

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



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The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

Welcome: The Nashville chapter meets at 3:00 P.M. on the second Sunday of each month in the HCA building on Park Plaza just north of Centennial Park off of 25th Avenue, North. Inside, you will see our sign and someone will greet you. We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend

Mother's Day

Our Special Meeting May 11

Mother's Day is a special day and it can be a difficult day for mothers. TCF will honor all mothers with special readings and there will be a picture board to display your child's photo. (Please bring a photo 5"x7" or smaller)

Also, in what has become a tradition in the Nashville Chapter, miniature yellow carnations will be given to everyone who attends. The flowers are provided by David and Peggy Gibson in memory of their daughter, Paige.



Phone Friends

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child. We understand and would like to listen. If you can't reach one of us, feel free to call another person on this list.

- Accidental Death**Mike and Paula Childers
646-1333
- AIDS**.....Joyce Soward
754-5210
- Illness**.....David and Peggy Gibson
356-1351
- Infant**.....Patti Drexler
834-8892
- SIDS**.....Kris Thompson
931 486-9088
- Murder/ Suicide**.....Joe Ladd
361-7996
- Small Child**.....Kenneth and Kathy Hensley
237-9972

Attending your first TCF meeting can be difficult. Feelings can be overwhelming. We have all experienced them and know how important it is to take that first step. Please attend two or three meetings before deciding if TCF is right for you. There are no dues or fees. If you choose, you need not speak a word at a meeting. We are an international, non-denominational group, offering support and information to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents. We Need Not Walk Alone.

BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

Survivors of Suicide

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings and receiving their helpful newsletter, you may call the Crisis Center at 615 244-7444.

Sharing

Sharing is a community organization interested in helping parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a newborn infant. The parent support group meets the second Thursday evening of each month at 7 p.m. in the Administrative Board Room at The Women's Hospital at Centennial Medical Center located at 2221 Murphy Avenue (between 22nd and 23rd Ave).

Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents

The first Thursday of each month, an ongoing support group for bereaved parents meets at Alive Hospice. For details, please call John Baker at 615 963-4674. For general grief (loss of parents, adult siblings, etc.) call 615 963-4732, leave a message and a counselor will return your call.

Times for TCF Videos

Do you have a question about what you're feeling? This informative thirty-minute program about grief and The Compassionate Friends can be seen on Channel 19 (Community Access Channel) in the Nashville area. Two videos are shown, with a break between them giving information about the Nashville chapter. The program may be seen on Mondays at 2:00 P.M., Tuesdays at 8:30 A.M., Wednesdays at 10:00 A.M., Thursdays at 7:30 A.M. and Fridays at 11:30 A.M. and 5:00 PM



CHAPTER INFORMATION

The Birthday Table

In the month of your child's birthday, a table will be provided at our meeting where you can share photographs, mementos, your child's favorite snack or a birthday cake, a bouquet of flowers—anything you'd like to bring. We want to know your child better, so please take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful day of your child's birth and for us to become better acquainted.

The “Let Us Remember Them” Listings

At your first TCF meeting you are asked to sign a registration card that gives us permission to add your child to the “Let Us Remember Them” list on page 3 in the monthly newsletter. If you have not been able to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed, please let us know, printing the exact way you'd like your child's name to appear, the child's birth and death dates, and the parents' names as they should be listed. You may drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205, or email us at tcf@tcfnashville.org. We'll be glad to include your child's name. You need notify us only one time.

Newsletter and Donations Deadlines

Remember that all newsletter submissions and monetary donations need to be received no later than the day AFTER the monthly meeting. Any suggestions for improving the newsletter are always welcome.

Are You Moving?

Each time a Newsletter is returned to us with an incorrect address, it costs us 41 cents to retrieve it in order to find out where you've moved. We then pay another 41 cents to mail it back to you. This is in addition to the original bulk mail cost. It would help a great deal in both time and money if you would notify us immediately of any address change so that your newsletter can reach you right away. You may call, write or email any chapter leader with this information. Thanks for your help.

NOTE: TCF Nashville Newsletters are now available on our chapter website. <http://www.tcfnashville.org>

Gifts of Love and Remembrance

The following voluntary donations will help The Compassionate Friends to be here for the families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow. Thank you.

*Oddie Bryant Jones
In loving memory of her son
James (Jay) Jones, Jr.*

*Barry and Jackie Friends
In loving memory of their daughter
Leanne Catherine Friends*

*Paul and Lydia Kingsborough
In loving memory of their son
Christopher L. (Chris) Kingsborough*

*Alvin and Lillian Fuqua
In loving memory of their daughter
Lindsay Dell Fuqua*

*Bob and Peggy Guy
In loving memory of their son
Jonathan Richard Guy*

*Linda Vaughn
In loving memory of her son
Gavin Garrett Vaughn*

*Judy Felts
In loving memory of her son
John Clayton Garrett*

*Wayne and Marsha Vick
(mistakenly omitted last month)
In loving memory of her son
Daniel Vick*

*Jim and Wilma Crosby
In loving memory of their son
Michael D. Crosby*

*Ann G. Harris
For the 2008 National Conference*

*William and Stephanie Tate
In loving memory of their daughter
Elizabeth Marie Tate*

*Noah and Alicia Daniel
In loving memory of their daughter
Maria Rose Daniel*

*Ms Sheila Marczak
Executive Director
Miller Harris Foundation
In Memory of
Miller Harris*

*Dave and Peggy Gibson
In loving memory of their daughter
Laura Paige Gibson*



Annual Balloon Release

The afternoon of June 8, 2008 marks the date of our regular June meeting and will be the time of our annual balloon release in memory of our children. Family members and their friends are invited to participate. Each person will be given a bio-degradable helium-filled balloon to which you may attach a handwritten message (paper will be provided.) Following a few moments of remembrance, the balloons will be released. It is really quite beautiful as they drift away together. Afterward, the group will gather for refreshments and fellowship. It would be great if everyone could bring a snack or treat to share.

Save the Date

Nashville TCF Chapter
Will be hosting the
2008 National Conference
at the
Sheraton Music City

July 18-20

Start planning to attend now!
See Page 7
for
Registration information

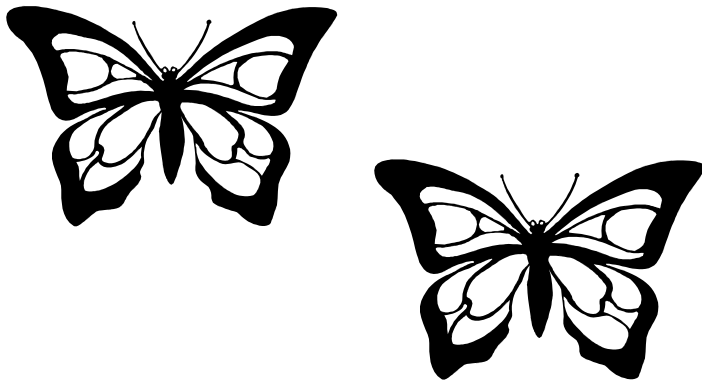
Bryan Houstrup and Joe Philpott at Allegra Printing & Imaging, 601 Grassmere Park, donate the printing, collating and stapling of this newsletter each month as a gift to the families of TCF. We are very grateful. Also, a special thank you to Deanna Brown and her family who label, sort and mail the newsletter in loving memory of their son, Marcus Dean Brown. We appreciate all of your generosity.

Former Guest Speaker To Do Book Signing

David and Nancy Guthrie want to pass along a very special invitation to fellow bereaved parents in The Compassionate Friends. There is to be book signings in May at area bookstores for their new book, *When Your Family's Lost A Loved One*. Nancy, author of the book, *Holding On To Hope*, spoke at one of our meetings last fall. In this new book, Nancy and David explore family dynamics involved when a loved one dies

and debunk some myths about the impact of grief on family and marriage. Signings will be at Logos Bookstore in Green Hills on May 10th from 11am to 12pm and at Davis-Kidd Booksellers at Green Hills Mall on May 15th from 7-8pm. If you attend, please be sure to mention that you are a part of TCF.

Lamar Bradley
TCF Nashville, TN



Congratulations, Seniors

*To all the graduating senior
siblings in the Nashville Chapter,
we extend our sincerest
congratulations
and best wishes for a bright,
healthy, and successful future.
Your TCF moms and dads
are very proud of you.*

Reflections Of A Mother Denied

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

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

Am I a mother? I truly am. My physical mothering has been limited to lovingly tending his grave, but I am a mother just the same!

Michelle M Parrish
TCF Columbia Chapter of Baltimore, MD

Registration is now open for the National Convention to be held right here in Music City!

You can register online at www.compassionatefriends.org.

Click on the conference logo on the right side of the page. There will be more details posted soon, and as always, there is an outstanding lineup of speakers and singers for this event.

A Special Wish For Today

Since those precious children are not here to wish ALL of you moms a Happy Mother's Day, please permit all of us in the TCF Nashville Chapter to say it for them. "Cherish those memories of all the yesterdays and have a Happy Mother's Day."

Adapted from TCF Chapter Newsletter
Fort Worth, TX

Mother's Day

*I do not feel like getting out of bed.
I am confused and kind of mad.
I know I should not feel this way,
For today is Mother's Day.*

*This used to be a lot of fun,
Because of my daughter and my son.
Now I find myself kneeling
And pray for explanation of this awful feeling.*

*He gave me two children then took one away.
How am I supposed to feel this Mother's Day?
Please give me strength to go on.
It's not easy with a child gone.*

*I'll get out of bed and face the day,
Try to accept whatever comes my way.
I'll spend the day going back to memory lane
And hopefully that will keep me sane.*

*I will think of two kids with stars in their eyes
So proud, because they'd made something nice.
Running fast, they are coming my way.
And I hear them sing out: "Happy Mother's Day!"*

Sue Lundberg
TCF Seattle-King Co, WA

"Death has no scissors
to cut the
cords of love."

Peter Marshall

A Mother's Love

*I need no pictures,
To remember your warm smile.
The lines of your face are embedded in my memory of you.
I gave you life in one second of pain
For which you returned thirteen 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 that you have
left in my life.
I carried you in my womb, then later in my arms.
But I will carry you forever in my heart.*

By Joy Morning
(for her friend Ginny Pelczynski)
TCF Phoenix, AZ

A Special Note to Siblings and Fathers

An emotional and sentimental day is Mother's Day. It can be a very lonely day for moms, even if there are other children in the family because that one child is not there to wish her a Happy Mother's Day.

Siblings, if mom is not responding to you as you would like her to on this day, give her a big hug and tell her you love her. Be gentle. She does love you. But she is also a mother who is lonely for that absent child.

Dads, hold your wife close and tenderly on that day. She may do a lot of daydreaming and crying. And her mind may wander back to when...

If the child who died is an only child, Dad, be extra kind and loving. Maybe take her to lunch or dinner, because even though that child is not here with her, she is still a mother, and a mother forever, she will be.

I am a mother of two beautiful children who are with me. I am a mother of two children that have died. I am still the mother of four children on Mother's Day.

Verna Smith
TCF Newsletter
Forth Worth, TX



31st National TCF Conference—2008 Nashville, Tennessee



Visit www.compassionatefriends.org to register online and receive the most up-to-date info.

Keynote Speakers, Workshops, Sharing Sessions, Activities Bring Healing Experience to Nashville, Tennessee

Keynote Speakers

- ♥ **Dr. Frank R. Lewis**—a surviving sibling, speaker, author, and pastor who for 10 years led the sibling support group of The Compassionate Friends of Las Vegas.
(Friday opening speaker)
- ♥ **Bruce Murakami**—whose remarkable story about how he has bonded and teamed with the drag racing teen who ended the life of his wife and daughter was made into the Hallmark Hall of Fame movie *Crossroads: A Story of Forgiveness*.
(Friday afternoon banquet speaker)
- ♥ **Darrell Scott**—whose daughter was the first to die at Columbine was inspired to start Rachel's Challenge™ in her memory, a program so far presented at more than a thousand high schools designed to inspire kindness and compassion.
(Saturday evening banquet speaker)
- ♥ **Ann Hood**—bereaved parent, is the award winning author of nine novels including *Comfort: My Journey Through Grief*.
(Sunday closing speaker)

Important Notice: Additional Overflow Hotel

TCF has negotiated and added an additional room block at the Courtyard (Marriott) Nashville Airport (this is not the same hotel as the Nashville Airport Marriott Hotel). The Courtyard (Marriott) Nashville Airport is located approximately two miles from the airport at 2508 Elm Hill Pike and there are regular shuttles between the airport and the hotel. Details of shuttle service between the Courtyard (Marriott) and the Sheraton Music City Hotel are being worked out, but will be available. Room charge is \$95 for one to four persons and is available for persons staying July 17-20. Call 800-321-2211 for reservations or locally 615-883-9500 and mention you are with The Compassionate Friends. Cutoff date at this special rate, if rooms remain available in the block, is Thursday, June 26.

A Mother's Lament

My precious boy, the stabs of pain I feel in my soul go deeper daily for the world not to see, and for me to hide more behind the eyes that just long to close. There is no medicine for this mother's heart that held you close, heard your first cry as my angel boy, heard your cry as a lost lamb in a forest of wolves. I see your beautiful face, hear your funny laugh and wit, too quickly turning to angry despair.

You are the part of my heart only God can see, for only He can see you. I mourn for you and the part of my heart that's left breaks, continually. I feel the agony in the room I've never seen. You left so meaningless and so sad. The sad music of my soul hears silently, hauntingly; praying for it to stop. But it plays on—over and over until I'm deaf from the inner cries of anguish. No pain in this life could compare to the one of surviving it without you. I love you, my Joshua, my precious boy. And I pray our Father holds you in His arms until I can.
Forever Your "Moma"

Brenda Milom
TCF Nashville, TN