



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

July, 2009

## 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.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Our meetings would not be possible if it weren't for the kindness of the staff and volunteers at the **First Baptist Church of Colorado Springs**. We would like to thank them for their ongoing support of our Chapter by providing a meeting place every month.



DATE Time	EVENT Monthly Topic	WHERE
July 16 7 pm	General Meeting Open Sharing	First Baptist Church
August 20 7 pm	General Meeting Open Sharing	First Baptist Church
August 29 Noon	Balloon Launch Remembrance	Monument Valley Park

### 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



### MEMORIAL BALLOON LAUNCH

The Pikes Peak Chapter of The Compassionate Friends invites you to join us at its **Annual Memorial Balloon Release** on Saturday, August 29th, 2009. The balloons will be released at 12:00 PM in the park area just west of the swimming pool in Monument Valley Park. If you cannot attend and would like to release a balloon in your child's memory or the memory of other children, call Laraine Anderson at 719-351-7653 or email her at [lason56@yahoo.com](mailto:lason56@yahoo.com). Every balloon released will have the name of a child who has died and a personal message, if you desire. Please join us to celebrate the life of your child. Refreshments will be served.



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## 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)*

Do you have a poem or a prayer, story or picture that you would like to share? We 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.

## Do Real Men Attend TCF Meetings?

It has often bothered me that more men and persons of cultural minorities don't attend TCF meetings. I know there are social and cultural constraints that inhibit many bereaved people from seeking outside help or support. Being both a man and a member of an ethnic group, I know very well the false pride that often restrains us from admitting we are not as self-sufficient as we want others to believe. We are taught (men in particular) at a young age not to reveal when we are hurt. We must be "strong" and "brave" and "silent".

Stoic endurance is really not unique in any culture. The British call it "keeping a stiff upper lip". The Japanese call it "gaman". Hispanics pride themselves on the ability to "aguantar". In the U.S., it is embodied in the Puritan ethic.

When I began attending TCF meetings regularly, I wondered for a long time whether I was a "real" man. Was I less macho than my brothers? Couldn't I handle my grief in solitary? The answers, I finally decided were Yes, but maybe.

Maybe I could have adjusted to my son's death by myself. Maybe I could have shunned the possibilities of self-destructive behavior, drunkenness, drug abuse, wild living or the unraveling of my family life without TCF. Maybe I could have dealt alone with all the anger, despair and depression. Fortunately, I didn't have to. I really admit I wasn't very enthusiastic about going to my first TCF meeting. I imagined a group of people sitting around, crying on each other's shoulders and bemoaning their cruel fates. Instead, I found people, who were hurting as much as me; who, like me, were angry; who also felt depressed - but who were working very hard to mend the tattered fabric of their lives. I soon discovered that this was a place where I could talk about my grief and still feel safe about it. Nobody was going to think me less than a man for not getting over my son's death in a few months.

TCF doesn't promise or offer any quick fixes. There are no magic words or formulas to take away your grief. Whatever "magic" takes place, I know now, happens slowly. I don't believe it's possible for a bereaved parent to "forget", but I think TCF's support and understanding help make it easier for us to go on with our lives.

To all you hurting people who have never attended a TCF meeting, I urge you to give it a try. Attend two or three meetings and see if some of the "magic" doesn't rub off on you. You can't hurt any worse than you are hurting now! TCF is for any and all bereaved parents --- men and women, all races and people of any or no religious faith. The only thing everyone at TCF has in common is the death of a child and how terrible it feels.

Steve Perez, TCF Denver CO



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## REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN ON THEIR BIRTHDAYS

*On the advice of the TCF national office, we are only including the month and date – not year – of birthdays and anniversary dates.*

<b><u>Child's Name</u></b> <b><u>Age at Death</u></b>	<b><u>Date of Birth</u></b> <b><u>Date of Death</u></b>	<b><u>Cause of Death</u></b>	<b><u>Parent /</u></b> <b><u>Compassionate Friend</u></b>
Ryan Thompson 2 years	Jul 1 Sep 17	Swimming pool accident	Yvette & Bob Thompson
Karen Sue Crawford 17 years	Jul 4 Jun 23	Cancer	Joy Andrews
Michael Jeffrey Waller 26 years	Jul 4 Mar 10	Army vehicle accident	Jeanie Young
Sean Thompson 25 years	Jul 5 Feb 26	Pedestrian-motor vehicle	Rick Korcsog & Frankie Thompson
Lisa Elaine Berns 2 months	Jul 6 Sep 6	SIDS	Robert (R.J.) & Lynn Berns
Kyle Joe Manning 12 years	Jul 7 Jun 19	Hurlers Syndrome	Carol & Don Manning
Blake Smith 1 year	Jul 8 Jul 17	Drowning	Brian Smith
Anthony James "Tony" Pisor 26 years	Jul 10 Jun 28	Surgery complications	Cynthia Pisor-Zapel
Cristoval Ornelas 1 day	Jul 13 Jul 13	Stillborn	Annette & Chris Ornelas
Travis Holappa 25 years	Jul 14 Jul 25	Kidnapping / Murder	Kim & Terry Packa
Sarah Katherine Stouber 6 days	Jul 18 Jul 24	Diaphragmatic hernia	JoAnn Labenberg
Cris Cruz 23 years	Jul 19 Oct 29	Car accident	Henrietta Madrid
Katie Steckiel 1 year	Jul 19 Nov 8	Croup	Wendy Steckiel
Tiffany Maxwell 35 years	Jul 20 Mar 7	Lung & heart disease	Diane Maxwell
Ryan Sayers 21 years	Jul 20 Jun 16	Lightning strike	Tom & Kate Sayers
Justin William Winner 13 years	Jul 21 Nov 5	Gunshot wound	Dale & Rosanne Winner
Brian Patrick Adair 14 years	Jul 21 Apr 4	Celiac disease	Duane & Mary Adair
Arthur Lipphardt Jr 25 years	Jul 23 Jun 15	Motorbike Accident	Art & Chris Lipphardt
Craig Matthews 31 years	Jul 24 Feb 4		Cathy Genato
Amanda Stocchero 16 years	Jul 24 Jul 19	Epilepsy	Sandy Stocchero
Keltryn Lenae Brinkman 3 years	Jul 25 Mar 19	Cancer	Jim & Judy Brinkman



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## BIRTHDAYS CONTINUED

<u>Child's Name</u> <u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u> <u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Parent /</u> <u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Michael Williams Greist 12 years	Jul 28 Nov 1	Car/bike accident	Allan & Judy Greist
Toby Ferrer 5 years	Jul 28 Apr 8		Maria Hymes
Scott Michael Gerwatowski 22 years	Jul 28 Feb 4	Heart attack	Linda Gerwatowski Helen and Walter Rakocy
Michelle Howie 32 years	Jul 31 Jan 12	Several illnesses	Annette Howie

## REMEMBERING OUR CHILDREN ON THEIR ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child's Name</u> <u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u> <u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Andrew Paul Whiteman 21 years	Aug 27 Jul 2	Motorcycle accident	Lyle Whiteman
Heidi Susanne Wolfe 20 years	Apr 6 Jul 3	Motorcycle accident	David & Karen Wolfe
Adam Roy Hodges 6 years	Jan 3 Jul 4	Car accident	JoAnn Ewing
Nicole Megan Yagi 10 years	Jan 6 Jul 5	Car accident	Jackie & Dennis Yagi
Jay Aguanno 19 years	Feb 12 Jul 7	Accidental overdose	Jean Aguanno
Shannon Diane McMahon 17 years	Nov 17 Jul 9	Vehicle accident	Robert & Jeanette McMahon
Angela Gisela Martinez 34 years	May 5 Jul 11		Maria Hymes
Jack C. Jefferson 6 years	Oct 8 Jul 11	Viral meningo-encephalitis	John & Dena Jefferson
Cristoval Ornelas 1 day	Jul 13 Jul 13	Stillborn	Annette & Chris Ornelas
Chris Skaggs 16 years	Oct 28 Jul 13		Carl, Annette & Felicia Cordova Ernest & Tanya Skaggs
Philip Dix 25 years	Sep 14 Jul 14	Sudden Heart Failure	Ann Dix
Zachary Dean Glenn 3 years	Feb 18 Jul 14	Accidental strangulation	Janice Bren Kristin & Larry Glenn
Kristopher Lohrmeyer 18 years	Dec 13 Jul 16	Murdered	Dan and Lori Lohrmeyer
Blake Smith 1 year	Jul 8 Jul 17	Drowning	Brian Smith
Jeanne Burroughs Widmar 33 years	Jun 20 Jul 18	Cancer	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Roy Polhemus	Jul 18		Kathleen Landry Edward Pohlemus



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## ANNIVERSARIES CONTINUED

<u>Child's Name</u> <u>Age at Death</u>	<u>Date of Birth</u> <u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Compassionate Friend</u>
Ryan Rickman 11 years	Feb 11 Jul 19	Auto accident	Jean Rickman
Amanda Stocchero 16 years	Jul 24 Jul 19	Epilepsy	Sandy Stocchero
Michael Benjamin Decker 18 years	May 16 Jul 20	Gunshot	Mary & Jerry Decker
Travis Grimmer 30 years	Nov 20 Jul 23	Cancer	Mary Lou Grimmer
Cathleen Bartlett Maxwell 6 years	Mar 17 Jul 24	Auto / pedestrian accident	Dick & Marty Maxwell
Sarah Katherine Stouber 6 days	Jul 18 Jul 24	Diaphragmatic hernia	JoAnn Labenberg
Travis Holappa 25 years	Jul 14 Jul 25	Kidnapping / Murder	Kim & Terry Packa
Kari Ann Kirt 15 years	Mar 28 Jul 26	Car accident	Lon and Andrea Kirt
Benjamin Stewart Easton 22 years	Jun 3 Jul 28	Car accident	Susan Stewart
Christie Fike 32 years	Apr 2 Jul 28	Leukemia	Shirley & Dan Emerson
Derek Matthew Chandler 15 years	Dec 4 Jul 29	ATV Hit by a truck	Billy & Cherie Chandler
Jimmy Schmidt 13 years	Jun 28 Jul 30	Leukemia	Jim & Laurie Schmidt
Jonathan Steven Gabriel 5 years	Apr 19 Jul 31	Leukemia	Steve & Jane Gabriel
Patricia Spain Boden 39 years	Apr 18 Jul 31	Auto accident	Margie Spain



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS  
**Walk to  
Remember**  
Portland, Oregon  
August 9, 2009



Whether or not you walk to remember, you have an opportunity this year to once again help The Compassionate Friends fund its programs through the **Friends Asking Friends**. This will be the fourth year for participation and every year more and more money is raised to support the organization and its outreach efforts. It's very simple to participate. First, visit the Walk to Remember website at [www.tcfwalktoremember.org](http://www.tcfwalktoremember.org). At the site, you can choose your level of involvement - you can create an individual, team, or chapter group, support one of our already established teams, or make a general donation to the Walk to Remember in memory of a special child. Many local TCF chapters are participating in this fundraiser. All funds raised by chapters stay in the local chapter except for 15% which covers administration costs of the program.

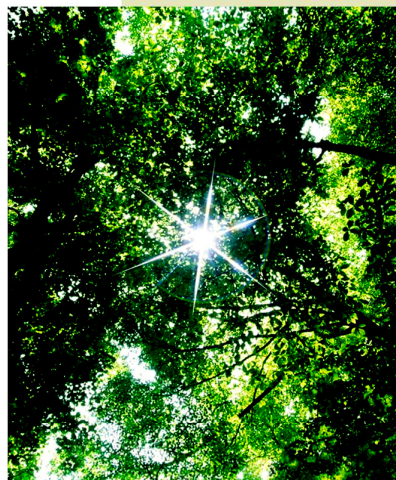




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## SUIDS Family Support Group



**Time: 6:30-8:30pm**  
**Day: 3rd Monday of each month beginning 3/16/09**  
**Location: St. Francis**  
**825 E. Pikes Peak**  
**5th Floor**  
**Summit Room**

This group offers grief support for parents, families, friends & caregivers who have been affected by the sudden, unexpected loss of an infant or toddler.

**Angel Eyes: (888) 285-7437**

**[Tena@angeleyes.com](mailto:Tena@angeleyes.com)**

**St. Francis: Leslie Schwender (719) 776-5855**

The meeting will be facilitated by Susan Backus Ph.D.  
This meeting is for adults only.  
No child care will be provided.

## SUPPORT GROUP 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? Our next meeting will be July 16th.

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.

## Love Gift Donations

Our chapter exists entirely through your donations which are tax deductible. Our largest expense is the printing and mailing of this newsletter, which is distributed to over 325 readers. 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 a 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 in "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.**

## 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**



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## SHARED THOUGHTS ON ANGER

Anger is probably one of the worst stages of grief. It is a raw emotion; we do not choose to be angry. It won't go away by denying it. It can be very mild or a rage that will almost destroy us. Our anger intensifies when we feel something, or someone, should have prevented the death or done more for our loved one. We almost feel it is our duty to lash out at what, or who, let us down. Many times our anger isn't about how they died; it's just the fact they died.

Because the situation we are in seems so senseless, and we feel so helpless, we search for a reason for our tragedy. We want to understand why it happened, but seldom are there answers.

We often feel anger when those around us won't allow us to be human and expect us to bottle up our feelings and pretend they don't exist, so they don't have to deal with our pain. They justify being angry at a broken appliance or disabled car, but can't allow us to be angry when such a large part of our future has been taken from our lives. We can't verbally express it because it is not socially acceptable, and it sometimes results in an explosion toward those around us. This causes anger to be misdirected. This is when it becomes very destructive. It is most important to seek the right place and people to vent our feelings. We need to seek someone who is concerned, sympathetic, and will not pass judgment, but will gently make suggestions, and direct our anger into a positive direction. (this sounds as though we need a Compassionate Friend).

It is very healthy to be angry if we express it and don't get stuck there. Many question their supreme being and the role they played. I feel this is a form of communicating, which can be necessary for some to obtain peace. We all take different roads to reach healing.

We have to face the pain in all areas of grief that we deal with. I needed to spend time with me. After much healing I asked myself what new traits or knowledge have I acquired that could possibly help me and make a better world for other bereaved parents. The one thing that I needed most was to "stay around" to say, "Grieve in your own way, because how you grieve is probably best for you". The pain did soften, and eventually I was glad there was a tomorrow. I did not believe that this was possible in my early stages of grief; you probably won't believe it either, but I have to tell you anyway.

God Bless,  
Marie Hofmockel, TCF Valley Forge



Carol Manning in memory of

**Kyle Joe Manning**

**DOB: July 7th - Anniversary: June 19th**

**Remembering you - Always.**

Arlene & Charles Burroughs in memory of

**Jeanne Burroughs Widmar**

**DOB: June 20th - Anniversary: July 18th**

**James Michael Burroughs**

**DOB: September 29th - Anniversary: June 24th**

## Forgive Until Forever

Grieving is a fierce and overwhelming expression of love thrust upon us by a deep and hurtful loss. Yet, grieving is frequently such an entanglement of feelings that we often fail to recognize that ultimately forgiveness must be an integral part of our grief and our healing. For what is LOVE, if forgiveness is silent within us?

We learn to forgive our children for dying, ourselves for not preventing it. We begin to forgive God or the fate we see ruling the universe. We start to forgive friends and relatives for abandoning us in their own bewilderment over the onslaught of emotions they sense in our words and behavior.

I believe we must be open to the balm of forgiveness. Through its expression in our lives, be it through thought, word or deed, we find small ways to seek life once more.

Deep within us, forgiveness is capable of treading the wasteland of our souls to help us feel again the love that has not died.

It is the beginning of release from the dominance of pain, not from the continual hurt of missing those we have lost, but from lacking the fullness of the love we shared with our child. That love lives with strength inside ourselves, and yet our beings are so entrapped in a whirling vortex of anger, despair, frustration, abandonment and depression that we often feel it only lightly.

Let us all heed the quiet message heard so softly in that maelstrom of the spirit. Forgive...forgive...forgive until forever. Let love enfold our anguish, helping us to learn to grow and strive beyond this hour to a rich tomorrow.

Don Hackett ~ TCF, Hingham, Massachusetts

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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

### You Are My Sunshine

As a child, I learned to sing on road trips in the family car. We sang "She'll be Coming 'Round the Mountain", "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and my favorite: You are my sunshine, my only sunshine, You make my happy when skies are gray. You'll never know, dear, how much I love you. Please, don't take my sunshine away.

Since my son's death, whenever I hear this song, I mentally change the spelling to 'son-shine.' When he left, skies surely turned gray. Gray skies continue to visit me in random moments of grief to the point that at times, it's impossible to see the sun. And when summer brings sunny days, it breaks my heart that he can't be here with me to light up my life. Grief enhances our senses so that the absence of light allows us to perceive our need for light. A good example came one dark and dismal day as I sat reading, a part of me dwelling on my missing child. Ever so softly, warmth crept across my outstretched leg. I shot a glance in its direction and discovered a stream of golden sunshine. In my preoccupation, I hadn't noticed the parting clouds outside--the transformation from gloom to gleam. If I had not been sitting quietly, thinking of my child, I would have missed the gift--missed an opportunity to find joy in that brief moment when 'son-shine' paid an unexpected visit. What a blessed gift it is to remember my child with joy.

There's a scientific reason that a sunny day brings some joy and energy to our lives. Bright light makes a difference to the brain chemistry. Lack of light causes a condition called Seasonal Affective Disorder. SAD doesn't occur only in the dark winter months. If you work the night shift or you spend all day in an office, wear sunglasses outside, spend your days off in a dimly lit home you may not be getting adequate light. All the more reason to grasp at every golden moment that comes our way.

The true lifesavers in my grief journey are those small surprising occurrences that often go unnoticed. When memories arrive on beams of joyous sunlight, I'm learning to take notice, to savor, then stock pile the simple pleasures that somehow appear in spite of heavy days. Sometimes light comes from deep within our hearts. Sometimes friends arrive with small rays of hope, guiding us through the darkest hours. Summer brings moonlit evenings, the flash of lightening across an endless sky, fireflies in a Mason jar, the beam of a flashlight piercing the darkness, yellow butterflies at the break of day; all reminders that our children were bright and full of life.

We are on a dark journey. At the same time, we are on a righteous search for light, grasping at hope wherever we find it. When gray days return and winter seems endless, remember-- it's not. As grief changes, we learn to survive the darkness, believing that light lies ahead. May sunshine bless you with small, precious moments of hope and joy in the coming summer days.

Carol Clum ~ TCF, Medford, OR