



# The Compassionate Friends

## Lehigh Valley Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Spring 2017

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Volume 31, Issue 2

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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

- April 10** Monthly Support Group Meeting - General Sharing
- May 8** Monthly Support Group Meeting - Separate Sharing for men and women
- June 12** Monthly Support Group Meeting - General Sharing
- June 17** TCF Annual Picnic and Memorial Balloon Launch

## 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.

We welcome newsletter writings from our members, you can also submit writings by others. All submissions must include the author's name & your contact information. Send to TCF Lehigh Valley, ATTN: Newsletter Editor, PO Box 149, Bath, PA 18014 or email to: TCFNewsEditor@gmail.com by the following cutoff dates:

Issue	Cutoff	Issue	Cutoff
Winter (Jan., Feb., March)	Dec. 1 <sup>st</sup>	Summer (July, Aug., Sept.)	June 1 <sup>st</sup>
Spring (April, May, June)	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	Fall (Oct., Nov., Dec.)	Sept 1 <sup>st</sup>

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

## Other Local Bereavement Groups & TCF Chapters

**TCF Carbon County Chapter** - 1st Tuesday 7:00 - 9:00 pm at Palmerton Community Ambulance Assn., 501 Delaware Ave. Palmerton  
Chapter Co Leaders - Dave & Lora Krum, Phone: 484-719-6753 Contact Email: tcfcarboncounty@gmail.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, 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 Allentown** (grief recovery after substance passing) Preregistration required, Contact: Nancy Howe 484-863-4324; 484-788-9440;  
nancyhowe@ymail.com or Jenny Kemps - 610-442-8490

## Local Children's Support Groups

**Ryan's Tree for Grieving Children (ages 5-18)** - www.slnh.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

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# News, Events & Announcements

**Sat. June 17th-TCF Family Picnic and Memorial Balloon Release -12 Noon**  
at Moore Township Rec 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 in honor of the children gone too soon, but who will live forever in our hearts!

The afternoon will begin with a potluck lunch. Every family is asked to bring a covered dish to share. Hot dogs, drinks and paper goods are provided by TCF Lehigh Valley. After lunch everyone will be given a memorial balloon upon which we can write a personal message to our loved one. We will then gather in a circle and release the our balloons as one.

There is a playground for the children and restrooms are conveniently located in the Pavilion.

Information, directions and RSVP form are on the last page of this newsletter.

If you plan to attend please RSVP. This helps us determine the amount of supplies needed. You may do so by using the form or by texting @ 484-891-0823 remember to include your name, number of attending and covered dish you will be bringing.



## 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
- Only Child -  
Shelly Garst 484-241-5396
- Addiction -  
Nancy Howe 484-863-4324
- Suicide -  
John & Maria Szabo 610-866-5468
- Homicide -  
Ginger Renner 610-967-5113

## 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

## 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.

**We thank the following for their generous donations this month**

Contributor	Loved One
♥ Mike & Joanne Providakis	<b>Angelo Providakis</b> <i>Missing you always</i>
♥ Jack & Jule Leonard	<b>John Leonard</b> <i>We love and miss you. Mom, Dad &amp; Karen</i>
♥ Rella Daniels	<b>Jonelle L. Sisonick</b> <i>In memory of my daughter Jonelle Sisonick</i>
♥ Josephine Leiby	<b>Bonnie L. Krause</b> <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Julius & Doris Ernst	<b>Wayne Stephen Ernst</b> <i>We love and miss you. Forever in our hearts.</i>
♥ Lucille Radocha	<b>Peter A. Radocha</b> <i>Happy 44th Birthday in heaven, Pete. 25 yrs. Since you left us</i>
♥ Thomas & Karen Bailey	<b>Mark Adam Bailey</b> <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Julia McLaughlin	<b>Michael Patrick McLaughlin</b> <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Caroline Frisby	<b>Joel L. Frisby</b> <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Kim & Barb Hunsicker	<b>Marie Lynn Albert</b> <i>Its been 20 years. Love and miss you always</i>
♥ Fred & Pat Andrew	<b>Jill Patricia Harris</b> <i>We love and miss you. Mom, Dad , Jeff, Sam &amp; Alex</i>
♥ Ernest & Laurestine Duh	<b>Heather Duh</b> <i>Forever in our hearts</i>
♥ Brian & Nancy Kleckner	<b>Mardelle Parenti-Blume</b> <i>2 years since we saw your beautiful face. Love, your family</i>
♥ Tom & Syd Caton	<b>Kimberly Jo Caton</b> <i>Saddest day of our lives. Love you forever</i>
♥ Sherwood & June Gum	<b>Jim Gum</b> <i>Always in our hearts. Forever in our prayers. Love, Mom &amp; Dad</i>
♥ Betty Schuler	<b>Dean Lynn Schuler</b> <i>In Loving Memory</i>
♥ Shirley Grozier	<b>Robert C. Grozier, II</b> <i>Gone are the times when I held you in my arms, but I will always hold you in my heart. Love you my son.</i>
♥ Larry & Linda Rothrock	<b>Scott G. Rothrock</b> <i>Our Love Always</i>
♥ David & Lora Krum	<b>Dylan &amp; Gavin Krum</b> <i>We love and miss you both more every day.</i>
♥ Irene Hudasky	<b>Lori L. Hudasky</b> <i>I love and miss you. Forever in my heart. Mom</i>

## Donations and Contributions

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

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 & mail to the address indicated.*

## April, May & June Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday	Anniv.
<b>Marie Albert</b>	- Daughter of Kim & Barbara Hunsicker	Jun 14	Apr 6
<b>Evan Albertini</b>	- Son of Louis AlBertini; Brother of Christopher AlBertini	May 28	Feb 13
<b>Walter Alfonso</b>	- Son of Joan Kunsman; Brother of Sherry Flanagan, Sandra Kunsman & the late David Kunsman & Charles Kunsman, Jr	Aug 10	May 18
<b>Patricia Alliston</b>	- Daughter of Glen & Peggy Wessner	Jun 22	Dec 3
<b>Sean Apgar</b>	- Son of Randy Apgar	Jun 18	Jan 22
<b>Patricia Arey</b>	- Daughter of Elizabeth Arey; Sister of Elizabeth Ann, Barbara, Rose Marie & Elaine	Apr 18	May 8
<b>Dakota Arndt</b>	- Son of Steve & Mary Arndt; Brother of Ann Marie & Dylan	Feb 6	May 19
<b>John Ashner, Jr.</b>	- Son of John & Grace Ashner; Brother of Suzanne & Michael	Jun 22	Nov 8
<b>Matthew Aungst</b>	- Son of Christopher & Mary Kelly Aungst; Brother of Alecia & David Aungst Aungst	Oct 15	May 30
<b>Mark Bailey</b>	- Son of Thomas & Karen Bailey	Jun 19	Apr 8
<b>Hannah Rose Bankos</b>	- Daughter of Thomas & Christina Bankos; Sister of Matthew Bankos	Apr 8	Feb 24
<b>Graham Beckhorn</b>	- Son of Alice Keyes; Brother of Christopher & Patrick Beckhorn	Apr 20	Feb 14
<b>Gabriel Benner</b>	- Son of Baily Benner; Brother of Calum Benner	May 4	Feb 9
<b>Aaron Bissell</b>	- Son of Bob & Patti Bissell; Brother of Danielle Bissell	Jun 17	Aug 19
<b>Matthew Breiner</b>	- Son of Jim & Lynne Breiner; Brother of Monica Breiner	May 5	May 17
<b>Rachael Brosky</b>	- Daughter of Karl Brosky; Sister of Rebekah Brosky-Dorsey & William Brosky	Jun 9	Sep 8
<b>Michael Buss</b>	- Son of Bea Bryfogle; Brother of Lindsay & Katelyn Buss	Sep 13	May 15
<b>Kimberly Caton</b>	- Daughter of Thomas & Sydney Caton	Aug 30	May 2
<b>Holly Cavanaugh</b>	- Daughter of Bill Cavanaugh; Daughter of Beverly Ann; Sister of Bo Cavanaugh Cavanaugh	Apr 27	Sep 25
<b>Matthew Chupella</b>	- Son of Maryann Chupella	May 18	Jul 31
<b>Cody Cinicola</b>	- Son of Larry & Jeanne Cinicola; Brother of Larry Cinicola; Grandson of Frank & Gayle and Anna Cinicola	Jun 8	May 25
<b>Anthony Coccia</b>	- Nephew of Jane Coggins	Jun 30	Oct 3
<b>Lorriane Corbo</b>	- Daughter of Debbie Goodman	Jul 13	Jun 23
<b>Kenneth Cosentino</b>	- Son of Judy Cosentino; Brother of Noreen Cosentino	Aug 11	May 6
<b>Rachel Dallas</b>	- Daughter of Robert & Linda Dallas; Sister of Sadie Dallas	Jan 21	Jun 14
<b>Denise Deiter</b>	- Daughter of Franklin & Lucille Reinhard; Sister of Cheryl Ann McCue	Jul 3	Jun 11
<b>Ky DiVittorio</b>	- Son of Jan DiVittorio; Brother of Ian DiVittorio	Feb 13	Apr 3
<b>Heather Duh</b>	- Daughter of Ernest & Laurie Duh; Sister of Laurestine "Laurie" Hollie Duh	May 15	May 24
<b>Paige Fernandez</b>	- Daughter of William Fernandez; Sister of Jamie & Billy Fernandez	Jun 18	Feb 28
<b>Edwin Frantz</b>	- Son of Pamela Green	Aug 11	May 24
<b>Joel Frisby</b>	- Son of Caroline Frisby; Brother of Richard, Gregory, Michael & Timothy Frisby	Mar 26	Jun 4
<b>Peter &amp; Paul Fry</b>	- Sons of John & Cynthia Chryst; Brothers of Jeff Fry & the late Benjamin Fry; Grandsons of Charles & Rose Giltner	Jun 1	Jun 1
<b>Mark Gery</b>	- Son of William & Catherine Gery; Brother of Kristin	May 22	Aug 3
<b>Elizabeth Gibson, MD</b>	- Daughter of Richard J. & Marilyn Brown; Elizabeth Gibson, MD - Sister of Margaret Nahrganl & Eric Brown	Jun 15	Apr 2
<b>Olivia Jo Grazer</b>	- Daughter of Scott & Melissa Grazer; Granddaughter of Louis & Margie McCullen and Stan & Diane	Apr 7	Apr 7
<b>Mary Greaser</b>	- Daughter of Lucian & Brenda Strybuc	Aug 9	Jun 14
<b>Jerry Green</b>	- Son of Sandra Green; Brother of Tina & Jeremy Green	May 30	Jul 4
<b>Jennifer Grider</b>	- Daughter of Carl & Joan Grider	May 18	Jun 29

## April, May & June Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday Anniv.
<b>Robert Grozier, II</b>	- Son of Shirley Grozier; Brother of Laurie, Brenda & Vance Grozier	Feb 15 Jun 11
<b>James "Jim" Gum</b>	- Son of Sherwood & June Gum; Brother of Deborah Martini	Nov 21 May 1
<b>Lisette Hahn</b>	- Daughter of Louis & Joyce Szoke	Mar 4 May 3
<b>Jeffrey Halvorsen</b>	- Son of Deborah Halvorsen; Brother of Michael Halvorsen	Jun 20 Jun 4
<b>Jill Harris</b>	- Daughter of Fred & Pat Andrew; Sister of Jeff	Nov 5 Jun 28
<b>Lisa Hawk</b>	- Daughter of Bruce & Mary Hawk; Sister of Bruce Hawk	Sep 4 Jun 1
<b>David Heard</b>	- Son of Susan Heard; Brother of Daisy Heard	May 20 Feb 10
<b>Mark Hebdon</b>	- Son of Lawrence & Ruth Hebdon; Brother of Laura Long & Michael Hebdon	Feb 24 May 15
<b>Zachary Heck</b>	- Son of Lori Edinger	Sep 3 Apr 25
<b>Sara Ann Hicks</b>	- Daughter of Mary Ellen Hicks; Sister of David Hicks	Oct 19 Jun 24
<b>Justin Hilbert</b>	- Son of Robert & Joan Hilbert; Brother of Ashley & Kyle Hilbert	Dec 22 May 26
<b>David Hoagland, Jr</b>	- Son of Gypsy Garrett	Sep 24 Apr 26
<b>Loren Holl</b>	- Son of Fern Gerth	May 31 May 30
<b>Richard "Rich" Hollabaugh</b>	- Son of Wayne & Linda Hollabaugh	Dec 20 Apr 10
<b>Taylor Holloway-Brown</b>	- Daughter of Marilyn Brown	May 26 May 19
<b>James "Jimmy" Hotz</b>	- Son of Elizabeth Hotz	Apr 24 Jul 4
<b>Lori Hudasky</b>	- Daughter of Irene Hudasky	Mar 18 Apr 22
<b>Jordon Hyndman</b>	- Son of Robin Hyndman; Brother of Shawna & Briana Hyndman	Nov 14 May 23
<b>Hannah Jordan</b>	- Daughter of Lisa Jordan	Jan 18 May 24
<b>Jack Julo, Jr</b>	- Son of Jack & Margaret Julo	Jun 14 Jun 18
<b>Frank Kerr</b>	- Son of Catherine Milano	Aug 27 Jun 23
<b>Julian Keyock</b>	- Son of Gregory Keyock; Brother of Maya & Jacob Keyock	May 5 Feb 17
<b>Colleen Kilker</b>	- Daughter of Mark & Kathleen Kilker; Sister of Meghan, Bridget & Mark Kilker	May 6 Jul 23
<b>Tara Koshinski</b>	- Daughter of Daniel & Mary Koshinski Sr; Granddaughter of Joanne Gordon	May 26 Nov 18
<b>Bonnie Krause</b>	- Daughter of Josephine Leiby - Mather	Jun 22 Mar 24
<b>Dylan Krum</b>	- Son of David & Lora Krum; Brother of The Late Gavin Krum; Grandson of Henry & Shirley Long and Nevin Krum	Jun 22 Jul 15
<b>Gavin Krum</b>	- Son of David & Lora Krum; Brother of The Late Dylan Krum; Grandson of Henry & Shirley Long and Nevin Krum	Apr 9 Nov 27
<b>Michael Kulp</b>	- Son of Mike & Tamara Kulp; Brother of Mikell Kulp	Apr 21 Nov 17
<b>David Kunsman</b>	- Son of Charles & Joan Kunsman; Brother of Sherry Flanagan, Sandra Kunsman, & the late Walter Alfonso & Charles Kunsman, Jr	May 2 Jul 15
<b>Trever Landis</b>	- Son of Robin Landis; Brother of Marlea, Dana & Kelsey Landis	Apr 16 Dec 9
<b>Jamie Laudenslager</b>	- Son of Jane Laudenslager; Brother of Jon & Shelly	Jan 23 Apr 14
<b>Joseph McGouldrick</b>	- Son of Pat McGouldrick; Brother of Jennifer McGouldrick	Jul 24 Jun 5
<b>Ryan Miller</b>	- Son of Patti Miller & The late Richard Miller, Jr; Brother of Richard Miller, III	Jan 4 Jun 12
<b>Michael Milot</b>	- Son of John & Patti Milot; Brother of Jill	Jun 30 Feb 2
<b>Frank Mirabile</b>	- Son of Joseph & Laura DeVito; Brother of Michael, Joseph & Nicholas	Apr 19 May 18
<b>Michael "Mike" Morgan</b>	- Son of Raymond & Deborah Vrtis	Aug 17 Apr 19
<b>Lisa Munjone</b>	- Daughter of Lorraine Parkhurst	Dec 5 Jun 11
<b>Cody Myers</b>	- Son of David & Denise Myers; Brother of Travis, Crystal & Benjamin Myers	Dec 12 May 15
<b>Colins Nevins Greede</b>	- Son of Ted & Mary Nevins Greede	Jun 23 Jan 10
<b>Kelly Owens</b>	- Son of Judy Dorward & Douglas D. Owens	Jan 24 May 20
<b>Allison Perno</b>	- Daughter of Cathy Perno; Sister of Joseph & Anthony Perno	Oct 7 Jun 10
<b>Michael Potkovac, III</b>	- Son of Annette Potkovac; Brother of Michele Cuvo, Matthew, Mark, John, Denise Potkovac & the late Donna Marie Potkovac-Roth	May 26 Aug 29
<b>Donna Potkovac-Roth</b>	- Daughter of Annette Potkovac; Sister of Michele Cuvo, Matthew, Mark, John, Denise Potkovac & The late Michael N. Potkovac, III	Apr 21 Feb 26
<b>Angelo Providakis</b>	- Son of Michael & Joanne Providakis	Feb 7 Apr 9
<b>Peter Radocha</b>	- Son of Lucille Radocha; Brother of Frank Radocha, Jr & Gina Sacco	Jun 13 Jul 1
<b>Harry Rawdon</b>	- Son of Margaret Rawdon; Brother of JettaAnn Rawdon	Sep 23 May 13
<b>Allison Reboratti</b>	- Daughter of Eduardo & Barbara Reboratti	Jan 25 May 9
<b>Nicole Reinhart</b>	- Daughter of Michael & Pamela Reinhart; Sister of Mikey & Timmy Reinhart	Jun 3 Sep 17

## April, May & June Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday	Anniv.
<b>Stephen Rendish</b>	- Brother of Sheri Wilson	May 6	Jun 21
<b>Cory Ross</b>	- Son of Kathy Ross; Brother of Michael Ross	Jul 24	Jun 12
<b>Eric Rute</b>	- Son of Linda Cavanaugh	Feb 15	May 20
<b>Scott Sargeant</b>	- Son of Gary & Phyllis Sargeant; Brother of Gary & Paul	Apr 14	Nov 1
<b>Dean Schuler</b>	- Son of Betty Schuler & the late Lester Schuler	May 22	Nov 19
<b>Amanda Schultz</b>	- Daughter of Mark & Patty Schultz; Sister of Ryan & Eric Schultz	Jun 18	Mar 5
<b>Steven Seibert</b>	- Son of Thomas & Eva Seibert; Brother of Nick & Krista Seibert; Grandson of Eva Juhasz	Jun 27	Dec 22
<b>Thomas Sensinger</b>	- Son of Ann Sensinger; Brother of Susan Brown	Jun 14	Oct 9
<b>Ronald "Ronnie" Sherbaum, Jr.</b>	- Son of Ronald & Donna Sherbaum, Sr.; Brother of Daniel & Joseph Sherbaum	Jul 17	May 17
<b>Andrew Siegfried</b>	- Son of Rich & Ruthann Siegfried; Brother of Ben Siegfried	Mar 27	Apr 18
<b>Jonelle Sisonick</b>	- Daughter of Rella Sisonick Daniels; Sister of Anthony & Nicholas Sisonick	May 22	Aug 3
<b>Zachary Spence</b>	- Son of Rebecca Spence	Sep 27	May 22
<b>Casey Stengel</b>	- Son of Casey & Jane Stengel; Brother of Chrissy, Sarah, Lisa & Mike Stengel	Jul 22	May 4
<b>Kevin Stenlake</b>	- Son of Elizabeth Leada Stenlake; Brother of Dawn Frey	Feb 22	May 26
<b>Keith Storat</b>	- Son of Richard & Susan Storat; Brother of Todd & Greg	May 18	Jul 22
<b>Jennifer Strohl</b>	- Daughter of Thomas & Christine Strohl	Apr 15	Dec 12
<b>Steven Suarez</b>	- Son of Abby Suarez; Brother of Giovanni Miranda; Grandson of Roger & Gabby Schreck	May 29	Jan 19
<b>Russell Terry</b>	- Son of Brian & Amy Erbe; Brother of Shannon	May 8	Jan 9
<b>Reeder Thatcher, Jr.</b>	- Son of Jane Thatcher & the Late Reeder Thatcher Sr.; Brother of Timothy, Michael & Lynne	Mar 12	May 22
<b>Jared Thomas</b>	- Son of Sandra B. Schueck	Aug 31	Jun 22
<b>James "Jimmy" Thompson</b>	- Son of Mary A. Thompson & The late Richard Thompson Brother of Marie, Mark, Patrick & Kathy Thompson	Jan 23	Apr 6
<b>Jessella Torres</b>	- Daughter of Jonathan & Jessica Torres	Dec 17	Jun 1
<b>Meredith Unger</b>	- Daughter of Kathleen Paone	May 23	Feb 17
<b>Shane Uttard</b>	- Son of Brenda Deubler	Jan 15	May 13
<b>Sean Virmalo</b>	- Son of Udo & Janet L. Virmalo; Brother of Eric, Brett & Katelyn Virmalo	Sep 13	Apr 28
<b>Joseph Visnosky, Jr.</b>	- Brother of Grace L Ashner	May 27	May 4
<b>Joshua Wersinger</b>	- Son of David & Joanne Wersinger; Brother of Patrick, Hope, Joeseoph, Gertrude & Marjorie Wersinger	Jan 19	May 17
<b>Richard "Rick" Wetherhold</b>	- Son of Franklin & Eleanor Wetherhold; Brother of Michael Wetherhold	Nov 20	Apr 16
<b>Zachary Wieder</b>	- Son of Michael & Tracy Wieder; Brother of Brandi Hahn; Grandson of Linda Seyfried	Apr 13	Dec 21
<b>Craig Yurick</b>	- Son of Robert & Sharon Yurick; Brother of Todd Yurick	Aug 5	Jun 21
<b>Abigail Zukowski</b>	- Daughter of Chris & Lisa Zukowski; Sister of Vincent Disimone, Gabrielle & Madison Zukowski; Granddaughter of Martin & Michele Glynn	Jan 27	May 18

# Look for us on the Web



Visit our **web page** at [www.lehighvalleytcf.org](http://www.lehighvalleytcf.org) for group information, meetings & events schedule, and helpful links.

**Like our facebook page:** [www.facebook.com/TCFLehighValley](http://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**

## How Well We Know

By Joanne Providakis  
 TCF Lehigh Valley Chapter  
 In memory of her son Angelo Providakis  
 2/82 - 4/00

Not all stories of life have happy endings,  
 how well we know.

My son's story had just begun  
 and it was time for him to go.  
 But sometimes I continue to read on  
 And make some happy endings  
 of which I'm very fond.

I'm always wondering what it would be like  
 to have him here today.  
 Continuing on with his story gives me a chance  
 with some things I never got to say.  
 For a moment there in time  
 I get to smile.  
 I get to enjoy some happy times  
 even if only for awhile.

Even though we'll never know  
 what it was to be.  
 We can make it something that  
 we would have loved to see.  
 When reality sets in  
 and I know its just my mind.  
 I know I have to leave  
 those happy endings behind.

Reality is my son's not here  
 and left almost seventeen years ago.  
 A life story cut short of a happy ending,  
 how well we know.

*When we lose someone we love,  
 We grieve not only for what we lost,  
 But what might have been*

*Unknown*

## The Garden of Grieving

By Barbara J. Reboratti, TCF Quakertown Chapter, PA

When Allison was killed in May 2001, the summer months that followed were merely a blur, other than the intense agony of days and nights filled with seemingly non-stop crying that literally took my breath away and plummeted me to near unconsciousness for lack of oxygen in my lungs.

I have no recollection of how the lawn and garden fared that year. I was non-functional both physically and mentally. I was hospitalized because I wanted to kill myself to be with my beloved 19-year-old daughter whose life was obliterated by a drunk driver convicted of homicide and now incarcerated.

When I attended The Compassionate Friends support group meetings, I wanted to deck any parent who

remarked that I would survive and even find joy again in my life. "What a betrayal to my Allison," I thought, "to not grieve for the rest of my life." My definition of grief was non-stop crying and despair. It was my badge of honor for her.

My grieving is a life sentence, but it has ever changing definitions these days. It evolves from day to day, week to week, month to month and year to year. And so too does my recovery.

The following year's Spring, I was angered by the new blooms of the crocus and the Iris. How dare they come alive and not my daughter. I stomped on a few blooms and then, of course, felt guilty. I didn't care about the unkempt yard and the garden vacant of flowers and vegetables. Yet, at the cemetery, I visited Allison's grave almost daily to literally dust her monument, pull weeds and even trim the grass with a pair of sewing scissors. Other bereaved parents didn't find that odd, but I got alarmed stares from everyone else.

Last Spring and summer, I ached when new blooms emerged, but I didn't stomp on them. From two prior years of neglect, weeds and tall grasses invaded the yard. Somewhere deep within me, I had the energy to buy a weed wacker and tackle the unwelcomed weeds with a vengeance. And I didn't stop at my own property. I wacked my way onto neighboring properties, including those where no one lived. I spewed epithets at the weeds followed by soggy and dirt-caked cheeks from the tears. In hindsight, it had nothing to do with unwanted weeds and everything to do with the anger and rage in my heart and soul. I couldn't kill the drunk driver, but I could kill the weeds. I would be exhausted, but I always felt better afterwards.

I had never consciously acknowledged the anger within me, but my mind and body did. Anger is seldom

*Continued on page 8*

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acknowledged or recognized as part of the grieving process. Few recognize it within themselves. And even fewer talk about it. I wasn't only angry at the person who caused my child's death, I was also angry at Allison for "leaving me." Even fewer bereaved parents acknowledge the anger with their own deceased child. Your child doesn't have to die as the result of someone's criminal or negligent action for you to be angry. Anger is as real a part of grieving a child's death as is the sorrow, the tears, the chest pain, the anxiety and the depression.

This year's Spring and Summer arrived with mixed feelings. The anniversary of Allison's death was on Mother's Day. I cried long and hard with the sorrow of missing Allison, but I also cried tears of love and adoration for my two surviving children; Ashley and Elliot. I had learned to risk love again and feel its healing effect on my heart and soul.

I saw a solitary flower bloom that had never bloomed before on our property. I was captivated by its bright color and the silky softness of its petals. It reminded me of Allison's vibrance, her ability to stand alone and her thick soft hair. I thanked God and Allison for the gift and, of course, I cried again.

This year, my yard and my flower gardens are vibrantly alive....and weed-free. Spending hours working the soil and planting the seeds are just as rewarding as whacking the weeds. As I nurture my plants, so too do I nurture the love in my heart for Allison. The physical exertion and the beauty of my efforts also nurture my heart and soul as I let the tears flow and the smiles grow. My children say it is Allison who helps me till the soil and plant the seeds of new life in memory and honor of her and the beauty of her enduring love for us.

"Wow, your yard and garden have come a long way," my neighbor remarked.

"Yes, indeed," I responded. And so too have I.



## Our Day... A Very Special Day

By Vera Babb, TCF St. Louis, MO

A day that is set aside especially to honor all mothers.

**MOTHER.** . . a beautiful word. What other word could you use to best describe giving birth to, nursing, love and caring for a tiny helpless human being, a gift of life to treasure? But weren't we taught that once you gave a gift to someone, you should never take it back? What went wrong? Mine was taken away from me. Does this mean that I wasn't worthy to be a mother, that I was failing, that I didn't appreciate the gift? The gift was too precious to be given for keeps. It was only loaned to me for a short while. Even in my sorrow, I feel special, for I know the true meaning of the word **Mother.** I have reached the ultimate, from the joy of birth to the sorrow of death. I belong to a special group who truly knows the meaning of the word **Mother.**

Would I not have accepted the gift if I had known the terrible loss I would feel by having it taken away from me? NO, I would still hold out my hands and accept such a precious gift, for to love and to cherish, even for a short while, is worth every tear.

This year on Mother's Day, I'll shed my tears but let them be as soft as a summer rain - a rain that nourishes the earth, tears that heal and cleanse my heart.



## A Mother's Love

By Joy Moming TCF/Phoenix, AZ

I need no pictures  
to remember your warm smile;  
the line of your face  
are embedded in my memory of you.  
I gave you life in *one* second of pain,  
for which you returned years of yourself -  
sometimes quiet, sometimes noisy,  
but always thoughtful.

Sometimes  
I hear a voice that sounds like you,  
and I pause.  
That pang of hurt  
stems from a tiny empty spot  
you have left in my life.  
I carried you in my womb,  
then later in my arms,  
but I will carry you  
in my heart forever.



## Father's Day

By Gerry Hunt, TCF White River Junction, VT

Every father believes in his role as protector of his family. He has been assigned the job of fixer and problem solver. He has been told, since his youngest days, that he must be strong - must not cry.

But each father among us has had to face that point where no amount of fixing, problem solving, and protecting has been able to stop our child's death. And inside we must ask ourselves about our failure, and we must face our lack of omnipotence.

Father's Day is often a forgotten holiday, overshadowed by the longer-standing tribute to mothers. But for the bereaved father it is a poignant reminder of bitter sweetness. Sweet in the memory of a loved, now lost, child; bitter for the death and pain and recognition of inability to stop what happened. Fathers do not often have a chance to share their hurts and concerns. Oftentimes they are unable to do so, a remnant of childhood learning's about the strength and stoicism of "big boys." A father may be uncomfortable opening up to his wife, and the wife who pushes him to talk may be pushing too hard.

Father's Day does not have to be a time when everyone pours out of the woodwork to say, "I'm sorry we haven't talked. Let's do it now." But it can be a time when the family gives Dad a hug, does something special, helps with the chores, and mostly, lets him know how important and needed and loved he is. It is some of these things that he has lost with the death of a child.

And, like Mother's day, the day set aside for fathers does not have to be limited to a Sunday in June. It can be any day and every day.

Fathers often show their hurts differently, often internally.  
**BUT THEY DO HURT.**

## A Father's Grief

My son, a perfect little boy of five years and three months, had ended his earthly life. You can never sympathize with me; you can never know how much of me such a young child can take away. A few weeks ago I accounted myself a very rich man, and now the poorest of them all.

Ralph Waldo Emerson  
In a letter to Thomas Carlyle



## No Ordinary Spring

This is no ordinary spring at all.

It dances on with unbecoming weather:  
now more like winter than December was,  
and then again as soft as early summer....

This is no ordinary spring at all.

It meets your heart with unexpected dangers:  
now with the loneliest of memories,  
and then again with unforgotten laughter....

This is no ordinary spring at all.

This is like life itself, a changing season.  
Accept the wintertime of grief,  
and then reach for the hope of summer  
and of healing.

Sascha Wagner



## Easter And Passover

By Dav Ziv, TCF  
BucksMont, PA



Its time for celebrating Easter and Passover, family holidays and family gatherings. Again, as bereaved parents, especially if we are newly bereaved, we pause and must make a decision as to how and if we are going to proceed as we have in former years, before the death of our children. For both holidays there is the religious aspect and how to deal with it. But, also for both holidays there is "the children's hour," so to speak. For Easter there have always been the Easter Parade, Easter eggs, and the Easter Bunny. For Passover, there have been matzah, the Seder with the recitations of the Four Questions, and with the participation of the youngest child.

So, again, what to do? Both Easter and Passover are holidays in which children are strongly involved. To see that empty chair at the table, to know that missing child is no longer with us, can be devastating, especially after the first or second anniversary of the death. As with the other holidays, Christmas, Chanukah, Thanksgiving, there are no pat answers, no magical formulas. If you can, visit the cemetery. If you can, talk about your child during the holidays. At our house we have made a ritual to remember our son at the beginning of the Passover Seder. Please handle these holidays anyway you can. There are no rules. Do it your way.

# Sibling Page

## Change is Natural

By Marydith Ferris, TCF St. Petersburg, FL

Sometimes I sit and think of what my life would be like today if my brother were still alive. I think of my graduation day and cry because he wasn't there to share my laughter and joy when received my diploma. Then I think back to his graduation day, knowing how happy he was and how excited he was to join the real world. Now that I have graduated, I don't feel that same excitement or joy because he is not here to share it with me.

The loss of my brother has changed my life forever. I would do anything to bring him back so everything would be the same as it was before. But I can't. I love my brother and I always will. I miss him more than anything.

When you lose someone as close to you as a brother: you tend to change for good and for bad. Sometimes people change by becoming more loving to others who are close to them, and that can be good. There are some people who change by becoming more withdrawn into themselves. That is what happened to me.

Before my brother death I would very rarely discuss my problems with someone else. Now I don't discuss them at all. Now I tend to react much more quickly to all kinds of situations, Sometimes I blow up at people when they did nothing wrong. I will apologize and they think I am crazy. But if you simply explain the situation and apologize, they do understand,

What I am trying to say is that change is a natural thing; we just have unique circumstances under which we change. Most people will automatically understand, but there are a few who need some explanations. Just know that you are okay, and don't worry about what others think. Know inside that you are doing what you need to do to get better.

## Saying Goodbye

By Kelly Conley, TCF Cincinnati, OH

One of the hardest things I ever had to do was to say goodbye to a very special person. This person was special to me in so many ways that when he died, it was like a part of me leaving too! I never thought a relationship between a brother and sister could be so strong. He seemed more than just a brother. He was also my best friend. We shared a lot of happiness

throughout the years we grew up together. Although he was three years older than I, we never really argued or fought. He took me to parties and shared secrets with me. My brother always treated me like a best friend.

When Tony was a senior in high school, he was diagnosed with cancer. I couldn't believe it! I never gave up hope. . . . But after two painful years, I finally had to say goodbye to the best friend I've ever had. It was like a bad dream, but I just couldn't wake up. I didn't want to accept the fact that he was gone forever. I would cry myself to sleep every night and again wake up crying. I just couldn't understand why God had taken away my big brother.

After months of mourning. I finally learned to accept his death I know now that he is finally out of pain. Seeing him sick like that is what hurt me most. It was very hard to say goodbye to my brother but I will never forget all our good times and our memories. He will remain in my heart and mind forever.☞

## Leah

By Alexis Contreras, TCF, Medford, OR

I am remembering my sister Leah.  
 I wonder if she is looking down on me.  
 I hear her voice as if she was still here.  
 I see her smiling face as I walk down the hallway.  
 I want her to be here with me and my family.  
 I am missing her all the time.  
 I pretend she is still alive.  
 I feel the pain inside my heart.  
 I touch all her belongings and remember her.  
 I worry about the rest of my family.  
 I cried when this tragedy happened so suddenly.  
 I am lonely at night when I think of her.  
 I understand I will never see her again.  
 I say that I miss her and I mean it too.  
 I dream at night that she is still around.  
 I try not to think of the accident,  
 but of the good memories I have of us together.  
 I hope never to forget the things she did for me.  
 I am remembering my sister and the love she gave to all.

### 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.

Submission Deadlines: Winter - Dec 1<sup>st</sup>; Spring - March 1<sup>st</sup>; Summer - June 1<sup>st</sup>; Fall - Sept 1<sup>st</sup>

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 to be published in. Deadlines listed above. Late submissions will be published in the next edition

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 Dave & Lora Krum  
250 South 9th St  
Lehighton, Pa 18235

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 specify what change(s) are (i.e. correction, sibling name addition etc...) Use another piece of paper if necessary

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

**Sat. June 17 @ 12 pm (Rain or Shine)**  
**Moore Township Recreation Center**  
635 English Rd. Bath, PA

You are invited to join us for our annual Picnic. Hot dogs, drinks & balloons are provided by the chapter, Please bring a covered dish to share, lawn chairs & sports equipment.

*Please RSVP, so that we can accurately determine the amount of supplies needed, by filling out and returning the form below or texting 484-891-0823 with your name, number of attendees, covered dish and if you are able to volunteer*

### **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<sup>st</sup>**

**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

