



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



June, 2019

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

SC MEMBER
Jenny Sutton
Son, Austin Sutton

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
CHAE LA CHRISTIANSON - 719-687-6688 *

SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT
RAYE WILSON - 303-814-9478

*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?

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.

Our next meeting will be held on June 20, 2019

*Father's Day
Edition*



FATHER'S DAY

Years have come and gone and time has surely drifted by.
I've searched for any answer, yet I'm left to wonder why.
The only thing I know for sure, through the happy and the sad.
No matter what the circumstance, I will always be your dad.
Not a day goes by that I don't hold you in my heart.
My love reaches far beyond this space we are apart.
These empty arms remember all the good times that we had.
I may be standing here alone, but I will always be your dad.
Some won't understand, so I don't bother to explain.
They look into my eyes, but they can only see the pain.
Afraid to look too deep as they are blinded by the fear,
If only they could know, a father's love won't disappear.
So when this road gets lonely and the journey seems too hard,
And I get to feeling sorry that I didn't get a card.
If I close my eyes I can almost hear you say.
"I love you and I miss you, daddy....Happy Fathers Day."

Alan Pederson - TCF Contributor

Father's Day Is Still a Time for Celebrating

A long time has passed since I've enjoyed a holiday—or for that matter any special occasion.

With Father's Day coming up shortly, I've decided that this year I'm celebrating.

The kids used to love when special occasions came along. I can still remember Stef's eighth birthday, only three months before her death, and how proud she was when we told her she could invite her best friends over for a birthday party. She wore her prettiest blue trimmed party dress with the lace ruffles.

The games they played still stick in my mind. There was "pin the tail on the donkey" and then "Simon Says." I remember clothes flying everywhere in a contest to see which child could put on a complete set of clothes fastest over her party clothes. I remember the hotdogs, punch and cake, the party favors. I remember Stef's giggles.

The memories also wander back to the party our family threw for Stephen's fifth birthday, only three days before the accident which also claimed his life. I still have the picture in my mind of that goofy orange cap someone had given Steve. He loved it, but it was at least two sizes too small. When he tried to put it on, the bill of the cap was up and Stephen flashed us one of those impish grins that reminds you of Spanky and Our Gang.

As I'm writing this, the tears are flowing down my cheeks remembering the good times we had together.

A lot of things changed when the kids died. Christmas, Easter, birthdays all became days other people celebrated. But not us.

I've done a lot of thinking since then. I know Stef and Steve are in a better place than I could ever imagine and that every day is a holiday for them. In my mind, I think Stef and Stephen would be sad if they felt their Mom and Dad couldn't celebrate life anymore.

Pat and I now have another son, Christopher, plus we have our fourth child on the way. We're trying to rebuild our lives and I feel we have been blessed along the way. Of course, Christopher is too young to understand Father's Day, but even without him here, I would still consider celebrating Father's Day.

I still remember the Father's Day a couple of years before Stef and Stephen died. With their mom, they had searched all over for

something special for me, finally deciding on a T- Shirt that proclaimed "World's Coolest Dad." I still wear that now faded shirt on occasion despite the many grass stains and grease marks.

When Father's Day arrives, I think I'm going to pull that old T-Shirt out and wear it.

I'm going to lay down out in the grass, letting the warm breeze hit me. And I'm going to pretend I'm being caressed by Stef and Steve. I'm going to remember . . . and I'm going to celebrate!!!

Wayne Loder - TCF Lakes Area, MI

Men Do Cry

I heard quite often "men don't cry" though no one ever told me why. So when I fell and skinned a knee, no one came by to comfort me.

And when some bully-boy at school would pull a prank so mean and cruel,

I'd quickly learn to turn and quip, "It doesn't hurt," and bite my lip.

So as I grew to reasoned years, I learned to stifle any tears.

Though "Be a big boy" it began, quite soon I learned to "Be a man."

And I could play that stoic role while storm and tempest wracked my soul.

No pain or setback could there be could wrest one single tear from me. Then one long night I stood nearby and helplessly watched my son die.

And quickly found, to my surprise, that all that tearless talk was lies.

And still I cry, and have no shame. I cannot play that "big boy" game.

And openly, without remorse, I let my sorrow take its course.

So those of you who can't abide a man you've seen who's often cried, reach out to him with all your heart as one whose life's been torn apart.

For men DO cry when they can see their loss of immortality.

And tears will come in endless streams when mindless fate destroys their dreams.

Ken Falk - TCF Northwest Connecticut Chapter

A Father's Prayer

"Our Father who art in heaven, I am a father on earth. You have given me this gift and responsibility. Grant me the wisdom to carry it out. Let my fatherhood be one of encouragement and support, not of expectations and control. Let me protect my children, but not too much. Advise them not too little. Let me respect them as individuals, not as extensions of myself. Let me be honest about my feelings toward them, including my anger, disappointment, hurt, excitement, joy and love. Let me be firm, without dominating them. Let me be sensitive to their feelings, without trying to change them. Let me be there for them when they need me, and get out of their way when they don't. Let me offer them the roots of belonging, and the wings of freedom. Help me, Father in Heaven, to be a father on earth."

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Adolfo Quezada, Tucson, AZ.





Welcome New Friends.

Kim Welch - Son, Brandon Ferrari
J.D. Farmer - Daughter, Brooke Hromadka

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.

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

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 Pictures will be returned after they have been scanned and your child's slide completed.

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 through making a LOVE GIFT donation today.



Chaela Christianson in memory of
Damon Vincent Christianson

Chaplin Eugene Steinkirchner
Love Gift Donation - CSPD

Megan Riley in memory of
Brandon Naymik



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Birthday	Compassionate Friend
Jacob Foreman	Jun 1	Jan Foreman
Paul Kovacevic	Jun 3	Mary Kovacevic
Benjamin Stewart Easton	Jun 3	Susan Stewart
Madalynn Ann Bergevin	Jun 3	Mollie Bergevin
Jake Matthew	Jun 5	Malcolm Matthew
Renee Lee Seiberlich	Jun 6	Joe & Leda Seiberlich
John Doles	Jun 6	James & Susan Appleman
Douglas Chadwick, Jr.	Jun 6	Deborah Chadwick
Tyler Schmidt	Jun 6	Valerie & Jeff Schmidt
Sandra Steckiel	Jun 10	Beth Steckiel
Mindy Baker	Jun 10	Terri Baker
Clinton Boland	Jun 13	Velda Fields
Yancy Hufford	Jun 13	Patty Hufford
Matthew Flint	Jun 14	Cathy Flint
Carl Simco	Jun 14	Loretta Chancellor
Daniel Prickett	Jun 14	Jim & Elaine Prickett
Andrea Mischel	Jun 14	Gary & Jerri Zimmerman
Jessica Robison	Jun 14	Terri Robison
Giorgiana Elizabeth Gordillo	Jun 16	Jennifer Gordillo
Nathan Gentry	Jun 16	Susan Gentry
Gryphen Barber	Jun 16	Sean & Cherie Barledge
Forrest Kelly	Jun 16	Cindy Bronner
Chris Barns	Jun 17	Bonnie Barns
Laura Dean	Jun 17	Barbara Dean
Jason Bradford Pfeif	Jun 17	Chris and Brad Pfeif
Jay William Sheridan	Jun 18	Mary & Tim Sheridan
Michael Jeffery Micke	Jun 18	Alice Micke
Jim Eley	Jun 19	Judith Eley
Richard McShan	Jun 20	Paul & Angelika McShan
Jeanne Burroughs Widmar	Jun 20	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Dennis Lynn Gerringe	Jun 21	Kim Gerringe
Robert Beynon	Jun 25	Donna Beynon
Kirsten Evelyn Cornell	Jun 26	Will & Marion Cornell
Noah R. Wilkerson	Jun 26	Sarah Wilkerson
Cyan Pratt	Jun 26	Stanley Pratt
Kyleigh Peltzer	Jun 26	Ashleigh Peltzer
Amy Feight	Jun 27	Patty & Bill Feight
Jimmy Schmidt	Jun 28	Jim & Laurie Schmidt
James Bishara	Jun 28	Phebe Bishara
Ian Izzeh	Jun 28	Haynes Tammy
Jason Nathaniel Lurch	Jun 28	Kathleen & John Lurch
Landon Spangler	Jun 30	Emma Spangler
Mike Petersen	Jun 30	Doug & Shelli Petersen





Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Anniversary	Compassionate Friend
Evan Carara	18 years	Jun 2	Cindy & J.D. Carara
Madalynn Ann Bergevin	1 day	Jun 3	Mollie Bergevin
Billy E. Hendrickson	19 years	Jun 3	Grace & Delbert Hendrickson
Colin Robert Spangenberg	31 years	Jun 3	Lois Spangenberg
Aaron Steffens	36 years	Jun 5	Lynn Nickel
Sean O'Connor	20 years	Jun 5	Dennis & Tracy O'Connor
Anton "Andy" George Horn	13 years	Jun 6	Levi & Emma Horn
Mindy Baker	41 years	Jun 7	Terri Baker
Robert (Robby) George, Jr.	48 years	Jun 7	Robert & Margaret George
Ashley Meston	14 years	Jun 7	Jerry Meston
Sarah Ness	24 years	Jun 8	Mary Ness
Jon Van Pelt	21 years	Jun 8	Claudette Van Pelt
Nicole Johnson	34 years	Jun 10	Sherry Turner
Sandra Steckiel	4 days	Jun 13	Beth Steckiel
Arthur Lipphardt Jr	24 years	Jun 15	Art & Chris Lipphardt
Austin Sutton	22 years	Jun 15	Labe & Jenny Sutton
Gryphen Barber	1 day	Jun 16	Sean & Cherie Barledge
Erica Lynn Groat	26 years	Jun 16	Linda Groat
Ryan Sayers	20 years	Jun 16	Tom & Kate Sayers
Bruce White	16 years	Jun 16	Gordon White
Scott White	12 years	Jun 16	Gordon White
Megan White	15 years	Jun 16	Gordon White
Vinnie Franz	18 years	Jun 17	Barb Franz
Michael Jeffery Micke	1 day	Jun 18	Alice Micke
Giorgiana Elizabeth	4 days	Jun 19	Jennifer Gordillo
Sara Hernandez	21 years	Jun 19	Kayhy Hernandez
Kyle Lyon	31 years	Jun 19	Tami Lyon
Kyle Joe Manning	11 years	Jun 19	Carol & Don Manning
Abbi Rose Starzynski	2 years	Jun 20	Sherry Starzynski
Tucker Ray Graef	14 years	Jun 21	Kathy Graef
Nicholle Guy	14 years	Jun 22	Lezlee Guy
Daniel Prickett	32 years	Jun 22	Jim & Elaine Prickett
Karen Sue Crawford	16 years	Jun 23	Joy Andrews
Anthony Paul Gratton	35 years	Jun 24	Luci Abrahamson
James Michael Burroughs	43 years	Jun 24	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Andrea Mischel	30 years	Jun 25	Gary & Jerri Zimmerman
Jay Simco	58 years	Jun 26	Loretta Chancellor
Nickolas Robert Vingren	3 years	Jun 26	Dale Vingren
Daniel J. Whisler	38 years	Jun 27	JoAnn Mowdy
Tyler Joseph Budfuloski	2 years	Jun 28	Rob & Alice Budfuloski
Anthony James "Tony" Pisor	25 years	Jun 28	Cynthia Pisor-Zapel
Stephen Lucas Tyler	19 years	Jun 28	Catherine Tyler
Kade Riefenberg	9 years	Jun 29	Andy Gibson
Liam N. McDougal Lasher	11 years	Jun 29	Ashley Snyder
Kimberly Ann Hayes	22 years	June 30	Patty and Patrick Hayes
Nick Naples	17 years	Jun 30	Laurie Naples
Colby McCarley	17 years	Jun 30	Tami Sisneros
Noah R. Wilkerson	5 days	Jun 30	Sarah Wilkerson



Thoughtful Words

Fathers in Grief, A Paradox for Today's Male

The loss of your child can be crippling and leaves deep scars. It changes who we are and how we look at life and how we relate with the world. Five or six years out is still early in the spectrum of child loss but close to the point where positive rebuilding can begin. One thing that I have discovered that helps pull you out of the canyon of despair is compassion for others. It is in giving that we receive and in healing that we are healed. In the first few years, it is hard to even help yourself much less others and we mechanically maintain, weep a lot and lick our wounds while clinging desperately to everything of our child and, in secret, wish to join them. We rejoin the real world at our own time and it happens when it is right for us. Everyone's journey is different but what remains the

same is the huge void that is left in our lives. How we fill it is up to us. I believe we need to fill it with something positive for others that creates a legacy of good in our child's name. We now become their legacy and we substantiate our child's life by the way we live ours.

In our "modern day" society, it is especially difficult for fathers to grieve openly, caught in a catch 22 of how to express the deep pain we are experiencing. Men don't cry, men do not emote, men do not hug (maybe at the funerals), men don't go to support groups, men don't call in sick because they are screaming inside; we are the man of the family. Fathers are the fix it guys, the protector, the strength and the rock the family needs for support. More times than not people will ask a father "How is your wife doing? This must be extremely hard for her."

The modern male is now given (by women and therapists) license to show emotions, to cry, scream, hug and express their deepest emotions and fears; to let it out. The irony of this is that if he does emote and the family has never seen this behavior, it is taken as a sign of weakness and the spouse and other family members feel they have lost their safety net, their rock of support, and feel even more help- less and rudderless on this journey of pain. If this happens, he may again "clam up" to help with his fam- ily and deal with his own pain later. He finds that "letting it out" is an axiom of sophistry and, in doing so, he feels he is letting his family down. Indeed a paradox for the wanna-be sensitive Dad. Most men cry alone in their cars on the way to work and they explain that the red eyes are due to allergies or a late night. When my father died when I was age 14, my Mom told me I was the man of the family now. I did not cry. I did not grieve. It was not until years later when my losses became overwhelming that I did finally let it out and express my emotions for the loss of my father. It has been 16 years now since Kelly died and I still cry with my wife when we feel our loss together or even when I hear a special song like "Wind Beneath My Wings" and I do not care who is present. You love hard, you grieve hard and it is sup- posed to hurt.

When you recognize your own pain and express it, you automatically become more empathetic to others in similar pain and can help relieve theirs. Heck, now I cry at hallmark card commercials. I can't help it. When people tell us to find closure, or move on and don't dwell on it, we can but not how they think we should. We find closure in what will never be, let go of the what ifs, the shoulda-woulda-couldas and move on with the knowledge that our children are forever by our side, only in a new relationship. We live in one sphere of existence, our loved one who has died in another, but with faith, undying love and the desire that we can connect at the seam where our two worlds meet. Love never dies. In America we are allowed a few weeks to "get over it" and get back on track. The dead are wrapped up neatly, so to speak, and put away and their names unspoken. I find this totally unacceptable. It has been almost 16 years and I still talk about Kelly every day and always will. We will always be bereaved parents but we will not always be experiencing the pangs of grief. Like arthritis, we learn to live with it the rest of our lives and also realize that we shall still have flare ups of pain and discomfort as we move on through the years.



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

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!



Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing

Colorado Springs Chapter of GRASP
Support Group for those who love someone
who died from substance use disorder.

Second Wednesday of Each Month
Springs Recovery Connection at
The Sanctuary Church, 1930 W. Colorado Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

New-Comers, Please Pre-Register:
Sheri Barger: SheriBarger@icloud.com
Becca Wesselman: wesselwoman@q.com
(www.grasphelp.org)

Strength

In the early days of my grief, a tear would well up in my eyes, a lump would form in my throat, but you would not know – I would hide it, I am strong.

In the middle days of my grief, I would look ahead and see that wall that I had attempted to go around as an ever-present reminder of a wall yet unscaled. Yet I did not attempt to scale it for the strong will survive – and I am strong.

In the later years of my grief, I learned to climb over that wall – step by step – remembering, crying, grieving, and the tears flowed steadily as I painstakingly went over. The way was long, but I did make it.

Near the resolution of my grief, a tear will well up in my eyes, a lump will form in my throat, but I will let that tear fall – and you see it. Through it you will see that I still hurt and I care, for I am strong.

Terry Jago ~ TCF, Regina, Canada

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Pikes Peak Chapter
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42ND TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE



RINGS OUT IN
PHILADELPHIA

JULY 19-21, 2019