



The Compassionate Friends

Lehigh Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Winter 2016

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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

Feb 8 Monthly Support Group Meeting

March 14 Monthly Support Group Meeting

April 11 Monthly Support Group Meeting

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 Bereavement Groups & TCF Chapters

TCF Carbon County Chapter - 1st Wednesday 7:00 - 8:30 pm at Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn., 501 Delaware Ave. Palmerton
Chapter Leader - Patti Bissell, Contact Phone: 610-826-2938 Contact Email: pannbiss@aol.com

TCF Easton Chapter- 2nd Thursday 7:00 - 9:00 pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 2115 Washington Blvd., Easton
Chapter Leaders John & Maria Szabo, Contact Phone: 610-866-5468 Contact Email: szabojanos1@verizon.net

TCF Quakertown Chapter - 2nd Tuesday 7:30 - 9:00 pm at St. Lukes Quakertown Hospital; 1021 Park Ave, Quakertown
Contact Phone: 215-536-0173, Contact Email: tcfquakertownchapter@verizon.net

GRASP (grief recovery after substance passing) 3rd Monday at The First Presbyterian Church, Cedar Crest & Tilghman Sts., Allentown
Preregistration required, Contact: Nancy Howe 484-863-4324; 484-788-9440; nancyhowe@ymail.com

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) Meeting day, time & place coincide with TCF, LV
Facilitated by Jeanette Laube, MA on a as needed basis. Preregistration required. Call 610-762-5783

TCF Telephone Friends

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

Infant Loss Kim Szep..... 610-730-3111

Infant Loss Cathy McDonald... 610 391-1474

Only Child..... Shelly Garst.....484 241-5396

Suicide..... John & Maria Szabo..... 610 866-5468

Addiction..... Nancy Howe..... 484-863-4324

Homicide..... Ginger Renner.....610-967-5113

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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

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: TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA

If you are Moving or going on Vacation and having your mail held or forwarded Please inform the Newsletter Editor of your new address or of a hold or forward on you mail. The Post Office does not hold or forward the newsletter. They are returned at our expense and we in turn remove those

Newsletter Submissions

2016 Cutoff dates for publication of Love Gifts, articles and poetry

Issue	Cutoff Date
Winter (January, Febuary, March)	December 1 st
Spring (April, May, June)	March 1 st
Summer (July, August, September)	June 1 st
Fall (October, November, December)	Sept 1 st

Send Poems

and Articles (with the author's name & your contact information) by mail to: TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA 18014 or email to: email: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com

We reserve the right to alter, modify or reject submissions not in keeping with our mission



Visit our web page at www.lehighvalleytcf.org for group information, meetings schedule, upcoming events and helpful links.

Like our facebook page: www.facebook.com/TCFLehighValley for quotes, meeting & event reminders, cancelations and member forum.

Find us on **Pinterest** under the keyword **The Compassionate Friends, Lehigh Valley Chapter**

News, Events & Announcements

Recent Events:

TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting Dec. 13th Thanks to Tom and Eva Siebert who graciously opened their home for members to share a meal and light a candle in memory of their child in observance of the The Worldwide Candle Lighting

TCF Candle Light Remembrance Service on Dec. 14th Thanks to all members and families that attended. Special thanks to the following that made it possible: Sacred Heart Hospital for use of the auditorium and beverages; Mary Ann Donuts for the donuts; Kim Szep for the beautiful slideshow of our children; John & Maria Szabo for the candles; all our readers helpers and volunteers, and everyone who brought the delicious treats to share.

Upcoming Event: Mark your Calendars

TCF Family Picnic and Memorial Balloon Release - Sat. July 9th, 2016, 12 Noon - ? @ Moore Township Recreation Center, Bath Pa Families and friends who have experienced the death of a child, grandchild or sibling are invited to join us for a pot luck meal and memorial balloon release. TCF provides hot dogs, drinks Attendees are asked to bring a side dish or dessert to share. More information and a RSVP form will be included in the next newsletter issue

Love Gifts

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Love Gifts are donations given in memory of a child or in memory of or in honor of a friend, relative or special person. These tax deductible donations enable the chapter to continue our mission of reaching out to the newly bereaved and providing ongoing support to all our members. To make a love gift donation please use form on page 11

We thank the following for their generous donations this month

Contributor

- ♥ Douglas D. Owens
- ♥ Lee and Shirley Lutz
- ♥ Judy Dorward
- ♥ Mary A. Thompson
- ♥ Denise Myers
- ♥ Donald and Sue Southgate
- ♥ Peter Mather
- ♥ Pat Martini McGouldrick
- ♥ Linda Stewart
- ♥ Shirley Grozier
- ♥ Doris Hosler

In Memory of

- Kelly Shawn Owens**
Always in my thoughts. Love, Dad
- Michael Douglas Mann**
Missing you more each Christmas. Love Always Mom & Dad
- Kelly Shawn Owens**
Think of your beautiful blue eyes and warm caring heart every day
- James "Jimmy" Thompson**
Tears are still building the stairway to heaven, Happy Birthday Son
- Cody David Alexander Myers**
In Loving Memory
- Troy G. Southgate**
We love and miss you very much. Always in our hearts. Love Mom & Dad
- Beth Anne Mather**
In Loving Memory
- Ky DiVittorio**
In Loving Memory
- Jennifer Lynn Schaible**
Happy Birthday, Love, Mom
- Robert C. Grozier, II**
Happy 57th Birthday my Bob - I love and miss you so much. God bless you my son, Mom
- Debra Sweeney**
Its been 15 years without you and we miss you every day

Donations and Contributions

TCF Lehigh Valley Contributors

- ★ Sacred Heart Hospital, Allentown for meeting room and drinks
- ★ Giant Food Store Employees for United Way Contributions
In Memory of David Todd Smith
- ★ Mary Ann Donuts, Allentown for meeting snacks
- ★ Aetna Payroll Contributors

★ United Way Payroll Contributors

- ★ The Matt Kush Foundation
In Memory of Matt Kush

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.

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

Note: Due to privacy concerns Birthday and Anniversary listings are only published with permission for Parents/Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents. For additions and corrections complete & sign the Update Form (pg 11) & mail to the address indicated.

January, Febuary & March Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday	Anniv.
Evan Albertini	- Son of Louis AlBertini; Brother of Christopher AlBertini	May 28	Feb 13
Sean Apgar	- Son of Randy Apgar	Jun 18	Jan 22
Dakota Arndt	- Son of Steve and Mary Arndt; Brother of Ann Marie & Dylan	Feb 6	May 19
James Balloch	- Grandson of Bill Gerth & Fern Gerth	Feb 22	Sep 4
Hannah Rose Bankos	- Daughter of Thomas and Christina Bankos; Sister of Matthew Bankos	Apr 8	Feb 24
Graham Beckhorn	- Son of Alice Keyes; Brother of Patrick Beckhorn & Christopher Beckhorn	Apr 20	Feb 14
Gabriel Benner	- Son of Baily Benner; Brother of Calum Benner	May 4	Feb 9
Kevin Blosky	- Son of Jack and Janet Blosky, Grandson of Jack and Nancy Blosky	Jan 28	Oct 4
Timothy Bogart	- Son of Nancy and Bill Bogart, Brother of Katelyn Bogart & Ryan Bogart	Mar 12	Jul 4
Joshua Booth	- Son of Les and Bonnie Booth	Mar 12	Dec 27
Brian Burke	- Son of Rich and Mary Burke; Brother of Melissa Burke	Jan 3	Oct 9
Rachel Dallas	- Daughter of Robert and Linda Dallas; Sister of Sadie Dallas	Jan 21	Jun 14
Hope Davidson	- Daughter of Dean & Donna Davidson	Aug 8	Feb 8
Sheila DeBoer	- Daughter of Barbara DeBoer & the late Henry DeBoer; Sister of Leslie and Cory DeBoer	Jan 29	Jul 27
Shawn Detweiler	- Son of Laurie and Elfriede Woolley	Feb 12	Mar 26
Kannah Dew	- Daughter of Heather Surget	Sep 14	Feb 24
Mark Dilts, Jr	- Son of Mark and Joy Dilts; Brother of Beth Dilts	Jan 6	Jul 8
Ky DiVittorio	- Son of Jan DiVittorio; Brother of Ian DiVittorio	Feb 13	Apr 3
Barry Donchez	- Son of Edward & Olga Donchez; Brother of Linda Shive and Mike Donchez	Nov 28	Jan 10
Wayne Ernst	- Son of Julius & Doris Ernst; Brother of David Ernst	Jan 6	Dec 24
John Evans, III	- Son of Jack and Ann Evans; Brother of Tom Sampson & Patti Stout	Mar 12	Aug 16
Maggie Faber	- Daughter of Harry and Carol Faber; Sister of Randi & Eric Gerencser; Heidi & Harry Faber	Jan 17	Jan 17
Brenda Fehr Hatrak	- Daughter of David & Eileen Fehr, Sr.; Sister of Barbara Burgin & David Fehr, Jr.; Granddaughter of Warren and Rose Fehr & Elwood and Mary Mann	Aug 31	Jan 8
Eric Fenstermacher	- Son of Rick and Kathleen Fenstermacher; Brother of Heather Fenstermacher	Feb 14	Jul 31
Paige Fernandez	- Daughter of William Fernandez; Sister of Jamie & Billy Fernandez	Jun 18	Feb 28
Araya Francisquini	- Daughter of Jamie Francisquini	Jan 11	Jan 2
Joel Frisby	- Son of Caroline Frisby; Brother of Richard, Gregory, Michael & Timothy Frisby	Mar 26	Jun 4
Benjamin Fry	- Son of John & Cynthia Chryst; Twin Brother of Jeff Fry; Brother of the late Peter & Paul Grandson of Charles & Rose Giltner	Oct 6	Mar 14
John Fry	- Son of Cathy McDonald; Brother of Joey, Allie & Billy McDonald	Mar 19	Jun 14
Eileen Collins Gant	- Daughter of Dorothy Collins; Sister of John, Steven & Brian Collins, Kathleen Morrison & MaryAnn Watkins	Mar 25	Feb 14
Kevin Garrison	- Son of Kathleen Garrison; Brother of Anthony Garrison	Dec 2	Jan 16
Sgt. Christopher Geiger	- Son of George and Patricia Geiger; Brother of Michael, Terrance, David & Timothy Geiger	Mar 30	Jul 9
Jesse Gentile	- Grandson of Gerry & Doris Rothermel	Jan 28	Jan 29
Aaron Groff	- Son of Leon & Debra Manuel; Brother of Melissa LaBar	Feb 11	Mar 5
Robert Grozier, II	- Son of Shirley Grozier; Brother of Grozier	Feb 15	Jun 11
Rita Guerrieri	- Daughter of Art and Mary Guerrieri; Sister of Maryrose Guerrieri-Nesbitt	Mar 11	
Lisette Hahn	- Daughter of Louis and Joyce Szoke	May 3	
Brett Harris	- Son of Chester and Carol Kinsey, Jr.; Brother of Terry & Lisa	Jan 14	

January, February & March Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday	Anniv.
Jonathan Hawk	- Son of Bruce and Mary Hawk; Brother of Bruce Hawk & the late Lisa Hawk	Aug 26	Mar 30
Heather Hawn	- Daughter of Mike and Cathi Tirrell	Feb 25	Dec 25
David Heard	- Son of Susan Heard; Brother of Daisy Heard	May 20	Feb 10
Anne Marie Mabus Heater	- Daughter of Wayne and Frances Mabus; Sister of Steven Mabus	Jan 7	Nov 25
Mark Hebdon	- Son of Lawrence and Ruth Hebdon; Brother of Laura Long & Michael Hebdon	Feb 24	May 15
Lori Hudasky	- Daughter of Irene Hudasky	Mar 18	Apr 22
Garrett Illes	- Son of John Patrick Illes; Brother of Christine Elizabeth Illes	Mar 17	Aug 26
Austin Jacobs	- Son of Penny Jacobs; Brother of Seth Jacobs	Jan 24	Aug 27
Jonathan Keller	- Son of Dennis and Lori Keller Brother of Amy Keller	Oct 25	Mar 23
Schyler Kemps	- Son of John and Jenny Kemps; Brother of Courtney & Alex Kemps	Mar 8	Feb 10
Julian Keyock	- Son of Gregory Keyock; Brother of Maya & Jacob Keyock	May 5	Feb 17
Kimberly Kissel	- Daughter of Michael & Gloria Kissel, Jr.; Sister of Colleen & Micheal Kissel & Lisa Zelko	Feb 6	Dec 22
Joshua Kortze	- Son of Al and Kim Kortze; Brother of Aubrey and Kim Kortze	Feb 20	Jan 27
Bonnie Krause	- Daughter of Josephine Leiby - Mather	Jun 22	Mar 24
Matt Kush	- Son of Rick and Ann Kush; Brother of Mike and Jenn	Aug 24	Feb 10
John "Jack" Kushnerick, Jr.	- Son of Bernice Kushnerick; Brother of Pat & Jan Kushnerick	Sep 17	Mar 16
Joy Laube	- Daughter of Barry and Jeanette Laube	Nov 3	Jan 15
Jamie Laudenslager	- Son of Jane Laudenslager; Brother of Jon & Shelly	Jan 23	Apr 14
Brian Lentz	- Son of Gary and Judy Lentz	Dec 9	Mar 10
John Leonard, Jr	- Son of John and Jule Leonard; Brother of Karen	Jul 27	Jan 6
Andrea Luecke	- Daughter of Louise Luecke; Sister of Jennae Luecke	Jan 30	Oct 23
Micheal Martin, Jr	- Son of Micheal and Jean Martin	Feb 4	Nov 29
Beth Anne Mather	- Daughter of Peter Mather	Mar 12	Jan 17
Rowan McElmoyle	- Son of James McElmoyle & Jenny Renninger	Mar 14	Mar 14
Katherine McGraw	- Daughter of John and Sue McGraw; Sister of Maggy and Sean McGraw	Aug 15	Feb 28
Michael McLaughlin	- Son of James and Julia McLaughlin; Brother of Matthew and Patrick McLaughlin	Mar 16	Dec 24
Ed McNally	- Son of Don and Connie McNally; Brother of Sean McNally	Jul 29	Feb 11
Frank Michael	- Son of John and Lisa Rigione; Brother of Connor Rigione	Feb 19	Feb 12
Ryan Miller	- Son of Patti Miller & The late Richard Miller, Jr; Brother of Richard Miller, III	Jan 4	Jun 12
Michael Milot	- Son of John and Patti Milot; Brother of Jill	Jun 30	Feb 2
Jim Minter	- Son of Jim and Barbara Minter; Brother of Jeanine Minter	Aug 15	Mar 14
James "Jimmy" Mullen, II	- Son of Jeanie Mullen	Feb 26	Jan 1
Susette Olewine	- Daughter of Louis and Joyce Szoke	Feb 17	Dec 2
Kelly Owens	- Son of Judy Dorward & Douglas D. Owens	Jan 24	May 20
Mardelle Parenti-Blume	- Daughter of Brian and Nancy Kleckner	Feb 9	Mar 1
Buddy Pearson	- Son of Bob and Shelly Garst	Jul 12	Mar 24
Randy Peischl	- Son of Betty Peischl	Mar 1	Jan 29
Donna Potkovac-Roth	- Daughter of Annette Potkovac; Sister of Michele Cuvo, Matthew, Mark, John, & Denise Potkovac & the late Michael N. Potkovac, III	Apr 21	Feb 26
James "Jimmy" Mullen, II	- Son of Jeanie Mullen	Feb 26	Jan 1
Michael Powers	- Son of Richard and Margaret Powers; Brother of Billy, Richie, Tara & Ryan	Jul 9	Feb 10
Angelo Providakis	- Son of Michael and Joanne Providakis	Feb 7	Apr 9
Caleb Putro	- Son of David and Susan Pultro; Brother of David Pultro, Jr	Oct 13	
James Ralls	- Son of Tina Ralls; Brother of Timothy & Geoffrey	Aug 17	

January, February & March Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday	Anniv.
Allison Reboratti	- Daughter of Eduardo and Barbara Reboratti	Jan 25	May 9
Sandra Roberts	- Daughter of Millard and Barbara Howell; Sister of Randy, Michaela & Alexandria	Feb 3	Aug 13
Anthony Romig	- Son of Edward C. Romig, Sr. & Lois Pearsall; Brother of Edward C. Romig, Jr.	Sep 12	Jan 20
Daniel Rostkowski	- Son of Shirley May Rostkowski; Brother of Janet Wise and Andrew Rostkowski	Nov 28	Jan 30
Maria Rothermel	- Daughter of Gerald and Doris Rothermel; Sister of Mark Rothermel	Mar 25	Feb 3
Joey Russo	- Brother of Jena & Jevin Russo	Jan 1	Feb 23
Jennifer Schaible	- Daughter of Linda Stewart; Sister of Andy Schaible & The late Aaron Schaible	Feb 18	Feb 26
Quinna Schleicher	- Daughter of Lin and Judy Schleicher; Sister of Aaron Schleicher	Feb 2	Mar 10
Amanda Schultz	- Daughter of Mark and Patty Schultz; Sister of Ryan & Eric Schultz	Jun 18	Mar 5
Joseph Siedlecki, Jr	- Son of Joe and Monica Siedlecki; Brother of MaryAnn & Michele Siedlecki and the late Jeanmarie Siedlecki Moyer	Feb 26	Jul 9
Andrew Siegfried	- Son of Rich and Ruthann Siegfried; Brother of Ben Siegfried	Mar 27	Apr 18
David Todd Smith	- Son of David and Kathleen Smith; Brother of Stephanie Seifert	Feb 25	Sep 17
Troy Southgate	- Son of Donald and Susann Southgate; Brother of Martin Southgate	Feb 25	Oct 30
Joseph Span	- Son of Joel and Annette Span	Jul 8	Feb 12
Andrew Staub	- Son of Mark and Louise Stahley	Jan 4	Jan 12
Lisa Staub	- Daughter of Mark and Louise Stahley	Oct 1	Mar 2
Geoffrey Steckel	- Son of Dean and Patricia Steckel; Brother of Jennifer and Mark Steckel	Mar 1	Jan 20
Kevin Stenlake	- Son of Elizabeth Leada Stenlake; Brother of Dawn Frey	Feb 22	May 26
Constance Stewart	- Daughter of Joanne Stewart; Sister of Keith and Kevin Stewart	Sep 23	Feb 1
Michael Stocker	- Son of Calvin and Kay Stocker, Brother of Megan Fibrick	Oct 14	Jan 26
Steven Suarez	- Son of Abby Suarez; Brother of Giovanni Miranda; Grandson of Roger and Gabby Schreck	May 29	Jan 19
Jon Sulick	- Son of John Sulick; Brother of Aymae Sulick	Feb 9	Sep 15
Kassidy Sullivan	- Daughter of Jessica Espinosa	Feb 20	Feb 20
Pete Swartwood, III	- Son of Pete Swartwood	Oct 11	Mar 22
Debra Sweeney	- Daughter of Richard and Doris Hosler; Sister of Donna Mallard	Nov 16	Jan 5
Travis Szerencits	- Son of Craig and Cookie Harron	Mar 11	Dec 1
Tracy Szoke	- Daughter of Randal and Kim Szoke; Sister of Trisha Remaley	Mar 9	Nov 24
Russell Terry	- Son of Brian and Amy Erbe; Brother of Shannon	May 8	Jan 9
Reeder Thatcher, Jr.	- Son of Jane Thatcher & the Late Reeder Thatcher Sr; Brother of Timothy, Michael & Lynne	Mar 12	May 22
James "Jimmy" Thompson	- Son of Mary A. Thompson & The late Richard Thompson; Brother of Marie, Mark, Patrick & Kathy	Jan 23	Apr 6
Meredith Unger	- Daughter of Kathleen Paone	May 23	Feb 17
Sheena Villa	- Daughter of Bill Villa & Barbara Maquera; Step Daughter of Angie Villa; Sister of Patrick Villa, Cruz Maquera & Gianni Villa	Mar 23	Mar 24
Stephanie Volkert	- Daughter of Joanne Fimiano; Sister of Zachary Volkert	Sep 22	Feb 12
Victoria Volkert	- Daughter of Joanne Fimiano; Sister of Zachary Volkert	Jan 14	Feb 16
Chad Wagner	- Son of Carl and Pamela Fehnel; Brother of Cori	Mar 13	Dec 23
Seth Warhurst	- Son of Debra Warhurst; Brother of Michele Warhurst	Mar 4	Mar 6
Samuel Weiner	- Son of Martin and Marie Levin	Feb 14	Mar 5
Joshua Wersinger	- Son of David and Joanne Wersinger; Brother of Patrick, Hope, Joeseeph, Gertrude & Marjorie	Jan 19	May 17
Avery Williams	- Daughter of Joshua and Ashley Williams	Jan 5	Jan 6
Stephen Winkler	- Son of Ellen Winkler; Brother of Jennifer; Grandson of Arnold Abramowitz	Jan 12	Jul 26
Michael Zalewski	- Son of Krzysztof and Jolanta Zalewska; Brother of Monika Baraket	Jan 7	Dec 6
Abigail Zukowski	- Daughter of Chris & Lisa Zukowski; Sister of Vincent Disimone, Gabrielle & Madison Zukowski; Grandaughter of Martin & Michele Glynn	Jan 27	May 18

The New Year

By Marie Andrews,
TCF Southern Maryland Chapter

It is the New Year. The holidays are behind us. We did with them what we could. Whether they were a time of sorrow, a time of joy, or a combination of each, they are now a part of our memories. In a strange way, as a memory in our hearts and in our minds, our child's place is there amongst all the other memories of the season. There is hurt along with the memory, but also a thankfulness for the memory.

Now we look out on a winter landscape. The earth is cold, the land sharply defined. Yet underneath the hard crust, the great energy and warmth of our earth is guarding and providing life to all that grows.

We may personally know the coldness and hardness of a grief so fresh that we feel numb; a grief so hurtful that our body feels physically hard; our throats tight from the muscles pulled by tears, shed or unshed; our chests banded tightly by the muscles of a mourning heart.

If we are not now experiencing this, our memories recollect so easily those early days. Yet, as we live these days, like the earth from which we receive our sustenance, we, too, in our searchings, find places of warmth and change and love and growth, deep within.

Let our hearts and minds dwell in these places and be warmed and renewed by them, and let us have the courage and love to share them with our loved ones, to talk about even that first dim shape of new hope, or of new acceptance, or of new understanding, or of new love.

These are the new roots, born of our love of our child, that are forming and stirring within, gathering strength so that our lives, at the right time, can blossom once again and be fruitful in a new and deep way.

It's Okay

by Rob Anderson

Reprinted from We Need Not Walk Alone Autumn 2004

It's okay
to cry,
to not cry,
to feel guilty,
to not feel guilty,
to be angry,
to stop being angry,
to seek answers,
to stop seeking answers,
to feel responsible,
to feel sorry for yourself,
to be mad at your child,
to feel misunderstood,
to reach out for help,
to let out your pain,
to care what others think,
to not care what others think,
to let go of your child's death,
to embrace your child's life,
to lose your expectations,
to grieve any way you want,
to give yourself a break,
to believe in signs,
to stop hating,
to forgive,
to smile without guilt,
to find joy,
to heal,
to begin to live again,
to laugh,
to love yourself.
It's okay; it's all okay.

Resisting the Grieving Process

By Ann Kaiser Stearns "Living through Personal Crisis"

"The person who resists grieving may successfully ward off intense pain. Still, a nagging ache will likely take its place. Denied feelings of grief will be expressed in hidden ways. A low-grade crisis can then endure for many years. [causing] moodiness, irritability, restlessness, nervousness, abuse of alcohol, or other drugs, conflicts in relations with others, physical ailments, accident proneness, reckless spending; or general dissatisfaction and disappointment with life. Grief doesn't go away just because it is ignored."

"HEALING INVOLVES BEING WILLING TO HURT MORE IN ORDER TO HURT MUCH LESS"

Valentine's Day Sealed With a Kiss



By Faye McCord,
Co-Chapter Leader,
TCF Jackson, MS

Remember how we
used to write to those we loved
the best?

Our letters we would fill with hopes
and dreams and seal them with a kiss.

To you our child, we write today - and
wish we could impart,

The hopes and dreams that once we
had, now crush our breaking hearts.

The thoughts of what we had planned
for you float through our wishful
minds,

Then burst like bubbles in the air,
while dreams explode with time.

And yet we still have hope and still
dream on, and think of all we'll miss,

And wish with all our hearts we could
write to you, and seal it with a kiss.

The grief we have for you is like a
weight upon our chests,

There's no way we can ignore it - it
never gives us rest.

And no words could ever tell of
our longings to express,

to write a love letter to you, our child,
and to seal it with a kiss.

And if we had but one chance more to
write to you today,

The words would come with no regrets
and we'd like for them to say ...

"To love and to be loved by you, our
child ... an honor and so blest,

Our time on earth cut short, it's true ...
But We Sealed it With a Kiss."

Ritual

By Donna Gerrior • TCF Pasco
County, FL In Memory of Rob

A gaze thru blurry window
When did it start to rain?
Then realize it's just the eyes
They're crying once again

Emptiness is mighty
Deep within begins the ache
Intense, this pain that surely
Will cause a heart to break

Shoulders gently tremble
A moaning soft and low
Arms tightly wrapped about
oneself

Body rocking to and fro

A ritual of comfort
A numbing of the mind
A cleansing of the tortured soul
A knowing eye made blind

Thus begins the healing process
Of this I know so well
Without you, I fall victim to
This mindless cast of spell

Your heart will mend

**But it will be a
different heart**

**Wear a deep and
lasting scar**

**Be a more
compassionate heart**

**Know life in a new
and different way**

**And understand the
eternity of love**



Nancy Green, TCF Livonia
MI

A Poem

*composed and read by
HT2 J. M. Schwaiger, USN
at the Memorial Service held for
ENSIGN BETH ANNE MATHER, USN
1-20-84, Naval Air Station, Sigonella, Sicily
Beth Anne is the daughter of TCF, Lehigh
Valley founders Peter & Elizabeth Mather*

Like a gentle flower
Still covered in dew,
You were loved and cherished
Because you were you.

Like the seasons that changed
Sometimes a little too fast,
Your time on earth was short
and your time has come to pass.

Yet those who knew you, knew
No regret,
for a friendship
As yours is hard to forget.

Multiple Losses

Much more than he died when he died.

With him died:
Hopes and dreams of future things,
Vacations and visits and homecomings,
Grandchildren who would be my pride,

Security when I lay down at night,

The assurance of another day,

Some time to say what I meant to say,

A tomorrow in which to
make things right,

Attempting the things we
had hoped to try,

Finishing projects we planned to do,

One last "I'm sorry" or "I love you,"

Another chance to hug and say good-bye,

I find when I look behind the shroud,

Death comes not alone but in a crowd.

Richard A. Dew MD.
"RACHEL'S CRY" A Journey Through Grief

But The Pain Is Getting Worse

Mary Cleckley, TCF Atlanta, GA

When your child dies suddenly or unexpectedly (and even though you had been told that your child was terminally ill, it still was unexpected, wasn't it?) something called shock takes over. I believe shock is nature's way of protecting you from the full impact of the pain of all that you've lost. I don't think a body could physically stand all of that at once, so nature does a kind thing and wraps you in a protective cocoon that keeps out much of the pain. This allows us to continue functioning and do the necessary things involved with the solemn task of making plans for the final rites of someone you love. You may have found yourself able to be the "hostess (or host) with the mostest", and taking care of others during this time. People may have commented on how well you were doing and admired your great strength openly, never understanding that it was your cocoon doing its job.

Some parents' protective coating lasts longer than others, but sooner or later, this shield starts disintegrating, and it is when the pain starts creeping in that the griever will try to provide his or her own cocoon; they will deny the death by pretending in some way that it didn't really happen, i.e., "He's not dead, he's visiting with Grandmother", or "She's playing with her friends", or "He's at school", or "He's at work," or "She's in her bed asleep." They're somewhere, but they're not dead. That's called denial, and it's a normal thing for some people. It's an effort to extend the effect of nature's cocoon.

It works for a while for some, but eventually that protective coating also dissolves and slowly but surely you find yourself dealing with depths of pain you've never known before, and it is frightening. You know you have about all the pain you can handle and you don't know what you'll do if it gets any worse. You have then reached what could be described as dealing with the real reality of your loss in all its complexity. It doesn't get any worse than that. It won't be better for a time, but you've touched bottom for now.

It's very easy to understand why the newly bereaved see reaching this point as a negative thing. This is when the telephone friends get the most calls (and that time varies from person to person, from a few weeks to some months) and the parent says (s)he thinks (s)he is losing his or her mind. And why not? Here they are getting further away from the actual death, but the

pain is getting worse. That surely seems like a negative, but those of us who have had the necessary time from our own experience, or who have time to observe the experiences of others, see this as a positive thing. When people tell me this has now happened to them, it tells me that they've come a long way. They've come through all the shock and denial and are now dealing head-on with what must be dealt with before their grief will soften.

You can't start healing until you've allowed yourself to feel the hurt of the loss of someone you loved better than yourself. So, if you've reached this place in your grief, see it as a positive, for it means you have forsaken unproductive things and have made a giant step toward your journey to a place where the pain eases and you learn to live with your loss. We, who are further down the road of grief, encourage you to reach for the plateau where we are. It's easier here. We can tell you honestly that the pain is now better, not worse.



Imagine

Imagine for a moment-- a mobile. All the shapes are of different weight and design, but they hang together harmoniously, each catching the sunlight and creating a melodious rhythm in the wind.

Now snip one of the pieces--there is chaos. Each of the remaining pieces smash into one another, and what was a melodious sound is now a clanging, almost a wailing in the wind.

When a child is snatched by death from a family, the results are the same, multiplied innumerable times.

Stephen Barrett
TCF, Ottawa, Illinois

You don't recover from grief.
You manage it.

~Martia Lattanzi
TCF Fort Smith Arkansas

Sibling Page

New At This: The Loss Of My Brother

By: Elizabeth Lea/Fisher , His Sister TCF Los Angeles

I lost my only brother one year ago on March 1, 1999. He was 38 years old and he died unexpectedly. I never in my life had lost anyone close to me. My family consisted of me, my brother, and our mom and dad. I was the older sister by almost 3 years.

Our family lost along the way great grandparents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and moms and dads. Relatives who died of natural or illness related deaths at and old age. I went through life taking things for granted; never taking the time to tell my brother, especially in the last few years of his life, that I loved him. I just thought he knew it. We go around thinking our loved ones know how we feel. They read our minds. Well I hope that to all who read this: Stop, Think, and Listen. Tell your family your loved ones, you love them. I had heard that before but I never paid attention to it. Someone would say, "pick up the phone and tell someone you love them and are thinking of them." But I thought it wouldn't come in my life, not for a long time, anyway. death knows no age,

My brother Jimmy didn't always live nearby and do you know what? I couldn't drop a postcard in the mail just to say "Hi, thinking of you, love, your Sis." I was too involved with my life and problems to take the time to do something that just took a few seconds to write.

Now a year has come and gone and not a day goes by that I don't think of my brother. I wake up to think of him. Then there are the nights I wake up and think of him, too. I have photos of him to keep his memory alive. Is this what grieving is? They say time heals. No! I don't ever want to heal, because if I heal I will not think of him, as much and I don't want a day to pass where I don't think or talk to him. Most of his life he was forgotten about, so I've made a promise to myself that in death he will never be forgotten. He is still with me and our family. He had a strong bond when it came to protecting his family and I know he is still watching over us.

My brother never married nor left any children to carry on his name. He was kind and gentle, handsome young man who left us much too soon and I would give anything to change the past; not to change God's will but to change my thoughtlessness. If you can learn one thing from this, I hope its to take the time in your busy lives to say to your child, parents, siblings, spouse, anyone you

love...tell them "Hi! I love you, I was thinking of you. I miss you" Whatever fits your situation. But please just let them know, because life is here one second and the next second its over. Ask my mom... She came home one day in March 1999 and saw her son, my brother, happy, full of life go into the bathroom to take a shower and he'd be right out. The next thing she saw was her son, my brother, dead on the floor.

His death has taught me to tell my loved ones how much I love them and that death can come to anyone at any given time. So learn this and live this and never forget it.

To the memory of my brother, James, "Jimmy" and to all those "Jimmies" in our lives. Please don't forget them, know matter what.

To My Brother - Robert Joseph

You were given life - in an instant
 Your life gave ours new meaning
 We largely awaited your physical arrival
 For spiritually, you were already with us We longed to see your precious face -
 So innocent and full of life
 In an instant - we began to plan ahead
 Soon growing impatient to share life with you You were a priceless gift given to us
 We would provide with never-ending love
 Our hopes and dreams were ended - in an instant Who has taken you? Where are you? Why are you gone?
 Now, my arms long to hold your tiny hand and rock you into a sleep
 My ears wish to hear your whimpering cries in the middle of the night
 My heart aches to love your every feature and to feel your love in return
 You have touched our lives in an extraordinary way You are now forever present in our hearts
 Our Dearest Robert - you shall never be forgotten - not for an instant!

Jennifer Lynn Stover
 In memory of her brother, Robert Joseph
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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

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A Search For A Cure *Author Unknown*

There is an old Chinese tale about the woman whose only son died. In her grief she went to the holyman and said, "What prayers, what magical incantations do you have to bring my son back to life?" Instead of sending her away or reasoning with her, he said to her, "Fetch me a mustard seed from a home that has never known sorrow. We will use it to drive the sorrow out of your life." The woman set off at once in search of the magical mustard seed. She came first to a splendid mansion, knocked at the door, and said. "I am looking for a home that has never known sorrow. Is this such a place? It is very important to me." They told her, "you've certainly come to the wrong place" and began to describe all the tragic things that had recently befallen them. The woman said to herself, "Who is better able to help these poor unfortunate people than I, who have had misfortune of my own? She stayed to comfort them, then went on in her search for a home that had never known sorrow. But wherever she turned, in hovels and in palaces, she found one tale after another of sadness and misfortune. Ultimately, she became so involved in ministering to other people's grief that she forgot about her quest for the magical mustard seed, never realizing that it had in fact driven the sorrow out of her life.

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

The Compassionate Friends Siblings Walking Together

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.