



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



Dec/January 2016

Upcoming Events

January 21st - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

February 18th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

STEERING COMMITTEE

CHAPTER LEADER

LARAIN ASARO-ANDERSON
Son, Michael Edward Anderson

MAILINGS & DATABASE

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL
Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

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/LIBRARIAN

CHAE LA CHRISTIANSON
Son, Damon Vincent Christianson

SC MEMBER/WELCOME PACKETS

LETA LEVETT
Son, Aaron Paul Levett

SC MEMBER

LEONIE CRAMER
Son, Julian Anthony King

SC MEMBER

DIANNE McLAUGHLIN
Son, Kevin Hardman

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

CHAPTER LEADER

LARAIN ASARO-ANDERSON * 351-7653

DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS

STEWART & LETA LEVETT * 531-5488

TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON * 573-2743

LEUKEMIA

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL * 282-1924

ADULT CHILD / SUDDEN DEATH

CHAE LA CHRISTIANSON * 687-6688

SUICIDE

LARITA ARCHIBALD 596-2575

SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

RAYE WILSON (303) 814-9478

*Please feel free to contact any of these Steering Committee members if you can not reach our Chapter Leader. **

*2016
Will Be A
Year For
Healing!*



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 January 21, 2016.

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.compassionatefriends.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!



Chaplain

Gene Steinkirchner
CSPD



Chaela Christianson
in loving memory of her son
Damon Vincent Christianson
5/30/1977 ~ 7/3/2010



Welcome to our new families:
Bonnie Barnes - Son Chris K. Barnes

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.

Why “Happy New Year” is Tough on Bereaved Parents

When the ball at Times Square drops, champagne corks pop. Ample hugs and kisses are dispensed all around.

A new year, new hope, new ventures, new possibilities. Wow, it's all so exciting!

However, for the parent who has lost a child in the previous year, the dawning of a new calendar year can be rough. In fact, most of the time, it is.

The bereaved parent can feel isolated, lonely, and sorrowful while everyone else is celebrating.

Daniel died at age four in February 1997 and entering 1998 was hard. My mind was filled with questions like: What am I doing entering a new year without him? How can this be? Why do I get to live and he died?

I was overcome with the feeling that I was leaving him behind. Because there it was, a fresh untouched year and I knew that none of the 365 days in it would contain a hug from him. There would be no new memories, no sixth birthday to watch him blow out the candles. 1998 was the year he was to start first grade and be in school with his big sister. At least in 1997, he had been with me. 1997 was the year he died, true, but he had also lived 33 days of it.

1998 knew nothing of a blond-haired boy who became bald from cancer treatments and had a love for being read to and a generosity for giving out stickers. How could I be excited about a new year?

Change isn't easy for many of us. While most want to get rid of an old used year, and enter something new and hopeful, for the bereaved mother or father, that is not always the case. Many can say, “Good riddance to 2015; it was a lousy year.” But for others, that was the year their son or daughter died, and moving from it, means a parent is moving further from the last time he or she saw her/his child.

Bereaved parents have fragile hearts. They might look okay, wear matching socks, use the correct salad fork, and even smile, but deep down in the fibers of their heart, they are struggling. Life seems so normal for everybody else—but them. They can think life is easy for others—but them. Getting out of bed can be a major accomplishment. Celebrating holidays can be consumed with sadness instead of happiness.

If you have a bereaved friend, help her/him by letting this year be a year where she/he can freely share stories about a deceased son or daughter. Let those in your lives with broken hearts speak of the memories etched in their minds. Let your friends know that you will not forget their children for however short or long these children lived.

So, it's a new year. May we all strive to make it an empathetic one where we learn richly from each another.

By Alice Wisler, in memory of her son Daniel, from www.opentohope.com



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays - December

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Robbie Rickman	Dec 1	Jean Rickman
Joshua Aaron Munkirs	Dec 1	Dana & Laura Munkirs
Abraham Daniel Boukhari	Dec 2	David & Deborah Woodrow
Dwayne Stoppel	Dec 3	Pearl Stoppel
John Doggett	Dec 7	Sandra Searles
John Walther	Dec 8	Joseph Walther
Zachary Nathaniel James McClary	Dec 9	Gloria & James Olsen
Daniel J. Whisler	Dec 11	JoAnn Mowdy
Matthew Stockwell	Dec 11	Mark & Sally Stockwell
Trinity Sumlin	Dec 11	Sheryl Sumlin
Rachael Samulenok	Dec 12	Megan Samulenok
Kristen Amanda Teran	Dec 12	Donna Loughridge
Kristopher Lohrmeyer	Dec 13	Dan & Lori Lohrmeyer
Gavin Perez	Dec 14	Shannon Paolini
Noelle Pearl	Dec 15	Michelle Fleming
Chris Reiter	Dec 18	Sharon Reiter
Nathaniel Hughes	Dec 19	Jim Hughes
Timothy Patrick Shea	Dec 22	Joe & Paula Shea
Katie Kennedy	Dec 23	Van & Kathy Kennedy
Nicolas Jay Broughton	Dec 23	Rose Broughton
Trevor "T.J." Franks	Dec 24	Penny Franks
Robert (Robby) George, Jr.	Dec 25	Robert & Margaret George
Sheri Cavin	Dec 27	Susan & Alan Cavin
Megan Lane	Dec 28	Sandra Gail Lane
Joshua Samuel Shelton	Dec 28	Cherie Berglund-Hensley
Kyle Hill	Dec 28	Ursula Hill
Anthony Anselmo	Dec 28	Vicki & Frank Anselmo
Chelsey Ann Kear	Dec 29	Tami Kear
Lindsay Jean Morris	Dec 30	Linda Morris



Betty Stieglmeyer

In Memory of
Jim & Scott Stieglmeyer



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays ~ January

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Ernest Price Hurst, Jr.	Jan 2	Nancy Hurst
Adam Roy Hodges	Jan 3	JoAnn Ewing
Addie Marie Vande Stowe	Jan 4	Shawn Roberson
Andrew Talley II	Jan 4	Jackie Talley
Alyanna Livingston	Jan 5	Kirstin Klinkerman
Jamie Jackman	Jan 5	Sherry Jackman/Knelson Spooner
Ramon E.G. Lucero	Jan 6	Diana & Kimber Michael
Nicole Megan Yagi	Jan 6	Jackie & Dennis Yagi
John Daniel Bernard Ringo	Jan 8	Angela Randle, Paul Ringo
Klye Snyder	Jan 9	LuAnn Walters
Ronald Eugene Peterson	Jan 9	Ron Peterson
Tyrone Binnebose	Jan 11	Natasha Binnebose
Terry A. Shank	Jan 11	Carol Vierling
Seth Fieser	Jan 17	Megan Fieser
Jaclyn Williams	Jan 20	Sandy & Rob Williams
Brody Richard Cisneros	Jan 21	Julie & Will Cisneros
Mallory Paulene Hendrickson	Jan 22	Celine & Gary Hendrickson
Adriano Bermudez	Jan 22	C.J. LaPointe
Eric Evans	Jan 23	Linda & Dick Evans
Jody Elizabeth Houtz	Jan 23	Jane & Chris Houtz
Corey Reynolds	Jan 23	Barb Reynolds
Kade Riefenberg	Jan 24	Andy Gibson
Blaine Joseph Steele	Jan 24	Paul Petta
Stephen Lucas Tyler	Jan 25	Catherine Tyler
Sarah Sunshine Wedekind	Jan 25	Lorry Pearson
Kevin Michael Burns	Jan 27	Stan & Willie Burns
Aaron Lee Gallob	Jan 27	Lou & Erma Gallob
Sean O'Connor	Jan 28	Dennis & Tracy O'Connor
Joshua Cesar Menendez	Jan 28	Dianna Castellanos, Julio Menendez
Shawn Adelgren	Jan 31	Russ & Dee Adelgren
Robert Slaughter	Jan 31	Ginger & Robert Slaughter





Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries - December

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Mia Allyson Gardiner	16 years	Dec 4	Peri Gardiner
Eric Sutton Skinner	19 years	Dec 4	David & Gail Skinner
Lisa Marie O'Briant	22 years	Dec 5	Gary & Mary O'Briant
Renee Lee Seiberlich	1 year	Dec 5	Joe & Leda Seiberlich
Ian Vincent	31 years	Dec 8	Vicky Campbell
Jackson Ahrold	9 years	Dec 12	Doug & Tina Blenkarn, Gretchen Blenkarn
Marc Darby	12 years	Dec 12	Lori & Steve Darby
Joseph Gentry Richardson	1 year	Dec 13	Miriam Gentry
Mallory Jane Hooper	25 years	Dec 13	Bill & Beth Hooper
Isaac Sartain	12 years	Dec 14	Gregory Sartain
Logan Riley		Dec 17	Heather Claypool
Ember Maria Arthur	30 years	Dec 17	Jeanette Newville
Samuel Hesselberg	17 years	Dec 18	Steve & Leanne Hesselberg
Audrina Elyse Escano	18 years	Dec 20	Chris & Christina Pearson
Anthony Anselmo	22 years	Dec 21	Vicki & Frank Anselmo
Tyler Glicker	19 years	Dec 22	Ginger Jones
Patrick Niedringhaus	18 years	Dec 22	Leah & Dave Niedringhaus
Robbie Rickman	21 years	Dec 25	Jean Rickman
Henry Rael	37 years	Dec 26	Isabelle & Ron Rael, Maria Rael
Chris Reiter	28 years	Dec 27	Sharon Reiter
Kristen Amanda Teran	23 years	Dec 28	Donna Loughridge
Ariel Allen	3 years	Dec 29	Judy Allen
Rebekah Cano Moore	20 years	Dec 29	Janis Cano
Chris Gettle	51 years	Dec 29	Kathlene Gettle
Mary Hope Burton	7 years	Dec 30	Jim & Betty Burton
Steven Bondurant	33 years	Dec 31	Karen Bondurant
Julian King	21 years	Dec 31	Carl Reese & Leonie Cramer
Matthew Flint	26 years	Dec 31	Cathy Flint
Michael Zwirlein	25 years	Dec 31	Chris Zwirlein

As we all know, the death of our child, no matter what age or circumstance, is a shattering experience for a family. When a child dies, to whom does a family turn for the emotional support they will need during the grief journey that lies ahead? If you are reading this newsletter, you have already learned that The Compassionate Friends understands that grief for a child lasts longer & is more intense than society commonly recognizes. Together as grieving parents we can offer empathy and understanding of this loss, while also recognizing that each person's grief is unique.

Do you know someone who is in need of The Compassionate Friends? Won't you be the hand that reaches out and offers support by giving them information about our organization?



Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries - January

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Susan Gordon	17 years	Jan 4	Mr & Mrs Arthur Gordon
Pierce Ford	29 years	Jan 5	Jeff & Cookie Ford
Savannah L. Burke	6 weeks	Jan 12	Herman & April Burke
Judy Gambill	17 years	Jan 12	Andrea Gambill
Michelle Howie	32 years	Jan 12	Annette Howie
Fred Chavez	32 years	Jan 14	Annette Atchison
Jim Eley	43 years	Jan 19	Judy Eley
Sara M. Losasso	14 years	Jan 19	Cindy Losasso
Joshua W. Lewis Gohlke	20 years	Jan 19	Karen Swank
Jacob Sanchez	3 months	Jan 22	Denise Langhorst, Janine McDonough
Nicholas Ryan Nelson	23 years	Jan 22	Marley Nelson Rhoad
Mark Van Matre	46 years	Jan 24	Patricia Van Matre
Patrick Michael Doyle	21 years	Jan 27	Ruby Doyle
Megan Lane	18 years	Jan 27	Sandra Gail Lane
Gregory Randall Davis	18 years	Jan 29	Cora Davis
Ernest Price Hurst, Jr.	44 years	Jan 30	Nancy Hurst
Amy Mae Lugenbeel	2 years	Jan 31	Terry & Barb Lugenbeel
Juan Marine	29 years	Jan 31	Pamela Marine

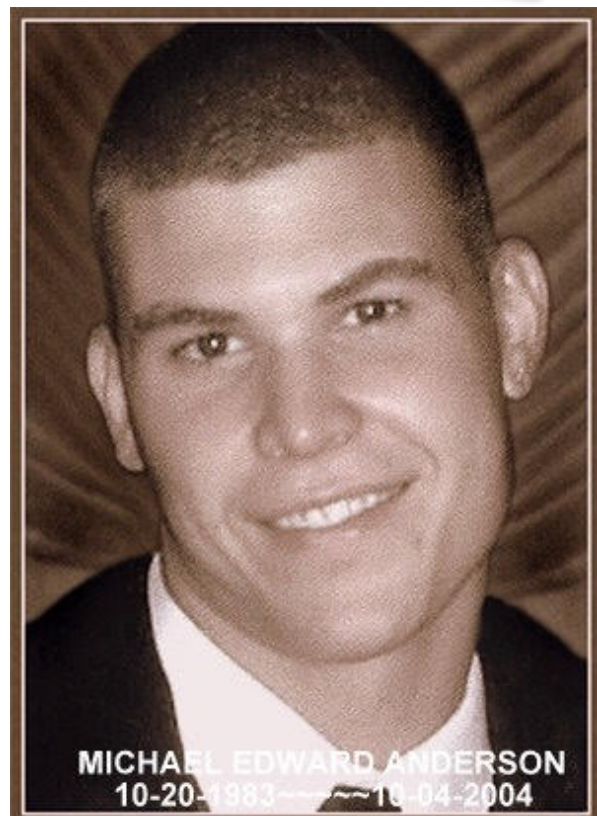




**This months newsletter is sponsored
in Loving Memory of**

**Aaron Steffens 2-16-74 ~6-5-2010
Son of Lynn Nickel**

**Michael E Anderson
10-20-83~10-4-2004
Son of Laraine Anderson**





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

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.



HEALING WORDS

THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

Life is full of changes. Most times I see each experience as a lesson. Something that will help me for some future event. Not knowing what that might be is stored away in my knowledge base to be used at some point in my life. I don't realize at the time because as all of us know lessons are painful. That is how we seem to learn them – the hard way.

Being a parent, gives us so much in the way of lessons. We learn patience. A newfound appreciation of this big beautiful world. Interesting ways of doing things. The never ending supply of using things in an unusual way to accomplish a task. (Just think back on when you saw your child using an unsafe means to reach something they were never intended to reach in the first place.) Most importantly I've learned to laugh at myself.

What I never thought would happen is that I'd be asked to make the ultimate sacrifice. Losing my son asked more of me than anything I have been through. It is the ultimate sacrifice to let go of something that is so much a part of you. Someone you can't bear to even survive without it. I feel I have lost the best parts of me in some way too. They just went away on March 5th. I know you feel it too. No matter what has been asked of us, we have figured out a way to do it for our kids. Whether we found a way to be the best parent ever – the sacrifice was worth it. If we did without so we could give to our children, the sacrifice was worth it. No matter what we loved them completely and gave as we could to enrich their lives.

This is different. I didn't have a choice. You didn't have a choice. We had to endure the ultimate sacrifice of love. Losing our child in such a permanent way. The LOVE of our child was worth it all.

To look into their eyes. See their smile. Teach them all we can. Know their dreams and see them come true. But that got taken away on that day and in that moment that's ingrained in our memories.

So, here we are together in this ultimate sacrifice. We have a new companion now named Grief. Most of the time I have to admit, I don't like Grief much at all. It brings me down. Makes me sad. Brings me to tears. Grief reminds me when I've forgotten to pay attention to my sorrow and loss. No matter what Grief is always there to remind me that it is here to stay.

I try to push Grief away. I try to ignore my Grief. I keep myself busy and distracted. Then in an instant, I am face to face with Grief, reminded that you and I have made the ultimate sacrifice. We somehow must continue the grief journey. I am grateful for being given so much love during the time Patrick was here with us. The ultimate sacrifice has asked so much . . .

By: Debbie Rivera - Tampa Bay, FL TCF

GRANDPARENTS' REMEMBRANCE

We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives. Our grief is two-fold and at times we feel powerless to help. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts.

We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild and we have lost a symbol of our immortality. As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them, and when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together. We continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. We support the new ones which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort. ♥

~Susan Mackey, TCF, Rutland, VT~



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

By Jennifer L. Page

I made a wish for you tonight
That the stars would sparkle in your eyes
That tomorrow the sun would shine for you
Flowers would bloom, birds would sing
And your heart would heal.
I made a wish for you tonight
That your lips would smile again
That laughter would tickle up from inside you
And let yourself feel again.
I made a wish for you tonight
That life would be good
That you would find peace and joy
That your wishes and dreams came true
And that I am part of them.
Jennifer L. Page
08 April 01

TCF - Boise, ID Chapter

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.

By Brenda Penepent, St. Paul, MN TCF

Do I Have To?

Mom, do I have to stop loving my brother
because he is not here?
Will I forget all about him because he's not near?
I remember all the things we did together, even
though we were very young.
I laugh and feel warm each time I think of a
particularly funny one.
Sometimes I get so angry that he's no longer
here to share, But I know he knows it's only
because of how much I still care.
I miss him, so even though at times we didn't
agree, Just knowing he was there made things
feel safe for me. He always felt he had to be my
strong, protective big brother,
And that's a bond we'll always share forever with
each other.
He tried to protect me even when he, too, was
just scared. No, I won't stop loving that big
brother of mine,
Not now, not ever, not till the end of time.
He will always be a part of what makes me be
me.
And that's the part of our love that will live
eternally.
By Jackie Rosen - TCF N.Dade, FL

Heartfrost - By Sascha Wagner

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.



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

Dec/January 2016

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