	Nov 20
Shawn Williams	Son of Terry and Deborah Williams; Brother of Stephen Williams & Stacey Bedics	Nov 5
Christopher Williamson	Son of Chris and Kim Williamson; Brother of Christina Joy Williamson	Nov 12

## November Anniversaries

John Ashner, Jr.	Son of John & Grace Ashner	Nov 8
Natasha Bartosic	Daughter of Traci Jennings; Sister of Aaron Bartosic & late Joshua Michael Bartosic	Nov 22
Carlos Berra	Son of Jose & Rita Familia; Brother of David Familia	Nov 12
David Betz	Son of Jennifer Betz	Nov 8
John Counterman, III	Son of Mary Jo Ackerly; Brother of Theresa Legarski	Nov 2
Nicholas Fetchko	Son of George & Fran Fetchko; Brother of Rebecca & Andrew Fetchko	Nov 20
Kelly Gallagher	Daughter of Marigrace Gallagher	Nov 15
Timothy Hamm	Son of Shirley Hamm	Nov 20
Anne Marie Mabus Heater	Daughter of Wayne & Frances Mabus; Sister of Steven Mabus	Nov 25
Julie Howe	Daughter of Timothy & Nancy Howe; Sister of Melanie Howe	Nov 19
Tara Koshinski	Daughter of Daniel & Mary Koshinski Sr; Granddaughter of Joanne Gordon	Nov 18
Gavin Krum	Son of David & Lora Krum; Brother of The Late Dylan Krum; Grandson of Henry & Shirley Long and Nevin Krum	Nov 27
Michael Kulp	Son of Mike & Tamara Kulp; Brother of Mikell Kulp	Nov 17
Charles Kunsman, Jr	Son of Charles & Joan Kunsman; Brother of Sherry Flanagan, Sandra Kunsman, the late Walter Alfonso & the late David Kunsman	Nov 19
Joseph Lestishock	Son of Marjorie Lestishock	Nov 2
Nathan Loicano	Brother of Andrea Loiacano	Nov 18
Jacob Miller	Son of William R & Caroline P Miller	Nov 16
Jason Miller	Son of Phil & Pam Miller	Nov 28
Bob Minotti	Brother of Lauren Wallitsch	Nov 1
PJ Pfenning	Son of Maureen Pfenning; Brother of Mandy Sciarillo & Lauren Pfenning	Nov 5
Pablo Rivera, Jr	Son of Beverly Rivera; Brother of Jeremy & Jesserina Rivera	Nov 19
Jason Rute	Son of Bill & Linda Cavanaugh	Nov 13
Scott Sargeant	Son of Gary & Phyllis Sargeant; Brother of Gary & Paul	Nov 1
Michael Schondorfer, Sr	Son of Alma Schondorfer	Nov 26
Dean Schuler	Son of Betty Schuler & the late Lester Schuler	Nov 19
Matthew Solderitch	Son of Brenda Solderitch & the Late Stephen Solderitch Sr.; Brother of Tina Saginario	Nov 3
Tracy Szoke	Daughter of Randal & Kim Szoke; Sister of Trisha Remaley	Nov 24
James Waitkus, Jr.	Brother of Alice Walbert	Nov 26
Darren Whipple	Brother of Jean Marie Yurkovitch	Nov 2
Christopher Williamson	Son of Chris & Kim Williamson; Brother of Christina Joy Williamson	Nov 12
Quinn Wolfe	Daughter of Matt Wolfe	Nov 17
Kenneth Zellner	Son of Kenneth & Barbara Zellner	Nov 15

***Please Note:*** Due to privacy concerns Birthday and Anniversary listings are only published with permission for parents/guardians, siblings and grandparents. If your child, grandchild or siblings name does not appear above or a correction is needed please complete and sign the Update Form on page 11 and mail to the address indicated.

## 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

Contributor	In Memory of
♥Maureen Pfenning	<b>PJ Pfenning</b> <i>Always in our hearts. Miss You</i>
♥Beverly Cavanaugh	<b>Holly Lynn Cavanaugh</b> <i>Miss You! All our love always, Mom &amp; Bo XOXO</i>
♥Brenda Solderitch	<b>Matthew Solderitch</b> <i>Happy 36th Birthday. I love and miss you so very much. Love You, Mom</i>
♥John & Grace Ashner	<b>John Ashner, Jr.</b> <i>We love and miss you more every day. Love, Mom &amp; Dad</i>
♥Dolores Kulik	<b>Richard J. Kulik</b> <i>Forever in our hearts. Love, Mom, Christina and Michael</i>
♥Betty Schuler	<b>Dean Lynn Schuler</b> <i>Love and Miss You</i>
♥Shirley Rostkowski	<b>Daniel Rostkowski</b> <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥Doris Hosler	<b>Debra L. Sweeney</b> <i>Happy 61st Birthday! Forever in our hearts.</i>
♥Yvonne Hude	<b>Molly Hude</b> <i>Happy 26th Birthday Molly! Forever young &amp; beautiful. Always in our hearts. Love Mom, Dad, Gram &amp; all who love you</i>
♥Sherwood & June Gum	<b>James Gum</b> <i>Forever in our hearts. Love, Mom &amp; Dad</i>
♥Fred & Pat Andrew	<b>Jill Patricia Harris</b> <i>Happy Birthday Jill. We love and miss you. Mom, Dad, Jeff, Sam &amp; Alex</i>
♥Shirley Hamm	<b>Timothy Hamm</b> <i>Love Always, Mom, Brothers &amp; Sister</i>
♥Edward & Olga Donchez	<i>Barry E. Donchez</i> <i>In honor of your birthday, holidays and our loss of you!</i>
♥Dawn & Gene DeLong	<i>David G DeLong</i> <i>In loving memory of our son &amp; brother. We miss you every day. 24 years is too long.</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  
In Memory of David Todd Smith*

★ *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.





# One November Day

By Sherry Brown, TCF Lehigh Valley, PA

Submitted by Brenda Solderitch in memory of her son Matthew

Everything we do  
Changes our life in some way,  
This happened to me  
One November day,  
That's when I had  
My son; You see,  
It was a joyful  
Time for me.  
As time went on  
And years went by,  
He became his own person  
A wonderful guy  
  
Those who knew Him  
Loved Him so much,  
It amazes me;  
All the lives He touched,  
For those of you;  
That he never met,  
He is one person you'd  
Never Forget,  
He's in God's Hands  
For He passed away,  
But I'll always remember  
That one November Day.



## Autumn

By Lily de Lauder TCF, Van Nuys, CA

In the fall  
When amber leaves are shed  
Softly - silently,  
Like tears that wait to flow  
I watch and grieve.



My heart beats sadly  
In the fall,  
Tis then I miss you  
Most of all.



## The Inscription

By Annabelle Gunnet Jones  
Bereaved Parents, USA "A Journey Together"

"Here lies an American Solder  
Known but to God."  
As I read the words over softly  
I said to myself, "How odd!"  
  
For I knew the Unknown Soldier  
Ever since he was a lad.  
He was just an average lad,  
Neither too good nor too bad.  
He liked to play ball and marbles,  
Climb trees, fish, and swim,  
Collect moths and arrowheads.  
  
I watched him grow to manhood  
And fall in love with a fair-haired lass,  
While a war-torn world away  
The cry was "they shall not pass."  
I was there on the station platform  
When he kissed his sweetheart Goodbye.  
There - he started his journey  
To a foreign land to die.  
  
Letters came from o'er the billows;  
What a story they did tell!  
Then - the message - he was missing  
In the Argonne's flaming hell.  
Back across the restless ocean  
To his own dear native shore,  
they brought his broken body home,  
Here to sleep forever more.  
  
Back and forth, the sentry paces  
With his firmly shouldered gun,  
ever guarding the sleep of the soldier  
Called "unknown" by everyone.  
But I know his name, so listen!  
While I tell it to everyone.  
He's not an Unknown Soldier  
For his mother called him - Son.

# Helping Yourself Heal During the Holiday Season

by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

Holidays are often difficult for anyone who has experienced the death of someone loved. Rather than being times of family togetherness, sharing and thanksgiving, holidays can bring feelings of sadness, loss and emptiness.

## **Love Does Not End With Death**

Since love does not end with death, holidays may result in a renewed sense of personal grief - a feeling of loss unlike that experienced in the routine of daily living. Society encourages you to join in the holiday spirit, but all around you the sounds, sights and smells trigger memories of the one you love who has died.

No simple guidelines exist that will take away the hurt you are feeling. We hope, however, the following suggestions will help you better cope with your grief during this joyful, yet painful, time of the year. As you read through this article, remember that by being tolerant and compassionate with yourself, you will continue to heal.

## **Talk About Your Grief**

During the holiday season, don't be afraid to express your feelings of grief. Ignoring your grief won't make the pain go away and talking about it openly often makes you feel better. Find caring friends and relatives who will listen-without judging you. They will help make you feel understood.

## **Be tolerant of Your Physical and Psychological Limits**

Feelings of loss will probably leave you fatigued. Your low energy level may naturally slow you down. Respect what your body and mind are telling you. And lower your own expectations about being at your peak during the holiday season.

## **Eliminate Unnecessary Stress**

You may already feel stressed, so don't overextend yourself. Avoid isolating yourself, but be sure to recognize the need to have special time for yourself. Realize also that merely "keeping busy" won't distract you from your grief, but may actually increase stress and postpone the need to talk out thoughts and feelings related to your grief.

## **Be With Supportive, Comforting People**

Identify those friends and relatives who understand that the holiday season can increase your sense of loss and who will allow you to talk openly about your feelings. Find those persons who encourage you to be yourself and accept your feelings-both happy and sad.

## **Talk About the Person Who Has Died**

Include the person's name in your holiday conversation. If you are able to talk candidly, other people are more likely to recognize your need to remember that special person who was an important part of your life.

## **Do What Is Right for You During the Holidays**

Well-meaning friends and family often try to prescribe what is good for you during the holidays. Instead of going along with their plans, focus on what you want to do. Discuss your wishes with a caring, trusted friend. Talking about these wishes will help you clarify what it is you want to do. As you become aware of your needs, share them with your friends and family.

## **Plan Ahead for Family Gatherings**

Decide which family traditions you want to continue and which new ones you would like to begin. Structure your holiday time. This will help you anticipate activities, rather than just reacting to whatever happens. Getting caught off guard can create feelings of panic, fear and anxiety during the time of the year when your feelings of grief are already heightened. As you make your plans, however, leave room to change them if you feel it is appropriate.

## **Embrace Your Treasure of Memories**

Memories are one of the best legacies that exist after the death of someone loved. And holidays always make you think about times past. Instead of ignoring these memories, share them with your family and friends. Keep in mind that memories are tinged with both happiness and sadness. If your memories bring laughter, smile. If your memories bring sadness, then it's alright to cry. Memories that were made in love-no one can ever take them away from you.

## **Renew Your Resources for Living**

Spend time thinking about the meaning and purpose of your life. The death of someone loved created opportunities for taking inventory of your life-past, present and future. The combination of a holiday and a loss naturally results in looking inward and assessing your individual situation. Make the best use of this time to define the positive things in life that surround you.

## **Express Your Faith**

During the holidays, you may find a renewed sense of faith or discover a new set of beliefs. Associate with people who understand and respect your need to talk about these beliefs. If your faith is important, you may want to attend a holiday service or special religious ceremony. As you approach the holidays, remember: grief is both a necessity and a privilege. It comes as a result of giving and receiving love. Don't let anyone take your grief away. Love yourself. Be patient with yourself. And allow yourself to be surrounded by loving, caring people.



## Secrets From a Mom at Thanksgiving

By Alice Monroe, TCF Mesa County Chapter

Yes, our dining room table is old. The wood has white spots where a pot of tea spilled one day, the circle over there is the place where a hot dish of mashed potatoes sat without a pad under it, the scratches are lines from homework and running little cars on its surface. The legs need to be glued back together from time to time. It doesn't even match the rest of the furniture any more.

But ...he sat at this table. My son. He ate here with the rest of the family. He helped me set this table many times. So, I think I'll keep it. And I'll light a candle and put it in the middle, even if we eat in the middle of the day. And I'll polish the chair he sat in. And I'll slowly eat a piece of pumpkin pie...just for him. No one needs to know...it's just a mother's secret.

## Dear Child Of Mine

By Betty Stevens, TCF Baltimore MD



Dear Child of mine, who died before your time,  
I am grateful for your life.

Though death brought the end of hopes and dreams,  
Still I am grateful for your life.

Through you I have known joy and sorrow, laughter and tears. Through you my life has been enriched, my compassion heightened and I am more keenly aware of the grief of others.

I am grateful for your life.

Now I draw upon my memories of you, some happy, some sad. They keep you close in many ways. They are priceless, precious memories that help me bear the pain. Through them I will learn to live again.

I am grateful for your life.

I have been blessed by your life and left with your love. I will share that love and strive to live to be a blessing to others. Dear Child of mine, though you died before your time, you are never far away from me. I have loved you in my heart of hearts and there I will love you through eternity.

I am grateful for your life. Dear Child of mine.

## "Don't Steal My Grief "

By Faye McCord, TCF Jackson, MS

Don't try to make me feel better,  
By quipping your cute jokes.  
Don't try to rob me of my pain,  
When I need it as my cloak.

I know you probably think,  
You're doing me a favor,  
But what you don't understand,  
Is that my sadness is my savior.

Don't try to steal my right,  
To express my grief in my own way.  
You see, I lost my child,  
And grief is the price that I must pay.

I need to feel the hurt and pain,  
As it beats inside my chest.  
Don't try to steal my grief,  
When it's the only feeling I have left.

**Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness.** It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the price we pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve.

~Rabbi Earl Grollman

**No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear.** I am not afraid, but the sensation is like being afraid. The same fluttering in the stomach, the same restlessness, the yawning. I keep swallowing. At other times it feels like being mildly drunk or confused.

There is a sort of invisible blanket between the world and me. I find it hard to take in what anyone says. Or perhaps, hard to want to take it in. It is so uninteresting. And no one told me about the laziness of grief...I loathe the slightest effort...

~C.S. Lewis

# Sibling Page

## He is Gone

By Selma Lepinski TCF Winnipeg, CA

He is gone  
 And he's never coming back  
 I hope he knows  
 How much he's missed  
 He touched so many people  
 They loved him too  
 But they have no idea  
 What I'm going through.

I cover up my feelings  
 As much as I can  
 Nobody has to know  
 The pain I have inside  
 Sometimes I just can't hold back  
 My feelings of loneliness and despair  
 I love him so much  
 This world is not fair.

Why him?  
 He was such a good brother  
 I still don't understand  
 Why it happened to him  
 I can't handle these feelings  
 They have become too much  
 I just want to be with him  
 Am I asking too much?  
 I love him I always will  
 But one day we'll be together -forever.

## Sibling's Point of View

By Alissa Roeder, TCF, Pikes Peak, CO

There are times when I see a fiery sunset of the silver glow of the moon, and I see my brother, and feel the peace as if he still exists. But these times are few, and most of what I see is - what he is missing.

Cry now, my silent tears, quietly so no one hears. They don't know the pain I go through, day after day and through the years.

Note:

Sibling volunteers are needed to light the sibling wreath and as readers for the Dec. 8th Candle Light Remembrance Service.

To Volunteer contact

Kathy Collins @

484-891-0823 or

TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com

## Do Thanksgiving Your Way

Lovingly Lifted From Bereaved Parents USA Newsletter

Who says we have to follow  
 Thanksgiving, the traditional way?  
 So what if we don't have  
 baked ham or turkey?  
 Were tired of that old bird  
 so why not beef jerky?  
 No, no cranberry sauce, no candied  
 yams or pumpkin pie.  
 She hated pumpkin pie,  
 and truly that's no lie.

This is our very first Thanksgiving  
 without her, you know.  
 We're not in the mood for all the fuss  
 it's still touch-n-go.  
 Mom's in the kitchen doing  
 the best she can.  
 She's crying her eyes out,  
 flooding the no-stick pan.  
 So, What about it, gang?

### 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) section.

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

The following is  Information change or update  Address or Phone change  Permission (check this box to grant OCR publication Newsletter/ Web permission)

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (required) \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Child \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (where your newsletter is to be sent to) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian Names \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Sibling's & or Grandparents Names (We publish only Parents/Guardians, Grandparents and Sibling names)

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

# The Compassionate Friends 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 the 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.

We are living a life very different from what we envisioned,

and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak.

Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life.

Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows  
as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

## 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](mailto:TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com)  
or by mail sent to TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA 18014



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### 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)