



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

February, 2010 Newsletter

Page 1

Upcoming Events

February 18th - "Tackling The Winter Blahs" - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
March 18th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
April 15th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

OUR TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

CHAPTER LEADER	LARAINÉ ANDERSON	351-7653
INFANT LOSS	COLLEEN & ART MANNON	535-9868
TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS	BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON	573-2743
LEUKEMIA	JANE & STEVE GABRIEL	282-1924
TEEN / YOUNG ADULT LOSS	BARB REYNOLDS	599-0772
SUICIDE	LARITA ARCHIBALD	596-2575
DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS	STEWART & LETA LEVETT	531-5488
SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT	RAYE WILSON	(303) 814-9478

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: National - www.compassionatefriends.org
Colorado Springs - www.tcfcolorado.org/coloradosprings

Welcome!

To those of you who are newly bereaved and receiving our newsletter for the first time, we warmly welcome you to The Compassionate Friends of the Pikes Peak Region.

We are other parents who have experienced the death of a child at any age and offer understanding and support through our monthly meetings and activities throughout the year.

OUR MEETINGS

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?
Next meeting will be February 18th, 2010.

It is often difficult to attend your first meeting, but those who do find an atmosphere of support from other parents who understand a parent's grief. Nothing is asked of you; there are no fees; you do not have to speak a word if you do not care to. If you are more comfortable bringing a friend or relative along with you, please do.

Many find these meetings help them to heal; and together we learn to live with our loss. We learn that [we need not walk alone](#).



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

February, 2010 Newsletter

Page 2



Sheila Slade in memory of

Karen Jean Slade

DOB: February 2nd - Anniversary: February 7th



In loving memory of my daughter Karen Jean Slade



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

February, 2010 Newsletter

Page 3

Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>		
<u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Karen-Jean Slade	Feb 2		Sheila Slade
30 years	Feb 7		
Ian Matthew Anderson	Feb 2	Rare fibrousing disease	Joann & David Butler
18 years	Aug 29		
Kent Curtis Junglen	Feb 3	Brain tumor	James Junglen
31 years	Feb 18		
Cynthia Claypool Martin	Feb 4	Sudden death	Steve & Ann Claypool
39 years	Aug 9		
Stephen Merle Schmoker	Feb 5	Brain tumor	Shirley & Ralph Greer
39 years	Nov 19		
Ethan Ford Mosman	Feb 5	Auto Accident	Christy & Mike Mosman
7 years	Dec 18		
Michael William Sarmento	Feb 7	Heart attack	Donna (Sarmento) Pugh
46 years	May 29		
Tyler Glicken	Feb 8	Car accident	Ginger Jones
19 years	Dec 22		
Kimberley Dawn Leir	Feb 8	Respiratory failure	Adaline and Herb Leir - TCF Regina Chapter
6 years	May 18		
Jillian Overly	Feb 9	SIDS	Dauna Overly
1 month	Mar 10		
Ryan Rickman	Feb 11	Auto accident	Jean Rickman
11 years	Jul 19		
Claire Palmer	Feb 12	Carbon monoxide poisoning	Jo & Lawrence Palmer
21 years	Sep 17		
Jay Aguanno	Feb 12	Accidental overdose	Jean Aguanno
19 years	Jul 7		
Gary Carlson	Feb 15		Phil & Rose Carlson
44 years	Apr 25		
Alan Russell Spletstoesser	Feb 15	Cancer	Joan Spletstoesser
17 years	Oct 19		
Ember Maria Arthur	Feb 16	Collision	Jeanette Newville
30 years	Dec 17		
Zachary Dean Glenn	Feb 18	Accidental strangulation	Kristin & Larry Glenn, Janice Bren
3 years	Jul 14		
Chance Tyler Nichols	Feb 19		Charlie Nichols
17 years	Jul 11		
Kendall Ford Young	Feb 20	Aplastic anemia	Ford & Ann Young
14 years	May 11		
Nikolas Chunn	Feb 21	Drowning / hotel pool	Monica & Doug Chunn
5 years	Aug 18		



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

February, 2010 Newsletter

Page 4

Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>		
<u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Michelle Sandra Seal	Feb 23	Metabolic disorder	Walter & Diana Seal
3 years	Mar 7		
Darrell Lewis Mitchell	Feb 27	Murdered	George & Freda Mitchell
20 years	Feb 9		
Fred Chavez	Feb 27	Suicide	Annette Atchison
32 years	Jan 14		
Jason Lamb	Feb 28		Jan Lyons-Lamb
32 years	May 5		

Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>		
<u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Paul A. Behr	Nov 29	Congenital abnormalities	Cynthia & Steve Behr
2 months	Feb 1		
Kristen Clark	Nov 2	Drug overdose / depression	Donna Krum
31 years	Feb 2		
James Craig Stieglmeyer	Mar 11	Cystic fibrosis	Wally and Betty Stieglmeyer
25 years	Feb 2		
Katie Shorkey	Sep 8	Murder	Robert & Karen Shorkey
24 years	Feb 3		
Craig Matthews	Jul 24		Cathy Genato
30 years	Feb 4		
Scott Michael Gerwatowski	Jul 28	Heart attack	Linda Gerwatowski / Helen and Walter Rakocy
21 years	Feb 4		
Karen-Jean Slade	Feb 2		Sheila Slade
30 years	Feb 7		
David Allen McGough	May 14	Car accident	Lillian McGough
25 years	Feb 7		
Darrell Lewis Mitchell	Feb 27	Murdered	George & Freda Mitchell
20 years	Feb 9		
Patrick Casey Hildebrand	Aug 26	Auto / pedestrian accident	Dr. Jan and Judi Hildebrand
21 years	Feb 9		
Yancy Hufford	Jun 13		Patty & Larry Hufford
26 years	Feb 11		
Steven Miller	Apr 27	Auto accident	Mike Miller
17 years	Feb 11		
Noelle Pearl	Dec 15	Car accident	Michelle Fleming
17 years	Feb 13		
Peter Joseph Noel	Sep 17		Janet Noel Starritt
20 years	Feb 16		



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

February, 2010 Newsletter

Page 5

Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u>		
<u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Stella Elliott	Aug 8	Auto accident	Donna Elliott
6 months	Feb 17		
Eric Cowles	Nov 15	SIDS	Doug & Leah Cowles
3 months	Feb 17		
Kent Curtis Junglen	Feb 3	Brain tumor	James Junglen
31 years	Feb 18		
Graham Stingley	Aug 7		Mary Winter-Stingley
23 years	Feb 18		
Logan Lawrence	Mar 5	Surgical complications	Janet & Edward Lawrence
23 years	Feb 22		
Kirsten Evelyn Cornell	Jun 26	Catastrophic cardiac event	Will & Marion Cornell
9 years	Feb 23		
Marisa Nicole Pilant	Mar 14	Sepsis	Stephen & Julie Pilant/ Richard and Elizabeth Jamison
2 years	Feb 23		
Jeremy Laurence	May 20	Suicide	Ted & Sherrill Laurence
25 years	Feb 26		
Sean Thompson	Jul 5	Auto /Pedestrian accident	Rick Korcsog & Frankie Thompson
24 years	Feb 26		
Richard Joseph Armstrong	Oct 19	Drowning	Chuck & Helen Armstrong
4 years	Feb 27		

Brother-Sister Bond Showed Itself on Valentine's Day

A couple of years after my son Michael died, I was sorting through some things which I had saved from our children's school years. I came across a Valentine card which depicts a little girl surrounded by heart symbols. "Stuck on you Valentine!," the card reads. On the back of the card is seven-year-old Michael's hand-written signature. The card was to his big sister Kelly.

The emotional bond between Kelly and Michael was formed very early. Almost three years older, Kelly was excited about the prospect of welcoming her new brother into the world. When I was pregnant with Michael, we didn't know the baby's gender in advance. "It's not a girl," Kelly had insisted. "He's my brother, and his name is Michael!"

The relationship between our two children was not unlike that of many other healthy siblings. Kelly and Michael were daily companions and playmates during the early years. They had their bouts of sibling rivalry, too, which on some days would drive me insane! Their love for each other was solid, however. On one particular evening, after a day of almost non-stop arguing between the two of them, while they were lying in their beds I heard, "Night Mike, I love you!" "Night Kelly, I love you!"

At age 19, Michael died in an automobile accident while Kelly was away at college. Kelly has had to learn how to be an only child. She has had to define for herself a new identity, a difficult task as a young adult. I am confident that the bond which was formed between them will remain forever.

Kelly is married and shares her new home with her husband and an adorable Pug named Otto. They occasionally spend a weekend at our house and sleep in Kelly's old bedroom, where Michael's "Stuck on you Valentine!" card can still be found on the night stand as a symbol of a bond that will never die.

By Anne Dionne – TCF Online Community Services



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

February, 2010 Newsletter

Page 6

When Grief Returns

Grief is a tricky thing. It can wreak havoc on your emotions, especially in the first year following the death of a child. A parent can think that progress in healing is finally being made, and then something as unexpected as a song comes on the radio, and the words trigger feelings of grief as strong as if the loss took place yesterday.

After all of the "firsts" are in the past, the path to healing seems a bit more even for a while. Setbacks don't come nearly as often as in the first year, and rarely are the grief feelings as raw and intense as during the first months following the death of a child.

Most parents work their way through the sad emotions of loss to a place where they can finally recall fond memories of times spent with their child. They can talk about their child without crying, and there is an overall feeling of peace rather than the gnawing feeling of never being at rest.

Grief can be quite deceitful, though, and show up many years after a loss, leaving one feeling like healing never took place. Rather than be alarmed if grief returns, remind yourself often that grief's visit is only a momentary appearance.

Just as we go through seasons in our lives, grief will visit each of those seasons to let us know that the loss of a child has left its mark on the heart. An especially sensitive time is when a parent enters what we so often call the "empty nest." Grief can return as a bold reminder of what was so cruelly and unfairly taken away. A parent's emotions can become very disturbed during this sad reminder of loss once again.

When grief returns, remind yourself often that this is a normal part of the overall healing process. The pain associated with child loss never totally goes away, so it is quite normal for certain times in our life to bring grief emotions to the forefront once again.

Remember that this return of grief will not last forever. Take good care of yourself physically. Eat well-balanced meals. Rest. Keep yourself well hydrated. Talk to your doctor if you feel like you might be entering a phase of depression. Depression is something that can be treated early and is nothing to try to hide.

Lastly, find some support for this difficult time in your life. Even though your loss might have occurred 20 years ago, if you feel overwhelmed with sadness and grief, it is most important that you find someone who will listen and lend you support.

Remind yourself often that grief is something that cannot be ignored. Grief can be masked for a while, but eventually it makes its presence known. It is something that requires hard work and attention. A parent's grief is a natural reaction to an abnormal event. Grief is not an illness, but rather is a time of readjustment to a reality of living with loss.

Parents who lose a child do not stop grieving. The pain will vary in intensity at different times in a parent's life, but the process is life-long. When grief returns, remember to be kind to yourself and allow yourself the time you need to once again work through your feelings.

Clara Hinton Union Grove, NC TCF

Pikes Peak TCF Looking for Future Leaders

Would you like to get more involved with our local chapter of The Compassionate Friends? Would you like to help facilitate meetings or put your energies to use helping others in their grief journey? If you are 18 or more months out since you lost your child and are interested in helping our local chapter, please contact Laraine Anderson at 351-7653 to find out more on how you can help. We will be looking for new Steering Committee members to replace those who have stepped down over the past year. Time commitment is minimal but enthusiasm to help others is a must. Please call Laraine for more information.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

February, 2010 Newsletter

Page 7

Love Gift Donations

Our chapter exists entirely through your donations which are tax deductible. Love Gifts enable us to continue our outreach to bereaved parents through our many chapter activities. 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.

These items must be received by the 10th of the month preceding the issue in which you would like them to appear. Love Gift donations should be sent directly to our treasurer, Frank Schager whose address is listed on the Love Gift Donation Form.



Tell us what you want. Is there something specific that you'd like to see? Perhaps more stories or articles on healing? Recommendations for books or poems written by other TCF members?

Do you have a poem or a prayer, story or picture that you would like to share? We also welcome your contributions to our newsletter whether original or something you may have read. If submitting something you've read or know is copyrighted material, you must obtain written permission from the author prior to us going to publication.

Please address any submissions to:

Stew Levett
160 El Dorado Lane
Colorado Springs, CO 80919

Or write to: Stewart@Archangelgifts.com

Submissions need to be received by the 10th of the month to be included in the following month's newsletter. Thank you.

LOVE GIFT DONATION

Your Name _____

Child's Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Anniversary Date _____

Dedication _____

Picture Enclosed: YES ☐ NO ☐

Mail to:
Frank Schager
2235 McArthur Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Angel Eyes: Giving Comfort, Providing Hope

Our group offers bereavement services for parents, families, friends and caregivers who have been affected by the sudden unexpected loss of an infant or toddler. This group offers you a comfortable place to heal and learn how to live with your loss. Nothing is asked of you; you do not have to speak if you choose not to.

People who have received bereavement services report that it is very helpful for them to have people to talk to who can understand the grief of losing an infant or young child. This group is a safe place where you can talk about both your grief and the precious memories you have of your child. Each month we will begin with a particular topic, talk about how you might be affected and have time for general sharing.

The group is led by an ANGEL EYES social worker whose mission is to help families and others cope with the sudden, unexpected death of an infant or toddler throughout the state by providing a range of bereavement services. For additional help and information: **Angel Eyes 1-888-285-7437**

Web site: www.angeleyes.org

Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of the Month

Location: Colorado Springs Penrose Library, 20 N. Cascade Ave
Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

There is no cost and parking is free at the meters after 6:00 p.m.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

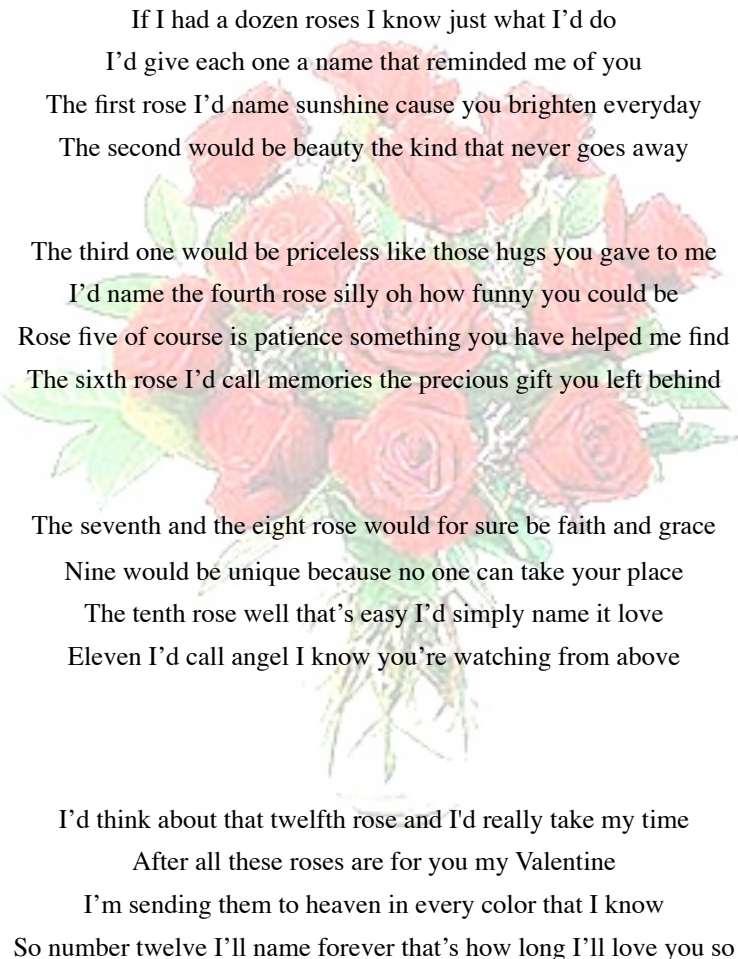
February, 2010 Newsletter

Page 8

I generally write a poem about our journey several times a year. The other day I was listening to a talk radio show here in Denver, and the host mentioned how his daughter is a little older now and this year he will buy her roses on Valentine's Day for the first time. I thought to myself how much I would love to give Ashley roses again. I began to think about roses, and then about Ashley, and then I just sat down and wrote a few lines that I am honored to share with my friends here. I wish you all a gentle Valentine's Day; this holiday of love always reminds me of how much we truly love all of our children.

Blessings,
Alan Pedersen

A Dozen Roses



If I had a dozen roses I know just what I'd do
I'd give each one a name that reminded me of you
The first rose I'd name sunshine cause you brighten everyday
The second would be beauty the kind that never goes away

The third one would be priceless like those hugs you gave to me
I'd name the fourth rose silly oh how funny you could be
Rose five of course is patience something you have helped me find
The sixth rose I'd call memories the precious gift you left behind

The seventh and the eight rose would for sure be faith and grace
Nine would be unique because no one can take your place
The tenth rose well that's easy I'd simply name it love
Eleven I'd call angel I know you're watching from above

I'd think about that twelfth rose and I'd really take my time
After all these roses are for you my Valentine
I'm sending them to heaven in every color that I know
So number twelve I'll name forever that's how long I'll love you so

By Alan Pedersen
www.everashleymusic.com



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

February, 2010 Newsletter

Page 9

SPIRIT GIFTS

Grief is such an individual journey. We are cast on its path without our consent, enveloped by a depth of pain we never dreamed existed. We'll have times when despair and loneliness threaten to engulf us.

But we do have one companion on this lonely, unsought road: our child who died. I think there is never a moment in the day when a part of me is not connected to my child, to our years together and to our present relationship. Our journey through grief is a good-bye to the physical presence of our children, but it is never good-bye to their spirits and to the essence of their beings. My child lives inside me now, and the same gifts he gave me when he was physically alive are still available to me through his spirit. In some ways, those "spirit gifts" are stronger, because they are contained and undiluted within me.

When the days get unbearably hard, when I think of all this wonderful young person missed by not getting to live out his life, I try to remember to focus on the present child, the one who lives inside me. I try to integrate his gifts into my life, sometimes seeing through his eyes, thinking from his heart and mind. Often, he reminds me to pay attention and not miss the beauty of nature that surrounds me. (He noticed the details in nature and loved the outdoors so much more than I). No matter how old your child who died, the essence of this unique being remains with you forever. It is through us and others who knew them that our children continue to live and affect our present world. Though not in the way we hoped and expected, our beloved children are still very much alive.

So...may the spirit of the child who lives so deep within your heart help you through this day and through every moment of this journey and the reestablishing of your life without their physical presence.

- Kitty Reeves, TCF San Francisco, CA

Some Thoughts on Rebuilt Engines

by Joan P. — TCF — Miami, FL

All of us who receive this newsletter have experienced something in common — the shattering of our human machinery upon impact with a son or daughter's death. Whatever helped us keep moving before, nothing works for us now. Our lives ground to a halt. In the stillness of grief's long night, I felt despair over trying to repair something that would always lack a vital part. How could I ever rebuild the machinery of my life without that precious part? Any repair work would require my permission and participation. Looking at the angled, damaged parts of myself, I questioned how to salvage anything workable from the wreckage. Eventually, blessedly, the desire to move again, to get back into life's traffic, got me doing something. At first it was tinkering, experimenting with the broken parts, imagining them whole again. Then I tried to learn by watching others who were rebuilding. It helped to read repair manuals, painfully written by people like me. The process was tedious and exhausting; there were setbacks, hidden cost, and false starts.

One surprising day my engine actually turned over — I moved a little. Before long, the motor sounded stronger. It almost seemed to hum, as I remembered it could. With persistence, I worked up to a decent speed, regained my sense of direction, and even began appreciating some sights along the way. I discovered that a rebuilt engine could carry me, despite the missing part. Occasionally it sputters, misfires or floods, being sensitive to road hazards other drivers don't see. Some hills always seem too steep, certain roads have too many memories. Sometimes the fog is too thick to drive through. When necessary, I slow down, make adjustments, or pull off the road temporarily.

I wanted to write about my experience out of gratitude. Each of us has our own long night of grief and our own reawakening from it. The mystery of healing defies simple explanation. Do invisible hands help us in the healing process? I don't have an answer, just astonishment at the process which moved me from the tangled wreckage of myself to a sturdy rebuilt that appears whole, even though it isn't. In closing, I lovingly acknowledge my daughter, Beth, who believed deeply in the possibility of rebuilding her own life.

February 2010

The Compassionate Friends
Pikes Peak Chapter
P.O. Box 26239
Colorado Springs, CO 80936



The Compassionate Friends
of the



Pikes Peak Region