



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**
PIKES PEAK CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



February 2017

STEERING COMMITTEE

CHAPTER LEADER

Laraine Asaro-Anderson

Son, Michael Edward Anderson

MAILINGS & DATABASE

Jane & Steve Gabriel

Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

TREASURER

Ruby Doyle

Son, Patrick Michael Doyle

NEWSLETTER EDITOR & EMAILINGS

Stewart Levett

Son, Aaron Paul Levett

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

Chaela Christianson

Son, Damon Vincent Christianson

SC MEMBER/WELCOME PACKETS

Leta Levett

Son, Aaron Paul Levett

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

CHAPTER LEADER

LARAIN ASARO-ANDERSON - 719-344-3216 *

DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS

STEWART & LETA LEVETT - 719-531-5488 *

LEUKEMIA

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL - 719-282-1924 *

ADULT CHILD / SUDDEN DEATH

CHAE LA CHRISTIANSON - 719-687-6688 *

SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

RAYE WILSON - 303-814-9478

MOTORCYCLE DEATH

STEVE SEIFERT - 719-331-6455

*Steering Committee

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 February 16, 2017.

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.





Support Resources

TCF Online Chat Groups:

www.compassionatefriends.org/resources/online_Support.aspx

- For questions, please contact Diana Jorden, 925-432-3854, who moderates the general grief and suicide loss rooms on Friday nights and Sunday. TCF online offers several specialized chat rooms, all moderated by moms who have been in chat for at least 2 years or more. We offer a sibling-only chat, loss under 1 year, loss over 2 years, loss of only child, suicide survivor, infant/pregnancy loss, and every night (and Monday mornings) there is a general loss room open to parents, step and grand, and siblings.
- You can sign up for the online TCF National newsletter at www.compassiontefriends.org
- You can reach our TCF National Facebook page through the link on the same home page of our national website. You will be asked to join Facebook if you are not already a member, and we hope you'll find our Facebook page as interesting as do the more than 11,000 fans who have already found us!



Seeking Contributors

We are always looking for material from our chapter members to include in this newsletter. It is the perfect way to share your child, grandchild or sibling with all of us. Tell us about the special things you did in their memory or simply tell us the special things you will always remember and keep close to your heart. It is a beautiful way for us to get to know more about your loved one. It unites us as a bereaved family and it will help us all to become closer. Where there is unity, there is strength, strength that we can give to and draw from one other.

We would also welcome any book reviews. If you have read a book that has helped you on your journey please tell us about it. There are many, many grief books out there. Some will be more healing than others. It is so helpful to be guided to the right ones. Please forward any writings, poems, book reviews etc. to Stew Levett PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com or you may use the U.S. Mail and send it to me at 160 El Dorado Ln., Colorado Springs, CO 80919.

We talk about them not
because we are stuck or
because we haven't
moved on, but we talk
about them because we
are theirs and they are
ours and no passage of
time will ever change that.
~ Scribbles & Crumbs ~



Welcome New Friends.

At nearly every meeting we welcome new members to our group, always with mixed emotions. We are glad you found us, but we are so sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain; we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief. Attending a meeting for the first two or three times takes courage, but for many it is the first real step toward healing. It may seem overwhelming, so we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become comfortable.

Theresia Colgrove -
Sons, Ryan Cosgrove & Michael Colgrove

Kira and Nick Berry -
Son, Dean Berry

Joe & Kristen Uveges -
Son, Andrew Uveges

Stephanie & Landon Swearingen -
Son, Logan Jude Swearingen

Wilma Cotten -
Daughter, Andrea Bartmess

Trudy Crisp -
Son, Anthony Crisp
Ryan Cosgrove & Michael Colgrove

Dave & Lucy Klos -
Son, Robert Yankosky



**Chaela Christianson - In Loving Memory of
Damon Vincent Christianson**

**Theresa Colgrove - In Loving Memory of
Ryan & Michael Colgrove**

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTACTS

TCF National Office
P.O. Box 3656
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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

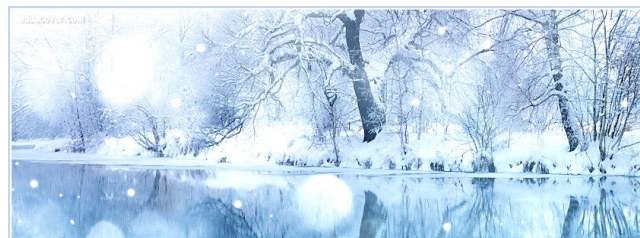


**Our newsletter this month is sponsored
In Loving Memory of
Karen-Jean Slade
Feb 2, 1950 - Feb 7, 1980
by
Sheila Slade - Mother**



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays - February '17

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Birthday</u>	<u>Compassionate Friend</u>
James R. Hurst	Feb 1	Kim Troeger
Karen-Jean Slade	Feb 2	Sheila Slade
Kent Curtis Junglen	Feb 3	James Junglen
Adrienne Levett Berger	Feb 3	Stewart Levett
Carrie Claire-Eileen Noyd	Feb 4	Travis Noyd
Stephen Merle Schmoker	Feb 5	Shirley & Ralph Greer
Michael William Sarmento	Feb 7	Donna (Sarmiento) Pugh
Tyler Glicken	Feb 8	Ginger Jones
Kimberley Dawn Leir	Feb 8	Adaline/Herb Leir - TCF Regina
Samuel Hesselberg	Feb 9	Steve & Leanne Hesselberg
Ryan Rickman	Feb 11	Jean Rickman Place
Karey Ackerman	Feb 11	Bob & Joann Zelins
Lindsay Yvonne Davis	Feb 11	Susan & Jerry Davis
Jay Aguanno	Feb 12	Jean Aguanno
Claire Palmer	Feb 12	JoAnn & Lawrence Palmer
Gary Carlson	Feb 15	Phil & Rose Carlson
Kevin Edward Farley	Feb 15	Elizabeth Farley
Aaron Steffens	Feb 16	Lynn Nickel
Treasure Carswell-Benford	Feb 16	Linda Benford
Ember Maria Arthur	Feb 16	Jeanette Newville
Alyssa Eck	Feb 17	Patricia Eck
Joyhanna Benford-Grimm	Feb 17	Linda Benford
Zachary Dean Glenn	Feb 18	Janice Bren, Kristin & Larry Glenn
Chance Tyler Nichols	Feb 19	Charlie Nichols
Kendall Ford Young	Feb 20	Ford & Ann Young
Nikolas Chunn	Feb 21	Monica Chunn
Michelle Sandra Seal	Feb 23	Walter & Diana Seal
Jade Skye Baxter	Feb 24	Christina & Steven Baxter
Darrell Lewis Mitchell	Feb 27	George & Freda Mitchell
Michael Ramirez	Feb 27	Jennie Ramirez
Fred Chavez	Feb 27	Annette Atchison
Jason Lamb	Feb 28	Jan Lyons-Lamb
Ariel Allen	Feb 28	Judy Allen





Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries - February '17

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Forever Age</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Paul A. Behr	2 months	Feb 1	Cynthia & Steve Behr
James Craig Stiegelmeyer	25 years	Feb 2	Betty Stiegelmeyer
Craig Matthews	30 years	Feb 4	Cathy Genato
Scott Michael	21 years	Feb 4	Linda Gerwatowski
James R. Hurst	6 days	Feb 5	Kim Troeger
Jaclyn Williams	14 years	Feb 6	Sandy & Rob Williams
Tristan Millman Troeger	25 years	Feb 7	Lisa & Joel Millman
Karen-Jean Slade	30 years	Feb 7	Sheila Slade
Jade Skye Baxter	2 years	Feb 9	Christina & Steven Baxter
Patrick Casey Hildebrand	21 years	Feb 9	Dr. Jan and Judi Hildebrand
Darrell Lewis Mitchell	20 years	Feb 9	George & Freda Mitchell
Yancy Hufford	26 years	Feb 11	Patty Hufford
Steven Miller	17 years	Feb 11	Mike Miller
Amy Feight	30 years	Feb 12	Patty & Bill Feight
Stephen James Benjamin	26 years	Feb 13	Kathy Benjamin
Noelle Pearl	17 years	Feb 13	Michelle Fleming
Adam Czyn	18 years	Feb 15	Robyn Czyn
Keith Hampton	30 years	Feb 15	Martha Hampton
Alexander Beall	30 years	Feb 15	Haven Stillwater
John Doggett	47 years	Feb 16	Sandra Searles
Peter Joseph Noel	20 years	Feb 16	Janet Noel Starritt
Eric Cowles	3 months	Feb 17	Doug & Leah Cowles
Alyssa Eck	1 day	Feb 17	Patricia Eck
Stella Elliott	6 months	Feb 17	Donna Elliott
Treasure Carswell-Benford	3 days	Feb 18	Linda Benford
Kent Curtis Junglen	31 years	Feb 18	James Junglen
Graham Stingley	23 years	Feb 18	Mary Winter-Stingley
Clara Johnson	26 years	Feb 21	Julie Sanchez
Logan Lawrence	23 years	Feb 22	Janet & Edward Lawrence
Carrie Claire-Eileen Noyd	24 years	Feb 22	Travis Noyd
Kirsten Evelyn Cornell	9 years	Feb 23	Will & Marion Cornell
Marisa Nicole Pilant	2 years	Feb 23	Stephen & Julie Pilant
Joshua Samuel Shelton	8 weeks	Feb 24	Cherie Berglund-Hensley
Reanna Maria Reedy	21 years	Feb 25	Carol Reedy
Jeremy Laurence	25 years	Feb 26	Ted & Sherrill Laurence
Sean Thompson	24 years	Feb 26	Rick Korcsog & Frankie Thompson
Richard Joseph Armstrong	4 years	Feb 27	Chuck & Helen Armstrong



TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person or just the right words that will help you in your grief or comfort you. Remember we have all been there and even though circumstances may be different we really do understand. You are not alone.

TO OUR SEASONED MEMBERS

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together. Each meeting the pain will not always be this bad it really does get better with wisdom. Show others that there is hope, from someone who has found it.

A Love Story

Once upon a time, there was an island where all the feelings lived: Happiness, Sadness, Knowledge, and all of the others including Love. One day it was announced to the feelings that the island would sink, so all repaired their boats and left. Love wanted to persevere until the last possible moment. When the island was almost sinking, Love decided to ask for help. Richness was passing by Love in a grand boat. Love said, "Richness, can you take me with you?" Richness answered, "No, I can't. There is a lot of gold and silver in my boat. There is no place here for you." Love decided to ask Vanity who was also passing by in a beautiful vessel, "Vanity, please help me!" "I can't help you Love. You are all wet and might damage my boat." Vanity answered. Sadness was close by so Love asked for help, "Sadness, let me go with you." "Oh....Love, I am so sad that I need to be by myself!" Happiness passed by Love too, but she was so happy that she did not even hear when Love called her! Suddenly, there was a voice, "Come Love, I will take you." It was an elder. Love felt so blessed and overjoyed that he even forgot to ask the elder his name. When they arrived at dry land, the elder went his own way. Love realizing how much he owed the elder and asked Knowledge, another elder, "Who helped me?" "It was Time," Knowledge answered. "Time?" asked Love. "But why did Time help me?" Knowledge smiled with deep wisdom and answered, "Because, only Time is capable of understanding how great Love is."
Author Unknown

THE GREATEST GRIEF

A sudden accident killed your child. That terrible phone call changed your life with no warning—you didn't get to say goodbye—this has to be the most terrible loss of all.

Your child died by suicide—you feel you should have been able to prevent it. Your guilt is devastating. How can you live with such an incomprehensible tragedy?

You only had one child—now you have none and your focus in life is gone. What's the point of living? What could be more devastating?

You've experienced the deaths of more than one of your children—will it happen again? How does one survive this pain again?

When your baby died, your dreams died—you have few memories and you're too young to be suffering like this—this loss is the most unfair.

Someone murdered your child—an unbelievable violation—you're angry and your frustration with the legal system feeds your anger. This must be the very worst.

You're a single parent—your child has died and you have no one to lean on, no one to share your grief—surely your suffering is the most painful.

The unbelievable has happened—your adult child died—you had invested so much in that child—now who's going to care for you in your old age?

You had to watch your child suffer bravely through a long illness—you were helpless to ease his pain and to prevent his death—how do you erase those horrible images?—Yours must be the greatest grief.

The truth is that the death of any child is the greatest loss, regardless of the cause, regardless of the age. Our own experience is far more painful than we had ever previously envisioned, so how could we possibly comprehend what others have undergone? To make comparisons between our own suffering and the pain of others is an exercise in futility. It accomplishes nothing and sometimes can be hurtful to others. To say that one type of death produces a greater or deeper grief than another tends to place different values on the children who have died. Each child is worthy of 100% of our grief, each person's sorrow is 100%, and each loss is 100% of our being. I can't imagine wanting to walk in the shoes of any other bereaved parent, can you?

Peggy Gibson TCF, Nashville, TN



FEBRUARY

When February comes, there is finally an end in sight to the long winter. Sometimes melting snow reveals the green tips of an early crocus or even an exquisite blossom itself, a soft flower of hope invading a harsh landscape of graying snow, biting wind and an ominous sky – a small promise of new life to come.

My heart, grieving for my son who died was like that image of winter. For somehow, even during the darkest, coldest moments, an unexpected sign of hope would intrude. And as the hours, days and months dragged on, my heart finally learned once again to be open to the promise of new life.

Painful memories melted into loving ones. Life that seemed forever dormant was once again sprung forth from my heart. In living hopefully and lovingly, the seasons of the heart can change. The living memories of your special child, like the flower in the snow, can be the beginning of the end of winter.

Maryann Kramer TCF Arlington Heights, IL

It is a Time for Love

February has fewer days than most months, and that may be of special significance to us, as our children had fewer days than most. When we think of this month, the most outstanding day, perhaps, is St. Valentine's Day. It is a time for love. When we were school aged, we had a special chance to give and receive cards in those decorated boxes in our primary classrooms. Perhaps it is the one holiday that children can really do something for everyone.

Addressing a card to each and every classmate made you think of how you felt about each one and wonder about how they felt about you. Love is found in every day of every year, but February and Valentine's Day is very special. I wish I could remember just how it felt to get a "nicer" Valentine from someone I had sent a "nicer" one to.

It is so long ago, and there have been so many much more significant happenings in my life. But sometimes, I'd like to remember just how it felt. I am sending along this Valentine Love Note to each of you right now, and

hope that you know it is one of the "nicer" ones, because each of you is very special to me. Somehow I don't wonder how you feel, somehow, I know!

As we grieve the loss of our children and one another's, we begin to find a different kind of love than we ever expected to experience.

Rosalie Baker TCF, Rochester, NY

Hello - Goodbye

It is with mixed feelings that we say goodbye to Yvette & Bob Thompson, longtime members, facilitators and for the past few years Yvette has served as our treasurer. Yvette and Bob became involved in our chapter in 2005 after the growing death of their little boy Ryan. Their little girl Brianna has grown up in front of our eyes and with that comes new life adventures and projects to help fulfill. Bob and Yvette have been so giving of their time and home over the years and we will surely miss their contributions to The Compassionate Friends.

Replacing Yvette as treasurer will be Ruby Doyle. Ruby is a recent transplant from Cortez, CO. Ruby is volunteering her services as treasurer in memory of her son Patrick Michael Doyle. Welcome Ruby!

Be Set Free

Express your tears and your pain. In order to move on, you cannot push down and pocket your emotions; they must be fully communicated for you to heal.

"Everyone cries," "Everyone sheds tears." Some people do it on the outside, but some are only capable of doing it on the inside. From a health perspective, the shedding of tears is very beneficial to physical well-being.

"The people who are unable or haven't developed the capacity to cry are carrying a heavier load of emotion that can actually contribute to some physical difficulties. I don't think you should ever apologize for your tears because you never apologize for something that is a gift from God."

Pull out your emotions. Face the pain head-on. Mourn loudly. Weep bitterly. Be set free.

Dr. H. Norman Wright



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 electronically scanned and added to our electronic Child Remembered "Picture Frame" displayed at monthly meetings and then returned to you.

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, Ruby Doyle 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 Ruby Doyle, 6552 Lange Drive Colorado Springs, Co 80918 ⇐
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: Ruby Doyle – 6552 Lange Dr. – Colorado Springs, CO 80918

Contributor Name & Address: _____

Relationship: Son Daughter Grandson Granddaughter Friend Other

Photo Enclosed: Yes No

Photo To Be Returned: Yes No



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

A Valentine Waiting for You

There's a valentine waiting for you
That's different from all the others.
It's there every month at our meetings
For fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers.
Its envelope is made of caring,
The glue of understanding seals it tight.
This nonjudgmental group who've been there,
Help to take away your fear and fright.
So, come join with us together,
Read your loving message printed clear,
In not only this month's valentine,
But all those throughout the year.
Mary Cleckley TCF, Atlanta, GA

The Child That's Not There

The child that's not there
Takes up every piece of me
The child that's not there
Consumes my every thought
The child that's not there
Makes me feel like I failed
The child that's not there
Took away a main reason for being
But
The children that are there
Still somehow bring me joy
The children that are there
Still need my love
The children that are there
Don't need any more grief
The children that are there
Force me to go on.
Tricia Palmer, TCF, Tidewater, VA

Why So Long?

It happens in an instant
You're there and then you're gone
Why is healing not like that?
It takes so very long!
Stew Levett - TCF Pikes Peak, CO

HEALING WORDS

Strange Words Welcome New Members

I am always amazed at the instant empathy we each feel as new members come to their first meeting. We have the strangest welcome for these parents: "We are so sorry you have to be here."

In other organizations the questions are probing: where did you go to school, where do you work, where do you live? All designed to "size up" the newcomer, put him or her in the proper perspective of a neatly ordered world. For us, this information is meaningless. We know the world isn't neat and orderly; we discovered that when we lost our children. We care about you, the newly bereaved parent, whose life was tossed into a cosmic blender when your child died. We care because we are you. We have been here a while, in this purgatory of pain. We have learned to live our lives in a different way, to place value on understanding and hope, the intangibles of the purest meanings of life. We have learned to value each other, to reach out and talk, to wait patiently during the silences needed to form thoughts. We listen intently as you quietly say your child's name, tell your child's story, speak of your heartbreak.

Yes, this is a different kind of welcome. But it is the most deeply sincere welcome we will ever receive. We are kindred souls, you and I. Each of us lives in the "after death" world of losing our child. Each of us has learned gradually that the hope we have attained has made life better, lessened the pain, moderated the isolation, tears, emotional devastation and pure mayhem that once overtook us. Each of us has learned this slowly, in our own time and in our own way.

Each month new parents who have suffered the most horrific loss that a human can endure are welcomed into our group. We reach out, we listen with our hearts and we remember.

Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF, Katy, TX, June 2006

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February 2017

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