February, 2014



Upcoming Events

March 20th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church April 17th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

Pikes Peak Chapter Steering Committee

Chapter Leader - Acting LARAINE ASARO-ANDERSON Son, Michael Edward Anderson

MAILINGS & DATABASE

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

SECRETARY

LEONIE CRAMER Son, Julian Anthony King

TREASURER

YVETTE THOMPSON Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

NEWSLETTER EDITOR & EMAILINGS

STEWART LEVETT Son, Aaron Paul Levett

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

BOB THOMPSON Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

CHAELA CHRISTIANSON Son, Damon Vincent Christianson

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

LETA LEVETT Son, Aaron Paul Levett

Welcome

Our support group meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Meetings are open to the parents, grandparents and older siblings of your loved one. We meet at the **First Baptist Church** downtown at 317 E. Kiowa. We understand your pain; won't you let us help you through your grief?

Our next meeting will be on March 20, 2014.

The death of your child is probably the most traumatic, life-changing event that you will ever experience. The Compassionate Friends is an organization of parents who have also lost a child to death. Each of us has experienced the deep, searing pain that you are feeling now. Each of us has turned to other parents who were farther into their grief journey for guidance, support and understanding. This is done through our monthly meetings, our newsletter, our website, our Telephone Friend program, our library and our e-mail program. Each month parents find our meeting to be a safe place where they can talk about their pain and problems with others who are uniquely qualified to understand; bereaved parents offer gentle suggestions or often simply listen. We invite you to bring a friend to your first few meetings until you feel a level of comfort with the group. Do not be surprised if we talk about the happy times with our children, the wonderful memories and the various methods we have created to keep our children close to us. It is here that many bereaved parents find hope as those who are more seasoned in their grief shine the light of experience to help illuminate each grief path. We have no dues. We are self-sustaining through donations and the generosity of so many in our community.

You Need Not Walk Alone.

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

Any of these members may be contacted to talk to you about your loss:

CHAPTER LEADER - ACTING 🛊

LARAINE ASARO-ANDERSON Mom of Michael E. Anderson 351-7653

DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS STEWART & LETA LEVETT *

531-5488

TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON

573-2743

LEUKEMIAJANE & STEVE GABRIEL

 \bigstar

282-1924

ADULT CHILD / SUDDEN DEATH

CHAELA CHRISTIANSON

687-6688

SUICIDE

LARITA ARCHIBALD

596-2575

SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

RAYE WILSON

(303) 814-9478

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Please feel free to contact any Steering Committee member if you are unable to reach our Chapter Leader.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



PIKES PEAK CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



Leonie Cramer & Carl Reese in loving memory of Julian Anthony King

Angie Jones in loving memory of her son **Charlie Josh Jones**

Chaela Christianson in loving memory of her son **Damon Vincent Christianson**

Chaplain

Gene Steinkirchner



Adjusted

"It's been several years since your son died," They say, "Surely, you must have adjusted by now."

Yes, I am adjusted-

Adjusted to feeling pain and sadness and grief and loss.

Adjusted to hurting and unexpected tears.
Adjusted to seeing people made uncomfortable upon hearing me say "My son died."

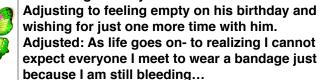
Adjusted to losing my best friend because I am not always "up."

Adjusted to people acting as if grief is contagious

and TCF meetings are "morbid."
Adjusted? Oh, yes, to many things.

Knowing I won't hear his voice, but Listening for it still.

Knowing I won't see him drive his Toronado, but staring at every one I see.



South Suburban Chapter of Chicago - TCF





Spring is Coming

If you are newly bereaved and looking toward your "first" spring, you may be surprised by some of the feelings you may experience during the next few weeks. We hear so 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 as life seems to burst forth everywhere, I was "in the pits." When a friend said to me, "Doesn't a day like this really 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 the grief work which we all must 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 process 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, and 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.





Julian Anthony King

March 18 would be your 30th birthday.

We miss you every day.

With love forever from Mom and Carl





Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend	
Wayne Allen Garrett	Mar 4	Joyce & Greg Garrett	
Desiree D'Gornaz	Mar 4	Louie & Edna D'Gornaz	
Logan Lawrence	Mar 5	Janet & Edward Lawrence	
Steven Warren	Mar 6	Linda & Mark Warren	
Erin Marie McCallister	Mar 7	Steve & Carol McCallister	
Keith Andrew Barrett	Mar 8	Ree Barrett	
Samuel Christensen	Mar 9	Stacy Christensen	
Owen William Howard	<i>Mar 10</i>	Mike & Carol Parker	
James Craig Stiegelmeyer	Mar 11	Betty Stiegelmeyer	
Ava Rose Wolfe	Mar 12	Kristy Wolfe	
Conri Lee Barber	<i>Mar 13</i>	Sean Barber & Cherie Barledge	
Marisa Nicole Pilant	<i>Mar 14</i>	Stephen & Julie Pilant & Richard & Elizabeth Jamison	
Cathleen Bartlett Maxwell	<i>Mar 17</i>	Dick & Marty Maxwell	
Julian Anthony King	<i>Mar 18</i>	Leonie Cramer & Carl Reese	
Terry "TJ" Basgall	<i>Mar 21</i>	Stephanie Basgall	
Megan Huyge	<i>Mar 21</i>	Stan & Rebecca Huyge	
Billy E. Hendrickson	<i>Mar 22</i>	Grace & Delbert Hendrickson	
Clayton Champion	<i>Mar 24</i>	Jessie & Phyllis Roark	
Christopher J. Novich	<i>Mar 24</i>	Susan & Joe Novich	
Marc Darby	<i>Mar 25</i>	Lori & Steve Darby	
Scott Martinson	<i>Mar 26</i>	JoAnn Martinson	
Justin A. Clayton	<i>Mar 26</i>	Terry & Sharon Clayton	
Jon Van Pelt	<i>Mar 27</i>	Claudette Van Pelt	
Kari Ann Kirt	<i>Mar 28</i>	Lon & Andrea Kirt	
Kira Ann Schager	<i>Mar 28</i>	Frank & Lori Schager	
Michael Eck	<i>Mar 31</i>	Patricia Eck	



Charlie Josh Jones "My Precious Child"

There's not a day that passes, That I don't sit and cry,
And look to Heaven for a reason But still I don't know why,
Couldn't He have waited Another year or two, Until you were a little older
And I'd had more time with you. Forgive me Lord, I then say,
All these thoughts are wrong, There had to be a reason
And I know I must be strong. You're in the arms of Jesus now
And I know that you'll be fine, But I wish with all my heart
That those arms could be mine.



Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Kevin Michael Burns	16 years	Mar 3	Stan & Willie Burns
Jessica Robison	17 years	Mar 3	Terri Robison
Steven James Gantz	13 years	Mar 4	Diana Gantz
Brian Michael Gregory	16 years	Mar 6	Roy & Phyllis Gregory
Terry A. Shank	28 years	Mar 6	Carol Vierling
Tiffany Maxwell	34 years	Mar 7	Diane Maxwell
Michelle Sandra Seal	3 years	Mar 7	Walter & Diana Seal
Jay William Sheridan	27 years	Mar 9	Mary & Tim Sheridan
Michael Jeffrey Waller	25 years	<i>Mar 10</i>	Jean Young
Terry "TJ" Basgall	25 years	Mar 11	Stephanie Basgall
Andy Cope	27 years	Mar 14	Debbie & Kurt Adelbush
Adam J. Hurst	32 years	Mar 14	Kim Troeger
Kevin Edward Farley	27 years	<i>Mar 15</i>	Elizabeth Farley
Charlie Josh Jones	12 years	<i>Mar 16</i>	Sue Jones & Angie Jones
Jim Agnew	31 years	<i>Mar 17</i>	Tom Agnew
Jody Elizabeth Houtz	17 years	<i>Mar 18</i>	Jane and Chris Houtz
Danae Lynne Marie Mannon	3 months	<i>Mar 18</i>	Art Mannon
Keltryn Lenae Brinkman	2 years	<i>Mar 19</i>	Jim & Judy Brinkman
John Daniel Bernard Ringo	8 years	<i>Mar 21</i>	Angela Randle & Paul Ringo
Christopher Calegar	10 years	<i>Mar 22</i>	Kevin & Linda Calegar
Megan Huyge	2 days	<i>Mar 22</i>	Stan & Rebecca Huyge
Gary Michael Owens	32 years	<i>Mar 27</i>	Freda Maria Garcia
Colin Peter Baerman	32 years	<i>Mar 28</i>	Paul & Kerry Baerman
Timothy Patrick Shea	21 years	<i>Mar 31</i>	Joe & Paula Shea



IMPORTANT REMINDER!

Each month we receive notifications from the U.S. Postal Service that our newsletters and, more importantly, birthday cards have gone undelivered due to an address change. We ask our Compassionate Friends to please notify us of your move if you would like to would like to continue to receive our postal newsletters and birthday cards.

Just send a note to The Compassionate Friends - Pikes Peak Chapter, PO Box 51345, Colorado Springs, CO 80949-1345 and that will do the trick. To be kept on our email distribution list, or to be removed, you can send an email to PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com and we will be sure your needs are met.





ORGANIZATIONAL CONTACTS

TCF National Office P.O. Box 3656 Oak Brook, IL 60522 630-990-0010 or toll free 877-969-0010

EMAIL: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

WEBSITES:

Pikes Peak - www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org

Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/TCFPikesPeak

National - www.compassionatefriends.org

Online Support

The Compassionate Friends offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship.

The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. Please check the schedule for dates and times of the sessions.

Note: Times posted on the schedule are based upon Eastern Time.

www.compassionatefriends.org

Love Gift Donations

A "Love Gift" is a wonderful way to remember your child, while also helping our TCF chapter "reach out" to bereaved families. There is no charge to attend meetings, use the library, or receive the newsletter. We depend solely upon these gifts, monetary or gifts-in-kind, to support our chapter. You may choose to donate a tax deductible "Love Gift" at any time. Let us be here for the families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

Our chapter exists entirely through your donations which are tax deductible. A Love Gift is money donated to the chapter in memory of your child who has died. If you feel a Love Gift is an appropriate way to honor the memory of your child, please consider a donation, large or small. Please fill out the form located in this newsletter and mail it to the address listed. All pictures submitted will be returned unless you specify for us to keep them and place them on our Child Remembered board displayed at monthly meetings.

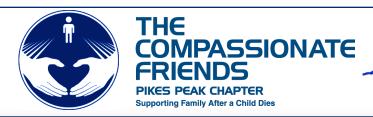
SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

\$50 or more - Newsletter Sponsor. May include a full page for printing. Please remember to send your page "Copy Ready" as you would like to see it printed in the newsletter.

\$0 to \$50 - A picture, if available, and dedication to be listed in the newsletter. Love Gift donations should be sent directly to our treasurer, Yvette Thompson whose address is listed on the Love Gift Donation Form. Wouldn't you like to make a dedication to your child and help our chapter?

⇒Send Love Gifts to Yvette Thompson, 5012 Rocking R Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80915 Thank you for contributing and supporting the work of our local chapter!

LOVE GIFT DONATION Costs are rising. We need your Love Gift to support our chapter & newsletter! If you can, please help. I would like to make a donation | in Memory of | a Chapter Gift In loving memory of: ______ Love Gift Donation: \$ ______ Please make check payable to: The Compassionate Friends Cut and mail this form with your Love Gift to: Yvette Thompson - 5012 Rocking R Dr. - Colorado Springs, CO 80915 Contributor Name & Address: ______ Relationship: | Son | Daughter | Grandson | Granddaughter | Friend | Other Photo Enclosed: | Yes | No | Photo To Be Returned: | Yes | No



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

What I Need

By Beth Pinion - TCF Andalusia, AL

A lot of time!
A little space,
A kind of quiet
Resting place,
Are what I need
At times like these
A special spot
Where I can grieve.

TO MY HUSBAND

My love, these past few months Seem to have paralyzed us In pain and anguish, And I know, in that state, The flow of communication becomes stilted. The love we are and share, Is forever, Darling. But I realize that you have felt, As have I, a separateness in our grief. It's all right, you know, Dear; I guess it is the nature of a loss so devastating That no matter how we try to comfort one another Along the strange path of grieving We sometimes feel so alone. We have done marvelously; we, my love, Talked, cried, remembered our son With tears and smiles. I know we will laugh again, My dearest beloved. We will laugh again — I promise.

By Molly Murphy ~ TCF, Winnipeg, Canada



Feelings

Her clothing is folded in tidy array How it was left is how it will stay. Her desolate dresser silently weeps In the still of the night, when everyone sleeps. The closet continues to guard and protect Items hanging on hangers, forlorn with neglect The bed she adored, where she bounced high with glee Cries invisible tears when no one can see. The bathtub she splashed in will not again see Someone who will love it as fiercely as she. It sits idle now, no longer a "star" And asks (in its way) if I know where you are. The house that she lived in, the yard where she played Are missing the landscape of love that she laid. Her numerous playthings, her once favorite toy Languish mournfully now without any joy. This dwelling called "home" has relinquished its heart, That gift from the one who was forced to depart. Now it withers from grief it's spirit extinct and we watch through our tears as the walls seem to shrink. Our angel was gone in the blink of an eye She took the light with her that day in July. Yet now there are times when my heart feels her near Then I know she's not left me ... her love is still here.

Sally Migliaccio-TCF, West Islip, N.Y.

THE BIRTHDAY TABLE

No rustling tissue paper, scattered ribbons, or burst balloons. No shouts of Happy Birthday, break the silence in this room. Nonetheless, a birthday has rolled round again, though the beloved children who reveled in the cheer no longer blow the candles out at the turning of the year Loving hands may bring a photograph of that precious life to share and place it on the Birthday Table with utmost tenderness and care For though the world may not recall the laughter or the joys, we treasure every memory of our birthday girls and boys.

Frankie Wilford - TCF, Carrollton-Farmers Branch, Texas





HEALING WORDS

How We Survive by Mark Rickerby © 2009

If we are fortunate, we are given a warning. If not, there is only the sudden horror, the wrench of being torn apart; of being reminded that nothing is permanent, not even the ones we love, the ones our lives revolve around. Life is a fragile affair. We are all dancing on the edge of a precipice, a dizzying cliff so high we can't see the bottom. One by one, we lose those we love most into the dark ravine. So we must cherish them without reservation. Now. Today. This minute. We will lose them or they will lose us someday. This is certain. There is no time for bickering. And their loss will leave a great pit in our hearts; a pit we struggle to avoid during the day and fall into at night. Some, unable to accept this loss, unable to determine the worth of life without them, jump into that black pit spiritually or physically, hoping to find them there. And some survive the shock, the denial, the horror, the bargaining, the barren, empty aching, the unanswered prayers, the sleepless nights when their breath is crushed under the weight of silence and all that it means. Somehow, some survive all that and, like a flower opening after a storm, they slowly begin to remember the one they lost in a different way... The laughter, the irrepressible spirit, the generous heart, the way their smile made them feel, the encouragement they gave even as their own dreams were dying. And in time, they fill the pit with other memories the only memories that really matter. We will still cry. We will always cry. But with loving reflection more than hopeless longing. And that is how we survive. That is how the story should end. That is how they would want it to be.

Reprinted with permission from the author. In Memory of Paul William Rickerby (1961-1997). and lovingly lifted from the West Central Iowa TCF newsletter - May/June 2010



A Father Returns to Work

By Bill Ermatinger

TCF Baltimore, MD In Memory of my daughter Kathy Ermatinger
After Kathy died, I, of course, went back to work. Some of
my co-workers made the stop at my desk to express their
sympathy. I know I turned them off, as my pain and my
denial were so great. I could not talk about what had
happened and how I felt. I thanked them. Although nobody
ever talked to me about it, that was okay as my pain was
such, I thought, I could not bear to talk. I threw myself into
my work and on occasion was confused because I could not
make the kind of decisions I had been making for years. I
never made the connection that this inability to concentrate
was part of my grief and was normal.

Lunch was the worst time. My habit was to eat with my associates, but often in the middle of the meal I would just have to get up and walk away. Although nobody ever said anything to me about this odd behavior, I do thank them at least for their tolerance. Slowly I readjusted (I thought) and in time (a long time) I was able to perform well again. But I never really grieved until I found THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS and it was here that people helped me to talk. It was almost twelve years before I found TCF as there was no such organization in 1967. My friends let TCF help you ... don't wait twelve years to talk!

VULNERABLE!

I have found in the years that have passed that I am most vulnerable at times of remembrance. The word "Anniversary" no longer holds a promise of celebration. Instead, holidays and birthdays, family gatherings and otherwise joyous occasions contain an undertow of sorrow. If I get caught up in it, I quickly get pulled under and wind up gasping for breath. It is ironic that the presence of the absence can be emotionally devastating. You'll excuse me if the bounce is gone from my step; or the depth of my laughter has changed. Issues that were once monumental now seem insignificant. Please excuse me if I don't commiserate that your car needs repair or the faucet leaks. My focus on life has forever changed. You'll excuse me if my spirit seems lost during holidays of any kind. They are now days "to bear" rather than days to share and enjoy. You'll pardon me if I bring you down or make you feel discomfort, and I'll pardon you for not understanding that my life will never be the same, that although I'll survive, there will always be sorrow.

-Joan Fischer, TCF Nassau County Chapter, NY





The Daffodil Principle

Contributed by Debbie Thornton - TCF Potomac, MD Several times my daughter had telephoned to say, "Mother, you must come to see the daffodils before they are over." I wanted to go, but it was a two-hour drive from Laguna to Lake Arrowhead "I will come next Tuesday", I promised a little reluctantly on her third call. Next Tuesday dawned cold and rainy. Still, I had promised, and reluctantly I drove there. When I finally walked into Carolyn's house I was welcomed by the joyful sounds of happy children. I delightedly hugged and greeted my grandchildren.

"Forget the daffodils, Carolyn! The road is invisible in these clouds and fog, and there is nothing in the world except you and these children that I want to see badly enough to drive another inch!"

My daughter smiled calmly and said, "We drive in this all the time, Mother." "Well, you won't get me back on the road until it clears, and then I'm heading for home!" I assured her. "But first we're going to see the daffodils. It's just a few blocks," Carolyn said. "I'll drive. I'm used to this."

"Carolyn," I said sternly, "Please turn around." "It's all right, Mother, I promise. You will never forgive yourself if you miss this experience." After about twenty minutes, we turned onto a small gravel road and I saw a small church. On the far side of the church, I saw a hand lettered sign with an arrow that read, "Daffodil Garden." We got out of the car, each took a child's hand, and I followed Carolyn down the path. Then, as we turned a corner, I looked up and gasped. Before me lay the most glorious sight.

It looked as though someone had taken a great vat of gold and poured it over the mountain peak and its surrounding slopes. The flowers were planted in majestic, swirling patterns, great ribbons and swaths of deep orange, creamy white, lemon yellow, salmon pink, and saffron and butter yellow. Each different-colored variety was planted in large groups so that it swirled and flowed like its own river with its own unique hue. There were five acres of flowers.

"Who did this?" I asked Carolyn. "Just one woman," Carolyn answered. "She lives on the property. That's her home." Carolyn pointed to a well-kept A-frame house, small and modestly sitting in the midst of all that glory. We walked up to the house. On the patio, we saw a poster. "Answers to the Questions I Know You Are Asking", was the headline. The first answer was a simple one. "50,000 bulbs," it read. The second answer was, "One at a time, by one woman. Two hands, two feet, and one brain." The third answer was, "Began in 1958."

For me, that moment was a life-changing experience. I thought of this woman whom I had never met, who, more than forty years before, had begun, one bulb at a time, to bring her vision of beauty and joy to an obscure mountaintop. Planting one bulb at a time, year after year, this unknown woman had forever changed the world in which she lived. One day at a time, she had created something of extraordinary magnificence, beauty, and inspiration. The principle her daffodil garden taught is one of the greatest principles of celebration.

That is, learning to move toward our goals and desires one step at a time--often just one baby step at time--and learning to love the doing, learning to use the accumulation of time. When we multiply tiny pieces of time with small increments of daily effort, we too will find we can accomplish magnificent things. We can change the world. "It makes me sad in a way," I admitted to Carolyn. "What might I have accomplished if I had thought of a wonderful goal thirty-five or forty years ago and had worked away at it 'one bulb at a time' through all those years? Just think what I might have been able to achieve!"

My daughter summed up the message of the day in her usual direct way. "Start tomorrow," she said.

She was right. It's so pointless to think of the lost hours of yesterdays. The way to make learning a lesson of celebration instead of a cause for regret is to only ask, "How can I put this to use today?"

Use the Daffodil Principle.

Stop waiting.....

Until your car or home is paid off Until you get a new car or home Until your kids leave the house

Until you go back to school

Until you finish school

Until you clean the house

Until you organize the garage

Until you clean off your desk

Until you lose 10 lbs.

Until you gain 10 lbs.

Until you get married

Until you get a divorce

Until you have kids

Until the kids go to school

Until you retire

Until summer

Until spring

Until winter

Until fall

Until you die...

There is no better time than right now to be happy.

Happiness is a journey, not a destination.

So work like you don't need money.

Love like you've never been hurt, and, dance like no one's watching.

If you want to brighten someone's day, pass this on to someone special. I just did!

Wishing you a beautiful, daffodil day!

"Don't be afraid that your life will end, be afraid that it will never begin." ~anonymous

Live for the journey and not just the destination!



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March, 2014

The Compassionate Friends
Pikes Peak Chapter
PO Box 51345
Colorado Springs, CO 80949-1345



ALS ALS

Pikes Peak Chapter
The Compassionate Friends