



# The Compassionate Friends

## Lehigh Valley Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies



May 2014

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#### Mailing Address:

PO Box 149  
Bath, PA 18014

**Phone:**  
484-597-0240

**Email:**  
tcflehighvalley@gmail.com

**Website**  
www.lehighvalleytcf.org

**Facebook Page**  
facebook.com/TCFlehighvalley

#### Steering Committee

Brian & Kathleen Collins, Gene & Dawn DeLong, George Geiger, Brenda Solderitch, Sharon Yurick;

#### Newsletter Editor

Kathleen Collins  
TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com  
484-891-0823

#### Treasurer / Newsletter Mailing Coordinator

Brenda Solderitch

#### Remembrance

**Secretary**  
Birthday Cards  
Maria Szabo

#### Acknowledgement

**Secretary**  
Sharon Yurick

#### Newly Bereaved Packet

George & Pat Geiger

#### Newly Bereaved

**Contact**  
Dawn DeLong  
484-597-0240

#### TCF Regional Coordinators

Ann Walsh & Bobbi Milne

#### TCF National Headquarters

1(877) 969-0010 (toll-free)  
www.compassionatefriends.org

#### 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

**May 12** Monthly Meeting - Topic: Mothers Day & General Sharing

**June 9** Monthly Meeting - Topic: Mothers Day & General Sharing

**June 14** TCF Picnic and Memorial Balloon Launch - Information - Page 2 ; RSVP - Page 12

### Meeting Cancellations

All cancellations will be posted on our **facebook page - facebook.com/TCFLehighValley**, on our **website homepage & calendar - 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	Easton	Quakertown
1st Wednesday 6:30 - 8:30 pm Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn. 501 Delaware Ave. Palmerton 610-826-2938 Email: pannbiss@aol.com	2nd Thursday 7 - 9 pm Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2115 Washington Blvd., Easton 610-866-5468 Email: szabojanos1@verizon.net	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

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	

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## **TCF Picnic and Memorial Balloon Launch**

**June 14, 2014 12 Noon**

**Moore Township Recreation Center**

All Families and friends who have experienced the death of a child, grandchild or sibling are invited to join as we celebrate and remember the lives of our children.

Lunch will begin at 12:00 noon followed by the Memorial Balloon release and fellowship.

TCF provides hot dogs, drinks, paper products. Attendees are asked to bring a side dish or dessert to share. Also provided are helium balloons and markers, with which to write a message to your loved ones.

If you plan to attend please fill out and remit the RSVP form on the last page of the newsletter or call (484) 891-0823

Directions and address of the park can be found above the RSVP form on the last page of this newsletter. Volunteers needed, to lend a hand complete the volunteer area on the RSVP form.

*Note: We use environmentally friendly biodegradable materials for our balloon release*



**We are on the Web**



Visit [www.lehighvalleytcf.org](http://www.lehighvalleytcf.org) for information about the group, meetings, upcoming events and helpful links.

**Like** our facebook page [www.facebook.com/TCFLehighValley](http://www.facebook.com/TCFLehighValley) for daily quotes, meeting and event reminders, updates

## **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

**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)

## 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.

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

## 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.

## Honoring our Motherhood and Fatherhood

By Nannette Jacobs, TCF San Francisco, CA

When a parent loses a child, they often feel like their role as a parent is severely damaged. Subconsciously we believe somehow it was our fault, even though consciously, we know it wasn't. For me, it is merely the fact that I brought Stefanie into this world to taste all it had to offer, only to be taken away from it 9 1/2 years later. Not only do I grieve for myself, but also for her. The pain is double.

Then came the huge task of living the rest of my life without her. As we all learn, there is no "getting over it." So we plug along taking life at first, one hour, one day, and finally, one year at a time. Before we know it, it has been 3, 5, 7, 10 or many more years since we last saw our child. How do we do it? Many ask me that question and I always reply with "What choice do I have?"

This is the time of year when parents celebrate their parenthood when we celebrate Mother's Day, Father's Day, First Communions, Confirmations and of course, graduations, followed up by the traditional season for weddings. It's a whirlwind time of mixed emotions for parents of children both living and deceased. Parents are

proud, as their living children move on through life, yet mourn the passing of what "was" and "should have been" for the child who is no longer here. Children do the inevitable — they grow up. At this time of the year, we parents are allowed to bask in the glory of the great job we've done raising our kids thus far, and look forward to the future.

Not so for the bereaved parent. If we have surviving children, we can relish in their accomplishments, but the joy can also be bittersweet. It's not easy. I'm proud of Hilary but sad about Stefanie. It's just the way it is. I've learned not to try to deny these obvious feelings, because I have finally figured out that I can be happy and sad at the same time. It's okay. I will always miss Stefanie and the things we didn't get to share, so it only makes sense that I would feel that loss as Hilary moves forward through her life.

So at this time of many celebrations, remember that you can be happy while you are still sad. You can't beat it, so you might as well join it ...enjoying life, that is!

***The love of a parent is not contingent on how much time we had with our child. Love simply cannot be measured in time.***

***Joanne Cacciatore***

# 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

## May Birthdays

Evan Albertini	Son of Louis AlBertini; Brother of Christopher AlBertini	May 28
Penny Azar	Son of Michelle M. Azar & the late Diab Azar; Brother of Michelle Weidman and Jean-Pierre Azar	May 28
William Bender	Son of Dean and Sheri Tretter	May 14
Matthew Breiner	Son of Jim and Lynne Breiner; Brother of Monica Breiner	May 5
Felicia Cook	Daughter of Herbert and Helen Cook	May 28
Heather Duh	Daughter of Ernest and Laurie Duh; Sister of Laurestine "Laurie" Hollie Duh	May 15
Doug Gable	Son of Ronald and Shirley Gable; Brother of Sharon Hornyak	May 26
Mark Gery	Son of William and Catherine Gery; Brother of Kristin	May 22
Jennifer Grider	Daughter of Carl and Joan Grider	May 18
Nicolas Gustafson	Son of Patty Gustafson; Twin Brother of Christin Gustafson	May 8
Raymond Haas, Jr.	Brother of Charles Haas & Linda Wronowski	May 27
David Heard	Son of Susan Heard; Brother of Daisy Heard	May 20
Loren Holl	Son of Fern Gerth	May 31
Colleen Kilker	Daughter of Mark and Kathleen Kilker; Sister of Meghan, Bridget and Mark Kilker	May 6
Tara Koshinski	Daughter of Daniel and Mary Koshinski Sr; Granddaughter of Joanne Gordon	May 26
David Kunsman	Son of Charles & Joan Kunsman; Brother of Walter Alfonso, Sherry Flanagan, Sandra Kunsman & the late Charles Kunsman	May 2
Adria Parker	Daughter of Adele Parker; Sister of Briana Parker & Nathan Parker	May 23
Michael Potkovic, III	Son of Michael & Annette Potkovic, Jr.; Brother of Michele Cuvo, Matthew, Mark, John & Denise Potkovic & the late Donna Marie Potkovic-Roth	May 26
Stephen Rendish	Brother of Sheri Wilson	May 6
Michael Schondorfer, Sr	Son of Alma Schondorfer	May 10
Dean Schuler	Son of Betty Schuler & the late Lester Schuler	May 22
Jonelle Sisonick	Daughter of Rella Sisonick Daniels; Sister of Anthony and Nicholas Sisonick	May 22
Eric Sisson	Son of Daniel Sisson & Crystal Crout; Stepson of David Crout; Brother of Courtney & Logan Crout	May 9
Keith Storat	Son of Richard and Susan Storat; Brother of Todd & Greg	May 18
Russell Terry	Son of Brian and Amy Erbe; Brother of Shannon	May 8
Meredith Unger	Daughter of Kathleen Paone	May 23
Joseph Visnosky, Jr.	Brother of Grace L Ashner	May 27

## May Anniversaries

Nicholas Allesch	Son of Toni Allesch	May 2
Patricia Arey	Daughter of William and Elizabeth Arey; Sister of Elizabeth Ann, Barbara, Rose Marie & Elaine	May 8
Dakota Arndt	Son of Steve and Mary Arndt; Brother of Ann Marie & Dylan	May 19
Matthew Aungst	Son of Christopher and Mary Kelly Aungst; Brother of Alecia & David Aungst Aungst	May 30
Neal Balmer, II	Son of Lisa Feist ; Step Son of Charles Feist; Brother of Laura Balmer & Kaitlyn Balmer	May 9
Donna Lee Benninger	Daughter of Betty Thompson	May 9
Krystal Bourquin	Daughter of Shelly Bourquin – Brusko; Sister of Alexandria, Gabriel & Xavier	May 22
Matthew Breiner	Son of Jim and Lynne Breiner; Brother of Monica Breiner	May 17
Michael Buss	Son of Bea Bryfogle; Brother of Lindsay & Katelyn Buss	May 15
Kimberly Caton	Daughter of Thomas and Sydney Caton	May 2
Kenneth Cosentino	Son of Judy Cosentino; Brother of Noreen Cosentino	May 6
Heather Duh	Daughter of Ernest and Laurie Duh; Sister of Laurestine "Laurie" Hollie Duh	May 24
Edwin Frantz	Son of Pamela Green; Brother of Amy & Troy	May 24
James "Jim" Gum	Son of Sherwood and June Gum; Brother of Deborah Martini	May 1
Lisette Hahn	Daughter of Louis and Joyce Szoke	May 3
Mark Hebdon	Son of Lawrence and Ruth Hebdon; Brother of Laura Long & Michael Hebdon	May 15
Justin Hilbert	Son of Robert and Joan Hilbert; Brother of Ashley & Kyle Hilbert	May 26
Loren Holl	Son of Fern Gerth	May 30
Jordon Hyndman	Son of Robin Hyndman; Brother of Shawna & Briana Hyndman	May 23
Wayne Marks	Son of Barbara Carter; Brother of Marie Greenwood	May 13
Frank Mirabile	Son of Joseph and Laura DeVito; Brother of Michael, Joseph & Nicholas	May 18
Cody Myers	Son of David and Denise Myers; Brother of Travis, Crystal and Benjamin Myers	May 15
Kelly Owens	Son of Douglas D. Owens & Judy Dorward	May 20
Harry Rawdon	Son of Margaret Rawdon; Brother of JettaAnn Rawdon	May 13
Allison Reboratti	Daughter of Eduardo and Barbara Reboratti	May 9
Ronald "Ronnie" Sherbaum, Jr.	Son of Ronald and Donna Sherbaum, Sr.; Brother of Daniel and Joseph Sherbaum	May 17
Casey Stengel	Son of Casey and Jane Stengel; Brother of Chrissy, Sarah, Lisa & Mike Stengel	May 4
Kevin Stenlake	Son of Elizabeth Leada Stenlake; Brother of Dawn Frey	May 26
Reeder Thatcher, Jr.	Son of Jane Thatcher & the Late Reeder Thatcher Sr.; Brother of Timothy, Michael & Lynne	May 22
Matthew Tobias	Son of Allen and Roseann Tobias	May 31
Joseph Visnosky, Jr.	Brother of Grace L Ashner	May 4
Joshua Wersinger	Son of David and Joanne Wersinger	May 17
Michael Widmer	Son of Mary Widmer & Steve Widmer; Brother of Suzanne Widmer	May 25

***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
♥ Udo & Janet L. Virmalo	<b>Sean Mikhail Virmalo</b> <i>Always with us. Udo, Janet, Eric, Brett, Katelyn</i>
♥ Shirley Rush	<b>Elwood Rush, Sr &amp; Elwood Rush</b> <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Mary Thompson	<b>James "Jimmy Thompson"</b> <i>Twenty One Years - But Only Yesterday</i>
♥ William & Elizabeth Arey	<b>Patricia Arey</b> <i>Beloved Daughter - Forever Missed. Mother &amp; Dad</i>
♥ Thomas & Sydney Caton	<b>Kimberly Jo Caton</b> <i>The saddest day of our lives. Miss you and love you forever</i>
♥ Ronald & Shirley Gable	<b>Doug Gable</b> <i>Much missed Son &amp; Brother. Ronald and Shirley Gable &amp; Sharon Hornyak</i>
♥ Sherwood and June Gum	<b>James Gum</b> <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Joanne Providakis	<b>Angelo Providakis</b> <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Amy Erbe	<b>Rusty Terry</b> <i>Happy Birthday in Heaven. We love and miss you. Mom, Cookie, Shannon &amp; Family</i>
♥ Betty Schuler	<b>Dean Lynn Schuler</b> <i>Happy 50th Birthday. Love and Miss You, Mom</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*

### TCF Carbon County Contributors

- ★ *United Way Payroll 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.

## Mom, Please Listen

Author Unknown, Submitted by Brenda Solderitch in loving memory of her Son Matthew

Mom, Please Listen  
as I take the time to write.  
I see parents struggling daily,  
Their pain is such a fight...

All of us who've gone  
And left the rest of you behind,..  
We're okay, Mom, I promise  
Heaven is beautiful and God is kind.

You used to tell me that one day  
God would call and take you home.  
You told me you'd make me strong  
So I would stand tall when alone.

But things happen. Mom  
That does not go in our plans.  
I wasn't scared, Mom,  
When God held out his hand.

I didn't want to leave you.  
I didn't have time to say good-bye  
When The angels said, "Come with 'us'"  
There wasn't time to question why.

I've watched you daily, Mom.  
It hurts to see you cry.  
I don't want you to be unhappy,  
Just because we didn't get to say goodbye

Tell others what I'm telling you,  
So many parents need to know  
That Earth was just a layover  
We had another place to go.

I know you miss me, Mom  
I know your heart was broken in two.  
But God really needed me  
Because my earthly life was through.

I'm always alongside you.  
I smile and touch your hair.  
I whisper "Mom, I love you"  
You just can't see me there.

I'm the one that gently touches you  
On your shoulder when you're sad.  
I'm happy now that you finally found  
God again, and are no longer mad.

Tell the parents, Mom, for me  
That all of us kids are okay.  
God had plans for our lives  
When he called us home that day.

I love you. Mom, I always will  
And remember I'm not far away.  
We're going to be together  
When God calls out your name.



## Our Gift to the Fallen

By Charlie Gragg  
©2007

For each soldier that has fallen  
so that many may stand  
We honor their spirit  
as they pass to God's hand

For without their sacrifice  
we would live in fear  
We pray for their loved ones  
and provide a salute and a tear

God help us heal the wounds  
of hate and misery of war  
That is our gift to our fallen heroes  
that are amongst us no more



## Reflections of a Mother Denied

By Michelle M. Parrish  
TCF Columbia Chapter, Baltimore, MD

On this, my first Mother's Day, I asked myself, "Do I have a right to celebrate Mother's Day?" Have truly been a mother this past year? The answer is yes.

Each day I have cared for my child as every mother does, except differently. In every way possible I have mothered him. I have mothered him with every tear shed; through the agony of longing to hold him. I have rocked him in my heart if not in my arms. I have kissed his little cheeks in my mind if not with my lips. Smelled his sweetness with my hopes if not with my nose. Felt his softness with my memory if not with my hands. Tickled him with my wishes if not with my fingers.

Am I a mother? I truly am. My physical mothering has been limited to lovingly tending his grave. But am a mother all the same.

## How to Handle Mother's Day

By Clara Hinton, Author of Silent Grief

Special days of any kind can be especially difficult for anyone who has lost a child. The first year following the loss of a child is often filled with days of dread and fear when anniversary dates and holidays approach. Mother's Day is a holiday that is one of the most dreaded holidays of all. A mother grieving the loss of her precious child often spends weeks in fearful waiting of the day, wondering how she will ever make it through.

There is no real way of avoiding Mother's Day. The stores are filled with gifts made and designed especially for mothers and children. Advertisements for gifts on the radio and in the newspaper bombard us every day for weeks prior to Mother's Day. Card and flower shops experience their busiest season of the year on Mother's Day. Reminders of this special holiday are everywhere!

The pain of facing Mother's Day without a child can be the most lonely pain a mother will ever know. There is an empty ache that becomes increasingly more evident as the day approaches, and there seems to be no way to find relief. It is wise to share these feelings with other members and friends rather than to avoid the topic. By sharing how you feel, you can alert others to be more sensitive to your needs during this painful day of sad reminders.

\*Sit down with your family and discuss what you would like to do for Mother's Day.

\*Remember that this is not a time to worry about hurting other's feelings, but rather a time to make your wishes known.

\*Remind yourself often that there is no right or wrong way to handle Mother's Day.

\*Some mothers have found it helpful to go away on a mini weekend trip, totally avoiding any church service, special meals, or family gatherings that will be too painful to attend. Other mothers choose to do something special in memory of their child such as take a walk to a quiet place, read a special poem, and then release a balloon in memory of their child. The actual releasing of the balloon is known to give mothers a sense of letting go that is quite healing.

\*Many choose to use Mother's Day as a special day to plant a flower or a tree in memory of their child who has died. Seeing something growing is often a visible reminder of the ongoing love a mother has for her child. Whatever you choose to do, remember not to set expectations too high for the day.

\*Plan to do something that is healing for you, but realize that you will still experience a wide gamut of emotions, and many tears will fall. Because grief is exhausting mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually, be sure to eat nutritious food for the day, hydrate yourself with lots of fluids, and allow yourself time to rest and be replenished. Grief work is the hardest work you will ever do! By planning ahead for Mother's Day, you have already crossed a big hurdle in your walk through child loss.

\*Telling others that this is going to be a difficult day for you is a way of building up a support system that will help you get through the day. Remind yourself often that you will make it through Mother's Day, and when you do, you will be one step farther along in this difficult journey we call grief.

*Mother's Day  
is a day of appreciation  
and respect. I can think of no  
Mothers that deserve it more  
than those that had to give  
their child back.*

*Erma Bomback*



## Are You a Grief Victim or Grief Survivor?

Author Unknown

*Being a victim is a state of mind dictated by others. A survivor dictates their own state of mind.*

**A victim** knows about feeling down and tries to stay up.  
**A survivor** knows feeling down is okay.

**A victim** tries hard to hide the tears.  
**A survivor** never leaves home without Kleenex.

**A victim** struggles to maintain a state of normalcy.  
**A survivor** knows normal no longer exists.

**A victim** gets caught in isolation.  
**A survivor** reaches out when they need to.

**A victim** is afraid they in time will forget.  
**A survivor** knows they never will!

**A victim** sometimes feels guilty laughing.  
**A survivor** laughs through their tears.

**A victim** tries at times to block out the memories.  
**A survivor** embraces memories of all kinds.

**A victim** wants someone to cure their grief.  
**A survivor** just wants someone to share their journey.

**A victim** struggles to get over their grief.  
**A survivor** fights to get through it.

**A victim** tries to get on with their life.  
**A survivor** lives their life knowing nothing will ever  
be the same.

**A victim** says oh I'm okay...than secretly cries.  
**A survivor** cries..., and says I'm okay.

## About being Strong

By Sascha Wagner

Many people are convinced that being strong and brave means trying to think and talk about "something else."

But we know that being strong and brave means thinking and talking about your dead love, until your grief begins to be bearable.

That is strength, that is courage, and only thus can "being strong and brave" help you to heal"

## Trust They Say

By Joanne Providakis, TCF Lehigh Valley

Trust they say,  
ask and you shall receive.  
It is in the book  
of what I'm supposed to believe.

Your prayers will be answered,  
give thanks every day.  
But when death tears apart your life,  
it's so hard to say.

An Angel of mine  
was taken away.  
It's been 14 years  
and I miss him every day.

Faith is so hard  
when a child is lost.  
You want to hold on  
but it's a devastating cost.

Yet it's memories and God's promise  
that keeps me afloat.  
Love never dies  
love is filled with hope

## A Trip Down Memory Lane

Loretta Ross, TCF Lehigh Valley, PA

I try to find a quiet place,  
That's far from trouble and strife.  
Where I can put together all the  
troubles of my life.

It's there I think of Buddy,  
Just he and I alone.  
And where I find the peace I crave  
Now that you are gone.

I try not to fear the troubles,  
I face from day to day.  
For in this quiet place I found,  
I'm learning how to pray.

Miss you, And Love you  
Forever in my heart. Your Nana.

# Sibling Page

## Thoughts for Siblings on Mothers Day

Excerpted from "One Women's Opinion"  
by Shirley Ottman

Mother's Day is sure to be a stressful time for a bereaved mom. Even when remaining children in the family gather to make their mother happy and to show her how purposeful her life is to them. Mother's Day is almost certain to be lonely for any bereaved mother.

If your mother doesn't seem as responsive that day, you sons and daughters, give your hugs and kisses anyway. She loves you, too. Remember that she's also the mother of a child no longer here...your brother or sister...and she misses your sibling as much as you do.

## Comfort Food

By Courtney Steed  
In "We Need Not Walk Alone"



My brother joined the Army Reserves when he was 18. He joined having been romanced by the idea of glory and heroism and a paid college education. He was in three years as a reservist before he chose to enter the Army in full-time service. Of course, our family challenged this idea - there is a war going on, after all.

He assured us that he would not be deployed, that he would be safe from Iraq. I am not sure any of us believed him, but somehow we knew he was destined for great things. When he arrived for his first assignment at Fort Carson, CO, he received orders to deploy to Iraq within six weeks. He left the Monday after Thanksgiving. After spending three weeks in Kuwait, he arrived in Iraq a few days before Christmas.

He had been unable to take anything with him to Iraq besides what he had been issued and some personal clothing and pictures. He was not able to receive packages until the week after Christmas, so we sent him a "stocking" box then. We filled it with the requested beef jerky and deodorant, as well as lots of granola bars, Skittles (his favorite), and shareable goodies.

The last time I talked to my brother, he had received his package and was extremely grateful for the awesome box. He specifically mentioned the granola bars, saying he wasn't going to share those with anyone. He had to rush off the phone, saying a quick, "Love you, Court," and he would call back soon. How I wish he would have. He was killed three weeks after he arrived in Iraq.

Six months after he died, we learned that he had been very protective of his granola bars. His friends said that he shared everything, except the granola bars. They laughed at his protectiveness, and told us about the day when they were on patrol and ran into a group of Iraqi children. The granola bars with which my brother had been so stingy were unselfishly shared among them.

[At this writing] it's been seven months since the my brother died. There are many days that are dark, and none go by without remembering his smile and heart. It always warms my heart to realize how even granola bars can bring comfort, if they are in the right hands.

## To Those Who Come After

Karen Hoyland, TCF, Brisbane, Australia

I never knew my brother,  
Yet I know him well;  
Through my mother's eyes  
I've known him, and I love him still.  
I'll grow tall and strong like him,  
Yet not like him at all.  
He'll be my guardian angel, and we'll  
Grow through life together, as one.  
I have his clothes and his toys and his photos.  
I hold them dear to me. But most of all,  
I treasure loving memories,  
The memories my mother gave to me.

### 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...)

# **TCF Annual Family Picnic & Balloon Launch**

**Sat. June 14 @ 12 pm (Rain or Shine)**  
**Moore Township Recreation Center**  
635 English Rd. Bath, PA

You are invited to join us for our annual Covered Dish Picnic and Memorial Balloon Launch.  
Hot dogs, drinks & balloons are provided by the chapter.  
Please bring your favorite covered dish, lawn chairs & sports equipment  
For questions or further information contact Kathy Collins at 484-891-0823

**Directions to the park:**

**From Bethlehem Area** - Take Center St./ PA-512 north, to PA-946 (Community Dr) Turn left proceed 2.4 miles to English Rd turn left, continue .04 miles to park entrance on right. Turn right into the park and follow the park road to the first stop sign turn right and follow the road to the pavilion.

**From Carbon County Area** -Take PA-248 east to PA-512 (Walnut St.) turn left proceed 4 miles to PA-946 (Community Dr) turn left proceed 2.4 miles to English Rd turn left, continue .04 miles. to park entrance on right. Turn right into the park and follow the park road to the first stop sign turn right and follow the road to the pavilion.

**From Easton Area** - Take PA-248 west to PA-512 (Walnut St.) turn right, proceed 4 miles to PA-946 (Community Dr) turn left proceed 2.4 miles to English Rd turn left continue .04 miles to park entrance on right. Turn right into the park and follow the park road to the first stop sign turn right and follow the road to the pavilion.

**From Wind Gap Area** -Take PA-512 South to PA-946 (Community Dr) Turn right proceed 2.4 miles to English Rd and turn left, continue .04 to park entrance on right. Turn right into the park and follow the park road to the first stop sign Turn right into the park and follow the park road to the first stop sign turn right and follow the road to the pavilion

*Suggestion: Keep this top portion as a reminder*

**RSVP by June 1**

**PLEASE PRINT**

Yes, I will attend the picnic     Total Attending     Adults     Children

\_\_\_\_\_ Covered Dish I will bring

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter(s) you attend \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I will volunteer to help with the picnic     Set Up     Clean Up     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley  
Attn: Kathy Collins  
PO Box 149  
Bath, PA 18014

