



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

January, 2010 Newsletter

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## Upcoming Events

January 21st - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church  
February 18th - 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](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)  
WEBSITES: National - [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)  
Colorado Springs - [www.tcfcolorado.org/coloradosprings](http://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 January 21st, 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.***



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## Same Auld Lang Syne?

### CHIMES

I was sitting in a pretty, tranquil garden, looking over a breathtakingly beautiful Midlands valley, listening to the music of many chimes – tiny, delightful tinkles and more robust resonances, chimes that sang of water and of wind, of hidden dreams, even one that sang “I’ll be loving you always”. No wonder I thought of you who will love forever, and how much like the chimes we the bereaved are.

It didn’t require much to set the peals off; a gentle breeze, a slight nudge were sufficient. When we are immersed in our loss it seems that we need a tempest to rouse us. We are too tired, too pain-filled to move through each day let alone attempt the long slog to some form of recovery. Yet all it might take could be an understanding ear, an inspirational word, a comforting caress to start the process. From then on it’s up to us to work with that momentum to create the sounds that will echo through our lives.

When I went shopping for chimes for my garden I thought I wanted the pretty tinkles I was used to. To my surprise I found myself drawn to the stronger sounds. The wise and talented creator of the chimes said that our tastes alter with time. For the newly bereaved it feels as if this numbness will be with us always, that nothing could change. Yet, somehow, some time along the way, we are different. The sadness never goes nor the yearning, but our reactions aren’t the same any more. We have learned to manage the grief better and can bear the loudness of everyday existence.

I remember how surprised I was when I first went to TCF to see so many confident, capable parents and longed for the time when I too could be part of that company. It’s taken many years and much heartache but today I know I am not that same broken woman. TCF has so many success stories; yours too will be one of them.

I hope that soon the bells will ring a beautiful melody for you.

ROSEMARY DIRMEIK - TCF Johannesburg, SA

Instead of the old kind of New Year’s resolutions we used to make & break, let’s make some new ones:

- Try not to imagine the future; take 1 day at a time.
- Allow yourself time to cry, both alone and with your loved ones.
- Don’t shut out other family members from your thoughts & feelings. Share these difficult times. You may all become closer for it.
- Try to be realistic about your expectations of yourself, your spouse, other family members & friends. If each of us is unique & different, how can there be perfect understanding?
- When a good day comes, relish it. Don’t feel guilty & don’t be discouraged because it doesn’t last. They will come again and multiply.
- Take care of your health. Even though the mind might not care, a sick body will only compound your troubles. Drink lots of water, take stress-type vitamins, rest (even if you don’t sleep) & get moderate exercise. Help your body to heal as well as your mind.
- Share your feelings with other compassionate friends & let them share with you. You will find that as you begin caring about the pain of others, you will start to come out of your shell – a healthy sign.

I know that these resolutions won’t be easy, but what has been? It is worth a try. There is nothing to lose and perhaps much to gain.

MARY EHMANN Lovingly lifted from TCF Chicago





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## 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>
Adam Roy Hodges	Jan 3	5 years	Jan 3	Car accident	JoAnn Ewing
Jamie Jackman	Jan 5	9 years	Jul 4	Croup	Sherry Jackman & Knelson Spooner
Nicole Megan Yagi	Jan 6	9 years	Jan 5	Car accident	Jackie & Dennis Yagi
Ronald Eugene Peterson	Jan 9	15 years	Apr 5	Motorcycle accident	Ron Peterson
Tyrone Binnebose	Jan 11	2 years	Jan 11	Infection from chemo	Natasha Binnebose
Terry A. Shank	Jan 11	28 years	May 18	Drunk driver	Carol Vierling
Frankie Padilla	Jan 13	18 years	Mar 6	Murdered	Frances Lucero
Seth Fieser	Jan 17	9 months	Nov 27		Megan Fieser
Mallory Paulene Hendrickson	Jan 22	1 year	Jan 17	Car accident	Celine & Gary Hendrickson
Adriano Bermudez	Jan 22	19 years	May 30	Car accident	C.J. LaPointe
Eric Evans	Jan 23	26 years	Nov 29		Linda & Dick Evans
Corey Reynolds	Jan 23	18 years	May 21	Bicycle/vehicle accident	Barb Reynolds
Jody Elizabeth Houtz	Jan 23	17 years	Jan 23	Heart attack	Jane and Chris Houtz
Sarah Sunshine Wedekind	Jan 25	30 years	Mar 18	Accidental drug overdose	Lorry Pearson
Stephen Lucas Tyler	Jan 25	19 years	Jan 25	Car accident	Catherine Tyler
Kevin Michael Burns	Jan 27	16 years	Jun 28	Auto accident	Stan & Willie Burns
Aaron Lee Gallob	Jan 27	28 years	Mar 3	Leukemia	Lou & Erma Gallob
Sean O'Connor	Jan 28	20 years	Jan 27	Car accident	Dennis & Tracy O'Connor
	Jun 5		Nov 21		



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## 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>
Patrick Clabeau	Jun 23	Car accident	Vince & Lori Clabeau
20 years	Jan 4		
Susan Gordon	May 3		Mr & Mrs Arthur Gordon
17 years	Jan 4		
Paul Anthony Fischer	Dec 14	Car crash	Stephanie Newcomb
32 years	Jan 6		
Michelle Howie	Jul 31	Several illnesses	Annette Howie
32 years	Jan 12		
Judy Gambill	Nov 13	Car/Truck Crash	Andrea Gambill
17 years	Jan 12		
Savannah L. Burke	Nov 25	SIDS	Herman & April Burke
1 month	Jan 12		
Fred Chavez	Feb 27	Suicide	Annette Atchison
32 years	Jan 14		
Sara M. Losasso	Apr 30	Car crash	Cindy Losasso
14 years	Jan 19		
Joshua W. Lewis Gohlke	Nov 19	Vehicular homicide (DUI)	Karen Swank
20 years	Jan 19		
Jim Eley	Jun 19	Flu symptoms	Judy Eley
43 years	Jan 19		
Jacob Sanchez	Oct 18	SIDS	Janine McDonough
3 months	Jan 22		
Jacob Sanchez	Oct 18	SIDS	Denise Langhorst
3 months	Jan 22		
Mark Van Matre	Nov 27	Cancer	Patricia Van Matre
46 years	Jan 24		
Megan Lane	Dec 28	Auto accident	Sandra Gail Lane
18 years	Jan 27		
Gregory Randall Davis	May 9	Auto accident	Cora Davis
18 years	Jan 29		
Amy Mae Lugenbeel	Sep 22	Seizure disorder	Terry & Barb Lugenbeel
2 years	Jan 31		

### The Compassionate Friends - Now on Facebook

If you are reading this newsletter from an email you have received, then you are no doubt familiar with the fact that The Compassionate Friends now has a Facebook presence. To view the postings from our national site you just need to go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Compassionate-FriendsUSA>. There you will find information about our organization, various discussion groups and upcoming events.

Many local organizations have added their own Facebook pages and with a bit of coaxing perhaps the Pikes Peak Chapter will join them.



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## SEASONED GRIEF

By 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 and 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.

## This Can Be A Constructive, If Not A Happy Year

Happy New Year??? "How can it ever be again?" "How will I ever make it through another year of this torment?"

When we are hurting and so terribly depressed, it is hard to see any good in our new year, but we must try. First, we must hold on tightly to the idea that we will not always be this miserable, that we will some day feel good again. This is almost impossible to believe, but even if we don't believe it, we must tell ourselves over and over again that IT IS TRUE - BECAUSE IT IS! Many parents whose children have died in the past will attest to this. Remember also, no one can suffer indefinitely as you are suffering now.

Second, we must face the new year with the knowledge that this year offers us a CHOICE - whether we will be on our way to healing this time next year or still be in the pit of intense grief. We must remind ourselves that if we choose to be on our way to healing by the following year, we must work to get here and that work entails allowing ourselves to go through our grief, to cry, to be angry, to talk about our guilts, to do whatever is necessary to move towards healing.

Third, we must look for good in our lives and find reason to go on and accept the fact that our continued suffering will not bring our child back. Many of us have other children and a spouse for whom we must go on. More important, we have our own lives that must be lived. Most of us know that our dead children would want us to go on! No, this coming year may not be a happy one, but it can be a constructive one. Through our grief we can grow and become more understanding, loving, compassionate, and aware of the real values in life. LET US NOT WASTE THIS NEW YEAR.

~Margaret H. Gerner, TCF, St. Louis, MO  
reprinted from the book We Need Not Walk Alone

## Some Ways to Help A Grieving Spouse

Assign top priority to your marriage relationship.  
Cultivate transparency, openness, and honesty.

Accept the pain that you feel. Be willing to share it and to listen to your spouse's expression of the pain he or she is feeling. Be patient with your spouse and with yourself. Recognize that your spouse is probably not at the same place in the grief process as you, and that is okay.

Don't expect your spouse to be your only source of healing. Keep working at communicating. Give special attention to your affection for each other. Learn and practice the gestures of love. Remember to stay in touch physically; the importance of human touching and hugging is hard to over estimate.

Allow or create space in your relationship. Everyone is entitled to a degree of privacy with their feelings, including their grief. Allow yourselves to enjoy life and each other. Be willing to laugh together, as well as cry together.

Work at finding some fun things to do together.

Help each other to remember that life is more than this child who has died. As important as this child is to you, and as much as you feel pain over his or her death, your marriage relationship is important too.

Howard - TCF Norman, OK





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## "IT WILL ONLY END IN TEARS"

Life has changed for us and, because of this, our relationships have changed, with everyone, including our partners.

As a child, whenever I became very excited, such as at a birthday party, my mother always said, "It will only end in tears", and she was usually right. That phrase comes to mind now. One of the many difficult areas of life now we are bereaved parents (how I hate that phrase!) is in our relationship with our partner, our husband or wife. The relationship as a whole is rocked to its foundations, as are our beliefs and expectations, and however rock-solid the marriage or partnership has been prior to the death, the stresses placed on the relationship all too often can result in alienation or divorce.

No doubt you have heard from the non-bereaved - "It's good you have each other." Good you have each other! In reality, what 'good' are we to each other? How does one grieving parent support and comfort the other?

Very little is written about parental relationships following a death. Most of us don't usually talk of our relationships, and particularly our 'sex lives', and to do so when we are hurting, vulnerable and confused is unthinkable, but I'm sure we must.

At my first TCF Conference, I joined a discussion group on relationships. We were twelve women and 1 couldn't believe my ears. These eleven other mums were saying exactly what I felt. However good the physical side of marriage had been prior to the death of our child, we now had little interest or desire to 'make love'. That part of us was frozen deep within and the very act which created our child became sinister and unwelcome. I think we all wanted 'love' but the physical activity of 'making love' was difficult, uncomfortable and frightening.

Now I am not saying all women feel like this, but many do. Many mothers and fathers receive great comfort and peace from 'love-making'. Indeed, to many, sexual activity relaxes and relieves stress, but when one partner wishes to 'love' and the other does not, the already-strained relationship strains even further.

How then do we cope with this 'battle of the sexes'? I wish I knew, I think like everything else in our bereavement, we have to face it. There's no easy way and it's the old chestnut - communication - again. To communicate your true feelings is so very difficult and to understand your feelings is even more so. Talk, explain, talk, and try to understand.

We have all felt the burden of guilt. Guilt about what has happened, guilt about being alive, guilt at enjoying life's experiences. This guilt could be directed at yourself or your partner and perhaps you feel you don't want life to be as it was.

Some families rarely touch. Touch can heal. However, when that touching changes from comfort to desire, fear may step in. One day at a time, one step at a time, then perhaps one and half steps back, that is how we adjust to our child's death. I believe we must pamper ourselves, treat each other gently and nurture the love that is already there.

It's four years and now for us, and it's not been easy. I have a loving and patient husband and I want to love him. 'Sex' will never be the same again. I'm different, he's different, so really it would be illogical to think that such an intimate side of life wouldn't change.

I usually 'end in tears'. Not tears of distress, but tears of love - love for my husband, love for my son, and of course, love for my beautiful daughter.

by Jane Morris, Derbyshire, Queensland Australia TCF



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## 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](mailto: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](http://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.

January 2010

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



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of the



Pikes Peak Region