



The Compassionate Friends **2018**

Lehigh Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



New Year & Winter 2018

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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

Jan 8 Monthly Support Group Meeting - General Sharing

Feb 12 Monthly Support Group Meeting - General Sharing

March 12 Monthly Support Group Meeting - General Sharing

All cancelations 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

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 st	Summer (July, Aug., Sept.)	June 1 st
Spring (April, May, June)	March 1 st	Fall (Oct., Nov., Dec.)	Sept 1 st

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@gmail.com or Jenny Kemps - 610-442-8490

Local Children's Support Groups

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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Recent Events:

TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting Dec. 10th Thanks to Tom and Eva Siebert who once again invited members into their home to share a meal and light a candle in memory of their child in observance of The Worldwide Candle Lighting

TCF Candle Light Remembrance Service Dec. 11th Thanks to all members and families that attended. Special thanks to 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; all our readers helpers and volunteers, and everyone who brought the delicious treats to share.

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



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

*Grief is the price we pay for love.
We did not lose our children.
They died, taking with them **our** hopes and
dreams for the future,
But never taking away their love.*

*Though death comes, love will never go away.
Hold it tight, the love our children gave us.
Hold it tight through the storms of grief
and bring it with you into today.*

Love• never goes away.

Darcie Sims

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
♥ Yvonne Hude	Molly Hude <i>Happy 29h Birthday Molly! Have a blast! Miss you very much, Mom & Dad & Grammy</i>
♥ Salvatore & Mary Bartolotta	Salvatore Carai Bartolotta <i>In Loving Memory of our son</i>
♥ Judy Dorward	Kelly Shawn Owens <i>January 29th one of the happiest days of my life, May 20th the saddest</i>
♥ Gene & Dawn Delong	David Delong <i>In loving memory of David, Miss you every day Love, Mom, Dad & Jamie</i>
♥ Lin Miller	Glenn Miller Jr. <i>Love Ever</i>
♥ Douglas Owens	Kelly Shawn Owens <i>Not a day goes by that you aren't thought of</i>
♥ Shirley May Rostkowski	Daniel "Dan" Rostkowski <i>In memory with love, Mom</i>
♥ Doris Hosler	Debbie Sweeney <i>Always in our thoughts. We miss you and love you</i>
♥ Don and Sue Southgate	Troy G. Southgate <i>We love and miss you so very much. Mom, Dad and Martin</i>
♥ Shirley Grozier	Robert C. Grozier, II <i>Happy Birthday my Bob. Missing you and holding you in my heart always. All my love, Mom</i>

Donations and Contributions

- ★ 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
- ★ The Shafer Family Charitable Trust
- ★ Aetna Payroll Contributors
- ★ 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.



Look for us on the Web



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

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

A butterfly lights beside us like a sunbeam
 And for a brief moment, its glory and beauty belongs to our world
 And then it flies on again.
 And though we wished it could have stayed
 We fell blessed to have seen it

Author Unknown

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.

January, February, 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 & Mary Arndt; Brother of Ann Marie & Dylan	Feb 6	May 19
James Balloch	- Grandson of Fern Gerth; Grandson of Bill Gerth	Feb 22	Sep 4
Hannah Rose Bankos	- Daughter of Thomas & 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 & Janet Blosky; Grandson of Jack & Nancy Blosky	Jan 28	Oct 4
Timothy Bogart	- Son of Nancy & Bill Bogart; Brother of Ryan Bogart & Katelyn Bogart	Mar 12	Jul 4
Joshua Booth	- Son of Les & Bonnie Booth	Mar 12	Dec 27
Brian Burke	- Son of Rich & Mary Burke; Brother of Melissa Burke	Jan 3	Oct 9
Rachel Dallas	- Daughter of Robert & Linda Dallas Sister of Sadie Dallas;	Jan 21	Jun 14
Hope Davidson	- Daughter of Dean & Donna Davidson	Aug 8	Feb 8
Cole Davis	- Son of Konnie Krasenics & Charles Davis; Brother of Jahleah Krasenics-Galarza	Jan 10	Apr 8
Sheila DeBoer	- Daughter of Barbara DeBoer & the late Henry DeBoer; Sister of Leslie & Cory DeBoer	Jan 29	Jul 27
Mark Dilts, Jr	- Son of Mark & 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 & 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 & Ann Evans; Brother of Tom Sampson & Patti Stout	Mar 12	Aug 16
Maggie Faber	- Daughter of Harry & 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 R. Burgin & David A. Fehr, Jr.; Granddaughter of Warren & Rose Fehr and Elwood & Mary Mann	Aug 31	Jan 8
Eric Fenstermacher	- Son of Rick & 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 of Jeff Fry; Brother of the late Peter & Paul Fry; Grandson of Charles & Rose Giltner	Oct 6	Mar 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 & 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 Laurie, Brenda & Vance Grozier	Feb 15	Jun 11
Rita Guerrieri	- Daughter of Art & Mary Guerrieri; Sister of Maryrose Guerrieri-Nesbitt	Sep 29	Mar 11
Brian Gum	- Son of Geary & Brenda Gum	Feb 21	Mar 5
Lisette Hahn	- Daughter of Louis & Joyce Szoke	Mar 4	May 3
Brett Harris	- Son of Chester & Carol Kinsey, Jr.; Brother of Terry & Lisa	Dec 10	Jan 14
Jonathan Hawk	- Son of Bruce & Mary Hawk; Brother of Bruce Hawk & the late Lisa Hawk	Aug 26	Mar 30
Heather Hawn	- Daughter of Mike & Cathi Tirrell; Sister of Holli & Chad	Feb 25	Dec 25

January, February, March Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday Anniv.	
David Heard	- Son of Susan Heard; Brother of Daisy Heard	May 20	Feb 10
Anne Marie Mabus Heater	- Daughter of Wayne & Frances Mabus; Sister of Steven Mabus	Jan 7	Nov 25
Mark Hebdon	- Son of Lawrence & Ruth Hebdon; Brother of Laura Long & Michael Hebdon	Feb 24	May 15
Thomas Hillanbrand	- Son of LaDonna Hillanbrand. Brother of Tristen & Stephanie Miller	Nov 3	Jan 9
Thomas Holoman	Son of Joseph & Joan Holoman	Jan 18	Mar 15
Lori Hudasky	- Daughter of Irene Hudasky	Mar 18	Apr 22
Austin Jacobs	- Son of Penny Jacobs; Brother of Seth Jacobs	Jan 24	Aug 27
Ryan Jones	- Son of David & Elaine Jones	Mar 7	Mar 7
Hannah Jordan	- Daughter of Lisa Jordan	Jan 18	May 24
Jonathan Keller	- Son of Dennis & Lori Keller; Brother of Amy Keller	Oct 25	Mar 23
Schyler Kemps	- Son of John & 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
Bonnie Krause	- Daughter of Josephine Leiby - Mather	Jun 22	Mar 24
Matt Kush	- Son of Rick & Ann Kush; Brother of Mike & Jenn	Aug 24	Feb 10
John "Jack" Kushnerick, Jr.	- Son of Bernice Kushnerick; Brother of Pat & Jan Kushnerick	Sep 17	Mar 16
Jason Lafortune	-son of Jean and Sharon Lafortune	Feb 10	Jan 25
Joy Laube	- Daughter of Barry & 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 & Judy Lentz	Dec 9	Mar 10
John Leonard, Jr	- Son of John & 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 & Jean Martin	Feb 4	Nov 29
Beth Anne Mather	- Daughter of Peter Mather	Mar 12	Jan 17
Katherine McGraw	- Daughter of John & Sue McGraw; Sister of Maggy & Sean McGraw	Aug 15	Feb 28
Michael McLaughlin	- Son of James & Julia McLaughlin; Brother of Matthew & Patrick McLaughlin	Mar 16	Dec 24
Ed McNally	- Son of Don & Connie McNally; Brother of Sean McNally	Jul 29	Feb 11
Emma McNulty	- Daughter of Jessica & Susan Katzbeck	Nov 19	Mar 11
Frank Michael	- Son of John & Lisa Rigione; Brother of Connor Rigione	Feb 19	Feb 12
Ashley Mickelson	- Daughter of Paul Mickelson	Feb 20	Jul 28
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 & Patti Milot; Brother of Jill	Jun 30	Feb 2
Terence Milton, Jr	- Son of Terence Hagins; Brother of Tyreek, Caressa, Asley, Danyell	Jan 1	Jul 26
Jim Minter	- Son of Jim & Barbara Minter; Brother of Jeanine Minter	Aug 15	Mar 14
James "Jimmy" Mullen, II	- Son of Jeanie Mullen	Feb 26	Jan 1
Colins Nevins Greede	-Son of Ted and Mary Nevins Greede	Jun 23	Jan 10
Susette Olewine	- Daughter of Louis & 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 & Nancy Kleckner	Feb 9	Mar 1
Buddy Pearson	- Son of Bob & 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
Michael Powers	- Son of Richard & Margaret Powers; Brother of Billy, Richie, Tara & Ryan	Jul 9	Feb 10
Angelo Providakis	- Son of Michael & Joanne Providakis	Feb 7	Apr 9
Caleb Putro	- Son of David & Susan Putro; Brother of David Putro, Jr	Mar 31	Oct 13

January, February, March Birthdays and Anniversaries

Child	Parents and Guardians, Siblings & Grandparents	Birthday	Anniv.
James Ralls	- Son of Tina Ralls; Brother of Timothy & Geoffrey	Jan 2	Aug 17
Allison Reboratti	- Daughter of Eduardo & Barbara Reboratti	Jan 25	May 9
Sandra Roberts	- Daughter of Millard & Barbara Howell; Sister of Randy, Michaela & Alexandria	Feb 3	Aug 13
Anthony Romig	- Son of Lois Pearsall & Edward C. Romig, Sr.; Brother of Edward C. Romig, Jr.	Sep 12	Jan 20
Daniel Rostkowski	- Son of Shirley May Rostkowski; Brother of Janet Wise & Andrew Rostkowski	Nov 28	Jan 30
Maria Rothermel	- Daughter of Gerald & Doris Rothermel; Sister of Mark Rothermel	Mar 25	Feb 3
Joey Russo	- Brother of Jena & Jevin Russo	Jan 1	Feb 23
Eric Rute	- Son of Linda Cavanaugh	Feb 15	May 20
Jennifer Schaible	- Daughter of Linda Stewart Sister of Andy Schaible & The late Aaron Schaible	Feb 18	Feb 26
Quinna Schleicher	- Daughter of Lin & Judy Schleicher; Sister of Aaron Schleicher	Feb 2	Mar 10
Amanda Schultz	- Daughter of Mark & Patty Schultz; Sister of Ryan & Eric Schultz	Jun 18	Mar 5
Joseph Siedlecki, Jr	- Son of Joe & Monica Siedlecki; Brother of MaryAnn & Michele Siedlecki & the late Jeanmarie Siedlecki Moyer	Feb 26	Jul 9
Andrew Siegfried	- Son of Rich & Ruthann Siegfried; Brother of Ben Siegfried	Mar 27	Apr 18
Joshua Simcox	- Son of Michelle Green & Otis Ramsey, Brother of Joseph, Zoe' & Tessy	Jun 30	Mar 16
David Todd Smith	- Son of David & Kathleen Smith; Brother of Stephanie Seifert	Feb 25	Sep 17
Troy Southgate	- Son of Donald & Susann Southgate; Brother of Martin Southgate	Feb 25	Oct 30
Joseph Span	- Son of Joel & Annette Span	Jul 8	Feb 12
Andrew Staub	- Son of Mark & Louise Stahley	Jan 4	Jan 12
Lisa Staub	- Daughter of Mark & Louise Stahley	Oct 1	Mar 2
Geoffrey Steckel	- Son of Dean & Patricia Steckel; Brother of Jennifer & 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 & Kevin Stewart	Sep 23	Feb 1
Michael Stocker	- Son of Calvin & Kay Stocker; Brother of Megan Fibrick	Oct 14	Jan 26
Steven Suarez	- Son of Abby Suarez; Brother of Giovanni Miranda; Grandson of Roger & Gabby Schreck	May 29	Jan 19
Pete Swartwood, III	- Son of Pete Swartwood	Oct 11	Mar 22
Debra Sweeney	- Daughter of Richard & Doris Hosler; Sister of Donna Mallard	Nov 16	Jan 5
Travis Szerencits	- Son of Craig & Cookie Harron	Mar 11	Dec 1
Tracy Szoke	- Daughter of Randal & Kim Szoke; Sister of Trisha Remaley	Mar 9	Nov 24
Russell Terry	- Son of Brian & 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
Shane Uttard	- Son of Brenda Deubler	Jan 15	May 13
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 & Pamela Fehnel; Brother of Cori	Mar 13	Dec 23
Whitney Wagner	- Daughter of Nick & Mindy Snyder	Nov 25	Feb 23
Seth Warhurst	- Son of Debra Warhurst; Brother of Michele Warhurst	Mar 4	Mar 6
Samuel Weiner	- Son of Martin & Marie Levin	Feb 14	Mar 5
Joshua Wersinger	- Son of David & Joanne Wersinger; Brother of Patrick, Hope, Joeseeph, Gertrude & Marjorie Wersinger	Jan 19	May 17
Avery Williams	- Daughter of Joshua & Ashley Williams	Jan 5	Jan 6
Steven Winkler	- Son of Ellen Winkler; Brother of Jennifer; Grandson of Arnold Abramowitz	Jan 12	Jul 26
Michael Zalewski	- Son of Krzysztof & Jolanta Zalewska; Brother of Monika Baraket	Jan 7	Dec 6
Abigail Zukowski	- Daughter of Chris & Lisa Zukowski; Sister of Vincent Disimone, Gabrielle & Madison; Granddaughter of Martin & Michele Glynn	Jan 27	May 18

New Year's Wishes for Bereaved Parents

By Former TCF President Joe Rousseau



- **To the newly bereaved:** We wish you patience with yourselves in the painful weeks, months, even years ahead.
- **To the bereaved sibling:** We wish you and your parents a new understanding of each other's needs and the beginnings of good communication.
- **To those who are single parents:** We wish you the inner resources we know you will need to cope, often alone, with your loss.
- **To those experiencing marital difficulties** after the death of your child: We wish you a special willingness and ability to communicate with each other.
- **To those of you have suffered the death of more than one child:** We wish you the endurance you will need to fight your way back to a meaningful life once again.
- **To those of you who have experienced the death of your only child or all of your children:** We offer you our eternal gratitude for serving as such an inspiration to the rest of us.
- **To those of you who are plagued with guilt:** We wish you the reassurance that you did the very best you could under the circumstances, and that your child knew that.
- **To those of you are deeply depressed:** We wish for you the first steps out of the "valley of the shadow."
- **To all fathers and those of you unable to cry:** We wish you healing tears and the ability to express your grief.
- **To those of you who are exhausted from grieving:** We wish you the strength to face just one more hour, just one more day.
- **To all others with special needs that we have not mentioned:** We wish you the understanding you need and the assurance that you are loved.

*In this world of change,
nothing which comes stays
and nothing which goes is lost*

Anne Sophie Swetchine

A NEW YEAR IS FOR HOPE

By Joan Schmidt, Central Jersey Chapter, TCF

It has a different number.

Days have gone by.

We've accumulated more time between ourselves and our child's death.

We may have rearranged our perspective - have different ideas about what is most important and what hardly matters.

In this new year, we know that there will be ups and downs. Some good moments and some bad moments.

And if we take just one moment, just one hour, just one step at a time -TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE IT.

Thoughts on Valentine's Day

By Karen Nelson TCF Elder Chapter, Utah

"How sad this day must be for you."
I read it in their eyes.
As if there's no more love
between us anymore,
you and I

How wrong they are
they do not understand
the bond between a parent and child.

I do not have to see your face
to remember your sweet smile.
I do not have to hug you,
although If I could, I would.
I do not have to hear your voice,
our love is understood.

Everyday I think of you,
my thoughts are full of memories.
I realize that love does not end
with death's painful goodbye.
I await with hope until
we can say hello again,
you and I.

A Valentine's Day Wish to all TCF Moms and Dads

By Wayne Loder,
TCF Lakes Area, MI



How I wish I could bring your child back to you for Valentine's Day. 24 hours you could spend telling your child of your love. But, alas, we are doomed to spend another Valentine's Day without our beloved children.

Others, who have not lost a child, tend to take for granted these very special days. A card that says "I love you Mom and Dad" should be carefully folded and saved in a special place. All too many parents consider these cards to be renewable commodities. "There's no need to save this one - we'll always get another one next year." For many of us, the memories remain of those Valentine's Days gone by. Because our child's love remains with us, our child will never truly be gone.

This year on Valentine's Day, let us shed tears of joy that we had even a short time with our child - for that time, no matter how short, can never be taken from us.

***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,

...understand the Eternity of Love

Nancy Green, TCF, Livonia, MI



If you are newly bereaved and looking toward your "first" spring, you may be surprised at some of the feelings you may experience during the next few weeks.

We hear much about the beauty of spring - the new life and the feelings of renewal that are supposed to accompany this lovely time of year. During my "first" year I expected that spring would cheer me up and make me feel lots better.

How surprised and frustrated I was when, on one of those truly magnificent spring days that life seems to burst forth everywhere, I was "in the pits". When a friend said to me, "Doesn't a day like this lift your spirits and make you feel better?" I had to reply honestly that I was having a really bad day. That the sense of loss and emptiness was greatly intensified. Gradually, I began to realize that my expectations for spring were unrealistically high. I had looked forward to spring with the wrong kind of hope.

When we are newly bereaved, we are constantly looking for something to take away the pain and make our lives all right again. Unfortunately, there is no magical event or moment when this takes place. It does happen, but only with time and grief work we must all do before we can be healed.

The coming of spring cannot make everything okay again. What it can do, however, is remind us that regardless of what happens in our lives, nature's processes will continue, and that can offer us hope.

I am looking forward to spring this year. I welcome the sun's warmth, the return of the birds from their winter in the south, the forsythia, the daffodils and the greening of the world.

Know that someday you will once again welcome spring. Be gentle and patient with yourself and with nature. Don't expect too much. Be ready to let a little of the hope that spring can offer into your heart.

Spring brings possibilities for new growth, commitment and change - if you allow it

Jan Gifford TCF Rockland Cty NY

Pictures

By Patty Fallon,
TCF Central Oregon



Pictures. I set them out. I put them away - get them out and start to go through them filled with wonder that the daughter pictured there is no longer going to call or walk in the door or send a card filled with love and humor. Cards that brightened my day and made me laugh and always prompted me to call her and give her a big hug when she walked in the door.

Pictures. I get them out. I run my hand over her face lingering on her lips remembering "kissy face mom." And suddenly overcome with grief pull that picture to me and I kiss her and tell her how much I love her and how very much I miss her—and then I look again, and see her eyes—eyes that sparkled and twinkled with mischief though at times filled with deep reflection. She was a sensitive intuitive young woman who possessed wisdom and insight much beyond her years. She "left us" when she was only 24.

Pictures. At times I hate them. They show me what I don't have. They bring back memories of a time when Jody was healthy and happy. A time when life with her was a joy. I am not yet to a place in my grief -healing where I can remember those times very well. I'm still filled with memories of her illness, pain and death; and I'm still at the place that I want all of those horrible memories to be a bad dream, a dream that I will wake from hearing Jody's voice calling me to come outside so that we can take some...pictures.

***Though life is not as it was
before, and will never be again,
our memories are much richer
than if love had never been.***

The Promise

By Genesse Bourdeu Gentry, TCF Mann Co., CA
Author of *Stars in the Deepest Night:
After the Death of a Child*

Your birth brought me star-shine,
The moon and the sun;
My wishes, dreams gathered
'round my little one.

My life became sacred,
Full of promise and light,
All wrapped in the girl-child
Who brought love at first sight

The years of your living
Filled with laughter and tears,
Excitement adventure,
Some boredom, some fears

But ended too quickly,
Ahead of its time
The loss is so horrendous
Such heartbreak was mine

But from the beginning,
One thought rose so clear;
Never would your death erase
The years you were here.

I would not be defeated
Or diminished by your death;
I would hang on, learn to conquer,
If it took my every breath

For your death destroyed my life,
Made both our lives a waste,
It wouldn't deny your life's meaning
And all the love you gave

I vowed that years of sadness
Would change, with work and grace,
To years of happiness, even joy,
In which you'd have a place.

Memories of you, like shining stars In the
patterns of my soul,
Are beacons flashing light and love; And with
them I am whole

In your honor, I live my life,
Now living it for two.
Through all my life, you too will live.
You lived, you live, you do.



Steps to Making Progress

By: Joe and Elizabeth Rousseau/
Loving lifted from Kansas City (MO-KAN) Region/
TCF Newsletter Oct/ Nov 1998

Allow Yourself to be imperfect
Whatever brings you pleasure and a little peace
To remember your child in whatever way you feel appropriate

Force Yourself to keep communication open
To accept offers of help from family and friends
To go through the old routines again
To really listen to your spouse and children
To try an activity you used to enjoy

Convince yourself that every member of the family will
and should grieve differently
That you won't feel dead inside forever
That your confusion about intimacy with your spouse is normal

Let yourself off the hook for problems
Feel the anger
Feel whatever it is that you do feel about God
Treasure your special friends

Teach yourself to establish small goals
Everything you can learn about grief
To ignore well-intentioned, unhelpful comments of others
To let go of the moment of your child's death
To embrace the memories of your child

Talk to your self to change the negative ways you think
About anything and everything

Forgive yourself for not being the most perfect parent
For all the things you did or did not do.

Find yourself now that you have changed into a different
person, without relying on drugs, alcohol, etc.
Rely on positive technique (reading, writing, new hobby, etc)

Indulge yourself by talking out your feelings in a safe
atmosphere such as Compassionate Friends
Through a new activity

Forget yourself/ Give of yourself...
By seeking out other bereaved parents and others in trouble
By concentrating on others who are in pain
To discover that We Need Not Walk Alone
As a tribute to your child

What is Left?

By Betty Stevens,
Loving lifted from TCF Livonia, MI Newsletter, October 2013

When a child dies, you ask, among other questions, what is left? A beautiful, sensitive, intelligent child has died. What can be left after such a crushing blow? Others will point out that you have a spouse, other children or grandchildren, perhaps relatives or friends; they are left.

You read books on bereavement, scarcely remembering what you have read, you attend meetings, talk with others who have suffered a loss like yours. If you are fortunate, you have one or two friends who, while they cannot fully understand, are there to love and listen. Perhaps there is a therapist who guides you in your search for an answer. But, for a long while everything you read or hear has little meaning and certainly cannot provide the answer to your question. Or can it? Does all that you have read and heard and experienced finally come together and answered the question of what is left? For me it does.

The answer was thirteen months in coming, but how clear it comes now. I am left. That's it! I am left and I have been left with the love of my child. It is a new love; it is different, more intense; it is understanding; it need not, be reciprocated; there are no strings attached.

I love this love of my child. It warms and comforts me. It is a wonderful love, but I cannot keep it. It is too precious to keep to myself. I am left with the love to spare and love to share. It will never run out. My child will always be with me to replenish it.

I have found my answer. I am left to share my child's love with you.



An Irish Blessing

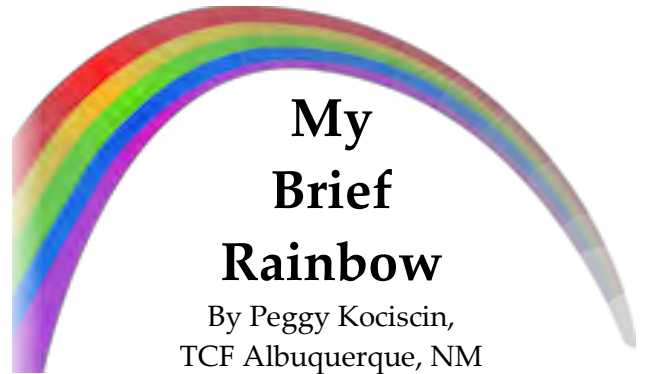
May you always walk in sunshine
And God's love around you flow
For the happiness you gave us
No one will ever know
It broke our hearts to lose you
But you did not go alone
A part of us went with you
The day God called you home
A million times we've needed you
A million times we've cried.
If love could only have saved you
You never would have died

Sibling Page

Dear Sibling:

How can I possibly tell you how much I miss you?
 But of course you probably already know- since you know me
 better than anyone.
 No matter how much time passes, I still wish you were here to
 share our lives
 And the future I expected us to have together.
 Even though we fought and at times neglected each other,
 I just assumed that you would always be there.
 That we'd grow old together and remember stories of growing
 up
 And laugh at each other as we looked and acted more like our
 parents.
 And we'd share our joys and setbacks, and adore each other's
 children.
 Your death has rocked me harder than I could have imagined.
 And at times I didn't want a future that didn't include you.
 Ultimately, there are no answers to my questions.
 There is no replacing you
 And there is no solace for my grief.
 There is only the simple choice I make every day
 To live on in the honor of your memory and the love we shared.
 To strive to carry on the best of who you were
 To cherish the brief time we have with other
 To celebrate the opportunity to be alive
 To have compassion for the pain of others as well as my own
 To have the courage to love fully as I have loved you
 And to remember that you would want me to go on and
 find joy again.
 You gave me many gifts while you were alive
 And I continue to discover the gifts in this loss.
 I am so thankful you were born my sibling
 I would not have traded our time together for anything.
 You are always with me
 Because you are a part of me.

Melanie Lamourei. TCF Marin County, CA In memory of
 my sister, Sarah Katherine Smith



My Brief Rainbow

By Peggy Kociscin,
 TCF Albuquerque, NM

Rainbows appear only on dreary
 rainy days.

They beautify the world
 for a few brief moments.

These moments, however,
 can be spectacular.

You were my brief rainbow.

You entered my life & stayed
 for but a short while.

Nonetheless, the memories
 of those moments

When you blessed us with laughter
 and delight,

joy and smiles, charm and beauty,
 gaiety and happiness,
 mischief and silliness,
 sunlight and moonbeams,
 giggles and love (ad infinitum)...

Made the deluge,

The years of pain and anger,

Helplessness and fear,

insanity and agony,

Sadness and heartbreak,

Emptiness and loneliness

Bearable.

Rainbows, however brief,

Make the world a brighter, lovelier place.

How grateful I am that I had you,

My brief rainbow.

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 1st; Spring - March 1st; Summer - June 1st; Fall - Sept 1st

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