



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



February, 2018

**STEERING COMMITTEE**

**CHAPTER LEADER**

**Currently Open**

**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

**SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR**

**Ron Agee**

Daughter, Melody Victoria Agee

**TELEPHONE FRIENDS**

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

**DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS**

STEWART & LETA LEVETT - 719-531-5488 \*

**LEUKEMIA**

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL - 719-282-1924 \*

**ADULT CHILD / SUDDEN DEATH**

CHAECLA 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 15, 2018.**

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.





### **When Your Adult Child Has Died**

*Editor's Note: This article is taken from a pamphlet made available from a local funeral home. No author is given.*

The death of a child at any age is the greatest fear of all parents. Parents should not have to bury their children. It is "out of order" and feels wrong. It shatters their whole world.

When your child dies, you lose not only your child but your hopes and dreams for the future. As your child grows up, and you begin to see their dreams realized, you live with the assumption that you will not have to see your child die. You may even have had the opportunity to experience the joy of becoming a grandparent and seeing the life cycle of your family continue. Life is as it should be.

So when your adult child dies, it can be overwhelming. You didn't see it coming. Your child didn't live longer than you, as anticipated. The world didn't go on as it should have, and your view of what is normal about life has been altered without your permission.

It doesn't matter if you spent time or talked with your child daily or only saw them on an irregular basis, you are a parent. Parents spend a lot of time protecting, enjoying and worrying about their children, no matter how old they are. Sometimes people fool themselves into believing that since their child is an adult, they are no longer responsible. However, with a child's death, people feel guilty for not protecting them and guilty for being alive when they are dead. Be prepared for these moments.

### **What Am I Feeling?**

You may feel bombarded by fear and anger. You may fear your future because this child was part of your security for old age. You may fear losing contact with in-laws and grandchildren. You might feel anger because you may not have been allowed to participate in medical or funeral decisions. You may feel anger at yourself over times that your relationship with your adult child was not all you wanted it to be. You may even feel angry with God because he allowed this to happen.

Aside from the emotional feelings, grief is very physical. It saps your energy, affects your appetite, keeps you awake or makes you want to sleep all the time. When you are tired and hungry, every emotional event, such as seeing someone who looks like your child or hearing about the successes of someone else's child, will hit you with greater impact. Taking care of your physical self is important: drink plenty of water, eat protein and complex carbohydrates to give you energy and do your best to get at least six to eight hours of sleep or rest. Even if you

can only manage to walk for 15 to 20 minutes three times a week, you will be doing a lot to recharge your batteries and reduce stress.

Grief is a complex process of your mind, body and spirit. Your mind seeks information about what happened, trying to make sense out of the senseless. The 'if only' and 'I should have' thoughts can attack at any time sending you sliding into despair as you realize there is nothing you can change about what has happened. Blame and doubt may become constant companions. Seeking information and talking to others about your 'should have' thoughts will help you use your mind to process your grief.

Expect an emotional roller coaster. Don't avoid the pain of your emotions with overwork, overplay or try to lessen the pain with drugs or alcohol. These things will only provide temporary relief. The pain will still be present and be expressed, perhaps as anger or despair. Use a journal to express your feelings, write a poem, read writings of others who have experienced a loss. Paint a picture, create a story, or create a ritual of remembrance; these are ways to confront your grief and allow you to move through the process. This allows you to grieve for the whole person's life, not just stay focused on the end-of-life events.

### **How Long Does Grief Last?**

Grief lasts far longer than anyone expects. There are no time frames for grieving, although many think it should be over quickly. Everyone will grieve in his own way and in his own time. Men, especially, may be tempted to be strong and not express feelings. Different situations also affect grief: Remember... wanting to help your other children and grandchildren cope with their pain compounds your grief. As a parent, this is a natural inclination. You must first help yourself before you are able to help other family members. You may have issues of health yourself. There are not right or wrong ways to grieve. Your family's different grieving styles should not be interpreted as meaning they loved your child less. Everyone had a unique relationship to your child and will grieve differently because of it.

### **What Can I Do?**

Believe that intense pain will not always be present. You will need opportunities to talk about the death and pain.

- Look for others who have experienced similar deaths so that you may gain a sense of hope by seeing that they are able to continue life.

*Continued on Page 9*



**Welcome New Friends.**

Raelyn Jacobs - Daughter, Everly Jacobs

Bill, Donna, & Stephanie Sasz - Son, Bryan Sasz

Gordon White - Children, Bruce, Megan & Scott White

Candace & Gregory Valdez - Daughter, Amber Pacino

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.

**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.

Digital Picture Frame - If you've been to one of our monthly meeting then you've noticed our large digital picture frame displaying picture of our children. Should you be interested in adding your child's picture to our display, please bring a picture to scan to our meeting or (preferred) email the picture, along with child information to Stew Levett at [PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com](mailto:PikesPeakTCF@gmail.com)  
Pictures will be returned after they have been scanned and your child's slide completed.

**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](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)

**WEBSITES:**

Pikes Peak - [www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org](http://www.TCFPikesPeakChapter.org)

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

National - [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)



**Sheila Slade**

**In Loving Memory of Her Daughter  
Karen-Jean Slade**

**Michaela R. Christianson**

**In Loving Memory of Her Son  
Damon Vincent Christianson**

**Chaplain Gene Steinkirchner  
C.S.P.D.**



## Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

<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
Carrie Claire-Eileen Noyd	Feb 4	Travis Noyd
Stephen Merle Schmoker	Feb 5	Shirley & Ralph Greer
Michael William Sarmiento	Feb 7	Donna (Sarmiento) Pugh
Tyler Glicken	Feb 8	Ginger Jones
Kimberley Dawn Leir	Feb 8	Adaline & Herb Leir
Samuel Hesselberg	Feb 9	Steve & Leanne Hesselberg
Ryan Rickman	Feb 11	Jean Rickman Place
Lindsay Yvonne Davis	Feb 11	Susan & Jerry Davis
Karey Ackerman	Feb 11	Bob & Joann Zelins
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
Ember Maria Arthur	Feb 16	Jeanette Newville
Aaron Steffens	Feb 16	Lynn Nickel
Treasure Carswell-Benford	Feb 16	Linda Benford
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
Riley Calen Winters	Feb 21	Lucrecia & Joel Sjoerdsma
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

<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
Craig Matthews	30 years	Feb 4	Cathy Genato
Scott Michael	21 years	Feb 4	Linda Gerwatowski
James R. Hurst	5 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
Lora Lee	40 years	Feb 11	Kathy Hollaway
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 Czyz	18 years	Feb 15	Robyn Czyz
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	7 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
Jordan James Miranda	24 years	Feb 29	Mike & Jonette Miranda



## THOUGHTFUL POEMS

### **A Forever Memory**

My life changed forever  
In just one blink of an eye  
Memories came rushing  
Of when we were little boys  
The fun and laughs, our little game  
All taken with one swipe  
Things will never be the same  
My tears I tried to wipe  
Me and you, against the world  
No one stood in our way  
We will see each other soon my friend  
I'm waiting for our day  
Memories are all I have now  
and pictures of your face  
The stress and pain, show on my brow  
I wish I could take your place  
So now I'll wait to see you  
It doesn't feel very nice  
When I wake up in the morning dew  
I'd swear I hear your voice  
For when I'm asleep in dream land  
We play till the sun goes down  
For on this earth is where I'll stand and to collect  
me, you will come down  
*By Mark Stringer - TCF, Ireland*

### **I'm Beginning**

I'm beginning to know your children  
From the things I heard you tell.  
From the pictures that you've brought here  
I think I know them well  
Our hurt and sorrow are immense  
I'm not sure where to start.  
Compassion after all is  
Your pain in my heart.  
My thanks to you for listening  
To words wrung from my soul.  
We are The Compassionate Friends  
That's all I need to know.  
*Jack Brown TCF Louisville, KY*

### **Heartfrost**

Does it not seem  
As if in wintertime  
Your mind remembers  
All those sunny things  
That warmed you once?  
And does it seem  
As if you have not smiled forever?  
Now take your hands,  
One in the other hand,  
And do remember  
All those sunny things again. Again.  
And let them warm you now.  
The smile will find you.  
*By Sascha Wagner*

### **Another Year**

Another year has come,  
And you, so far away from me now;  
But in my heart still.  
Forever, I will hold you close.  
Each smile, laugh and tear I've cried  
A testament to your presence.  
I will always love you,  
No matter what happens.  
Your death cannot separate us.  
I'm right here, loving you as always.  
My heart is true and strong,  
I will never forget your spirit.  
I am no longer afraid.  
To live or die is the same for me.  
You are with me on this journey.  
I raise your light to the heavens, and  
Smile.  
*Brenda Penepent, TCF, St. Paul, MN*



## 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](mailto: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.

## Button, Button, We'll Make You A Button!

We have purchased a photo button machine and we are ready to start making your picture buttons. Bring 2 copies of the SAME picture to your next meeting and we will have it ready for you the following month. THIS IS A FREE SERVICE TO YOU.

Please bring your pictures to any of our monthly meetings. We will need a 3"x5" or 4"x6" photo of your child but would prefer NOT using the original photo. We suggest using Walgreens who can quickly make good 4"x6" copies from your original.

For best results make sure the photo of your child is centered and not too close to the edge or the results may not turn out as expected.

We are requesting one photo button per family to get started. Thereafter we will be able to make additional buttons for each member of the family as time and labor allows. Also, for those who have lost more than one child, we will gladly make a button for each child.

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### **TCF asks for donations in memory of our children who have died.**

Our chapter is funded solely through donations; therefore we sincerely appreciate your support. Your generosity helps us send newsletters, purchase brochures and cover the many expenses to help grieving families in our community. All donations are tax deductible. You and your child's name will be noted in the next newsletter. Workplace "Matching Gift" programs can increase your donation by 50-100%. Please help us help others by making a LOVE GIFT today.

### **The Wounded Heart**

Children have preceded their parents in death for eons of time. We are not the first, nor will we be the last to enter the realm of Bereaved Parents. But for now – right now - it is Our Hearts that are freshly wounded and Our Hearts in need of mending.

Wounded hearts must be allowed to mourn and lament their loss; to pour out their pain, agony, sadness, hurt, and anger; and to release their well of tears. Wounded hearts need to be wrapped in quietness, gentleness, and compassion, away from the turmoil of daily life.

A wounded heart not allowed to mend from the depth of its agony, will be as an abscess- to swell and undermine – erupting at a distant time. Or, suppressed, will slowly choke the spirit of its host. Only the bearer will know when his heart has healed.

The wounded heart, encouraged and given the time and freedom to mend, will carry in its chambers the memory and shared love of a precious child. - *Nancy Green, TCF, Livonia, MI*



### ***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.

**\$25 up to \$50** - A picture, if available, and dedication to be listed in the newsletter.

**\$0 up to \$25** - A Love Gift acknowledgement. All 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



**When Your Adult Child Has Died**  
*Continued from Page 2*

**What Can I Do?**

- Tell your story to others to help you work through your grief and make you more able to help grandchildren or other children grieve.
- Create rituals to help you celebrate your adult child. Other family members may help you think of ways to commemorate this life. Establishing a scholarship, donating books, planting a tree, becoming involved in your child's favorite charity or activity are all ways to share your child's life with others.

You will not get over the death of your child, but you can learn to live and enjoy life again. There will always be moments of pain and sorrow as you remember the birthday, the anniversary of the death and as you mark the passing events you planned to share with your child. Be prepared for these moments of grief and do not be alarmed as they continue throughout your life. The times of grief are also times to tell the story of this child. How you looked forward to their birth, what you hoped their life would be like, and memories you have of the joy you had in their successes. Your children are always a part of your life. They are a part of who you are. You do not have to stop loving them because they have died. They are forever in your heart.

**SEASONED GRIEF**

Eva Lager, TCF, Perth, Western Australia

There used to be a point to summing up a year just past, not as a personal accomplishment, but as a reflection. Leaving previous hurts behind was welcomed and the sensible thing to do. I thought I was getting wiser as I was getting older. With new years clean and full of possibilities, becoming another person seemed simple, another chance at getting it right, like a redemption, being forgiven for having blundered or been found wanting.

But death changed everything, without permission. Resolutions, made sincerely, broken quickly, offended my need to hold on to the past, to rewind life, fast backwards, so I could capture what I had lost.

Still, time went on, regardless of my pleas. And when exhaustion set in, as eventually it must, I understood there would be another future, not the one I thought I had the right to expect but one where I dared carry hope in my heart again.

(Reprinted from *We Need Not Walk Alone*, national magazine of TCF)



**In Loving Memory of**

*Karen-Jean Slade*

Born February 2, 1950

Died February 7, 1980

***By Her Mother, Sheila Slade***

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February, 2018

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