

April, 2012



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



Upcoming Events

April 19th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

May 17th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

Special Guest - Alan Pedersen previewing his DVD *Walking Through Grief*

May 26th - Annual Balloon Launch & Bar-b-que

The Pikes Peak Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is please to announce the advanced screening by ALAN PEDERSEN of his new DVD *Walking Through Grief*. In addition Alan will perform a few of his song which made him internationally recognized and talk about the making of the DVD.

Walking Through Grief is a powerful documentary style DVD presentation on the subject of grief and loss, hosted by Alan Pedersen and Dr. Darcie Sims. Alan is nationally recognized as one of the most inspirational speakers and presenters on grief and loss. As a bereaved father and an award winning singer/songwriter, Alan has recorded 4 successful CD's of original songs about the grief journey. Dr. Darcie Sims is a top selling author and one of the foremost educators and presenters on bereavement in the world.

Walking Through Grief is unlike any program ever produced. This 70 minute DVD tenderly chronicles the journey of several contributors who have experienced great loss in their lives and have once again found hope. It is informative, inspirational, and entertaining, filled with wit and wisdom wrapped around practical tools and advice. This program will greatly benefit anyone who has experienced the death of someone they love, and all who want to better understand the grief journey.

Be one of the first to view **Walking Through Grief** at this special advanced screening.

www.GriefAndBeyond.com

www.Facebook.com/GriefAndBeyond



Pikes Peak Chapter Steering Committee

CHAPTER LEADER

LARAIN ANDERSON

Son, Michael Edward Anderson

MAILINGS & DATABASE

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL

Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

TREASURER

FRANK SCHAGER

Daughter, Kira Ann Schager

NEWSLETTER EDITOR & EMAILINGS

STEWART & LETA LEVETT

Son, Aaron Paul Levett

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON

Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

LEONIE CRAMER

Son, Julian Anthony King

Don't miss this opportunity to watch this special DVD presentation and get a chance to hear Alan sing.

Space will be limited so please arrive promptly to insure your spot.



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 April 19th, 2012.

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.

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 - www.tcfcolorado.org

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS MEMORIAL DAY & PICNIC BALLOON LAUNCH

The Compassionate Friends of the Pikes Peak Region is very excited to once again host our annual barbeque picnic and balloon launch on Saturday, May 26th, Memorial Day Weekend.

We will start the afternoon at 1 p.m. with our barbeque potluck for all in attendance. The event will be held once again at TCF Steering Committee Members Bob & Yvette Thompson's house with the meats and drinks being provided by The Pikes Peak Chapter of TCF. Our Memorial Day Balloon Launch honoring our children which will start following our lunch and time to socialize. RSVP's are suggested so we may plan seating and food. Be sure to mark your calendars now for this annual event.

To RSVP you may email Laraine Anderson at lason56@yahoo.com or Stew Levett at stewart@archangelgifts.com. Please let us know how many in your family will be attending. For those who continue to receive our newsletter the old fashioned way, you may RSVP directly to Laraine by leaving her a message at 719-351-7653. Should you forget to RSVP, no worries; We would like for you to come and enjoy the food and fellowship of the other TCF members anyway.

Last years picnic and was a huge success so don't miss this years opportunity to have a nice picnic lunch, talk with friends and help memorialize your child with our balloon launch.

Please bring a side dish or dessert, enough to feed your family and to share with a few others. We hope to see you there!





Online Support

The Compassionate Friends offers “virtual chapters” through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. Please check the schedule for dates and times of the sessions.

Note: Times posted on the schedule are based upon Eastern Time.

www.compassionatefriends.org

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

CHAPTER LEADER	
LARAINA 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

Lending Library

Our chapter offers a lending library with a variety of books on grief and bereavement. We encourage you to browse our library and feel free to check out a book to take home with you. We only ask that you sign out the books and return them in a timely manner so others can have the benefit of them as well. If you have read a book that was helpful to you and would like to share it with others, donating that book in your child's name is a wonderful way to honor them. Stickers are placed in these books to note whose memory they are given in.



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



Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Michael Robert Pugh	Apr 2	Robert & Donna Pugh
Christie Fike	Apr 2	Shirley & Dan Emerson
Kaitlin Bartlett	Apr 3	Kim Bartlett
Michael Zwirlein	Apr 3	Chris Zwirlein
Steven James Gantz	Apr 4	Diana Gantz
Mike Mozo	Apr 5	Valerie Kirchhofer
Heidi Susanne Wolfe	Apr 6	David & Karen Wolfe
Joseph Gentry Richardson	Apr 6	Jack & Miriam Gentry
Angel Leah Kelley	Apr 7	James L. Kelley
Acacia Barbara Clen	Apr 8	Cindy Santarte
Jonathan Frazier	Apr 9	Kimberly Argo
Tommy Kinslow	Apr 9	Pam Kinslow
Julie Bankston	Apr 13	Peggy Bankston
Andrew Evan Neely	Apr 13	Tamara Noble
Zachary Nicholas Hoke	Apr 16	Debra & Steve Hoke
Patricia Spain Boden	Apr 18	Margie Spain
Jonathan Steven Gabriel	Apr 19	Steve & Jane Gabriel
Zach Joseph	Apr 22	Garry & Renee Joseph
Tyrone Elliott Bautista	Apr 22	Rosemary Devney
Ja-Mickeal James Lane	Apr 23	Lara & Kenneth Lane
Sean William Staat	Apr 23	Susan & William Staat
Miguel Meza	Apr 24	Susan Meza
Steven Miller	Apr 27	Mike Miller
Juan Marine	Apr 29	Pamela Marine
Micah David Smilser	Apr 30	Robin Myers
Sara M. Losasso	Apr 30	Cindy Losasso
Kaden France	Apr 30	Jeremy & Sarah France



NEW CHAPTER LEADER SOUGHT

Last month we announced the upcoming departure of our Chapter Leader, Laraine Anderson in the month of June. The normal term for a Chapter Leader is two years and Laraine has been our leader for nearly four years. Laraine will continue as part of our Steering Committee and will coach her replacement for a minimum of six months in order to achieve a smooth transition for our group.

Laraine's dedication and passion to The Compassionate Friends has shown in her growth as our leader and, indeed, the strong growth and direction she has taken our chapter. Thank you Laraine!

If you are interested in helping others and would like to become our chapter leader, please contact any of our steering committee members or Laraine at lasan56@yahoo.com or Stew Levett at stewart@archangelgifts.com.



Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Richard McShan	23 years	Apr 1	Paul & Angelika McShan
Erin Marie McCallister	3 weeks	Apr 2	Steve & Carol McCallister
Matthew John McCallister	22 years	Apr 3	Steve & Carol McCallister
Brian Patrick Adair	13 years	Apr 4	Duane & Mary Adair
Skylar Lynn Boyle Ringland	22 years	Apr 4	Cathleen Boyle
Abraham Daniel Boukhari	18 years	Apr 4	David & Deborah Woodrow
Ronald Eugene Peterson	15 years	Apr 5	Ron Peterson
Kristie Diaz	26 years	Apr 7	Julie Diaz
Sarah Jo Card Ferrara	32 years	Apr 7	Carol & Andrew Ferrara
Toby Ferrer	4 years	Apr 8	Maria Hymes
Douglas Radowski	40 years	Apr 8	Patricia Radowski & Renee Roettger
Lindsey Everding	18 years	Apr 10	Trena Everding & Dave Kiefer
Rocke Lee Corley	42 years	Apr 11	Jeanne Corley
Patrcia Elliott	19 years	Apr 11	Connie & Dave Elliott
Lindsay Jean Morris	20 years	Apr 12	Linda Morris
Michael Robert Pugh	13 years	Apr 12	Robert & Donna Pugh
Eric Johnson	22 years	Apr 13	Gary Johnson
Michael Eck	2 weeks	Apr 14	Patricia Eck
Dennis Lynn Gerringe	16 years	Apr 16	Kim Gerringe
Sarah Sunshine Wedekind	30 years	Apr 16	Lorry Pearson
Richard "Richie" Petras	3 years	Apr 16	Richard Petras
Acacia Barbara Clen	13 years	Apr 16	Cindy Santarte
Naomi Katherine Schwartz	1 year	Apr 16	Tim & Sonoko Schwartz
Dawn Michelle Wiley	21 years	Apr 18	Luanne Wiley
Jalynn Cameron	4 months	Apr 19	Jessica Cameron
Miguel Meza	20 years	Apr 19	Susan Meza
Leah Rae Wiley	23 years	Apr 21	Russ & Kelly Wiley
Gary Carlson	44 years	Apr 25	Phil & Rose Carlson
James Bishara	19 years	Apr 27	Phebe Bishara
Micah David Smilser	1 day	Apr 30	Robin Myers

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. Love Gift donations should be sent directly to our treasurer, Frank Schager 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?*



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

Lonely, Hurting Children

“How is your Mom doing?” is the basic question asked.

Sometimes an inquiry about Dad, but so sadly seldom.

They do not ask the siblings, they must be so sad.

True, the depth of our loss brings agony and pain.

But the children, the dear children, really do hurt again and again.

They lost a brother or a sis, their pain is just as real.

Frustration, anger, and fear, they too go through such hell.

Who is there to comfort them, to give a word of care?

Everyone is more concerned about the parent's welfare.

While siblings drown in their hurt and pain.

No one to hold them near and let them know they are not to blame.

To uplift and ease their minds from fear.

Linda J. Camper-TCF,
Pikes Peak Chapter

In This Place

Brave hearts, you are here. You have traveled a dreadful distance. You have come, seeking solace, understanding, hope, threads to patch what death's so cruelly undone. In this place you can relax and breathe . . . the coats of others' expectations taken off.

Walk into these few hours as into an oasis where draughts of love and memories can be quaffed.

In this place all names can be spoken; in this place each one's story may be told.

We will not be discouraged by your sorrow; in this place ALL feelings, we enfold.

Here laughter does not mean we are forgetting; we do not count how many tears are shed.

Both fuel us, fellow travelers, give us courage, for the long and winding road that is ahead.

And those we love are pleased we are together.

They smile down on us, and bless this day, glad for every tiny step we're taking and send their light to guide us on our way.

Traveling with us as we journey onward, sending strength for what the miles may bring, they are a part of everything we do that matters - in every dance we dance, and every song we sing.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry from *Catching the Light* -

Coming Back to Life after the Death of a Child Written for TCF meetings

A DEATH HAS OCCURRED

A death has occurred,
and everything is changed by this event.

We are painfully aware that life can never be the same, that yesterday is over, that relationships once rich have ended.

But there is another way to look upon this truth.

If life went on the same without the presence

of the one who died, we could only conclude that the life we here remember made no contribution, filled no space, meant nothing.

The fact that this person left behind a place

that cannot be filled is a high tribute to this individual.

Life can be the same after a trinket has been lost, but never the same after the loss of a treasure.

Paul Iron

*The Compassionate Friends-
Savannah, GA*

BECAUSE

Because you can't feel me,
doesn't mean I'm not there.
Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm not near.
Because you can't hear me,
doesn't mean I don't speak.
Because you can't see me,
doesn't mean I'm out of reach.
Because I am dead,
doesn't mean I'm gone.

Beth Oldani
TCF, Arlington Heights, IL



HEALING WORDS

I Said I Could Not Do It, But I Did!

Exactly 8:05 a.m., Friday, July 9, 1971, was the last time I looked at my eight year-old daughter with her eyes open. I walked beside her as they rolled her down the hall to the elevator that would take her down to the operating room for her simple, routine tonsillectomy.

At exactly 1:30 that afternoon, I was told she was dead. I said then I could not live a day without her. I just could not do it.

BUT I DID

During the drive home, I said I would never be able to walk in that house without her.

BUT I DID

As I walked in that empty house, someone quickly ran and shut her door—the door to her room where she kept all the things she loved. The room where she played and slept. I said I could never go in there again. I said I could not do it.

BUT I DID

When they said, “Come, let’s go to the funeral, the Rosary, the Mass,” I said I could not do it.

BUT I DID

For months that followed, I just knew my life would never be the same, and it wasn’t. All the things I said I could not do did get done. All the life I said I could not live did get lived. Differently, but I did live. Now comes today—16 years later. I have to admit, I had to look it up to be sure. Sixteen years! Palmer Ann would have been 24 years old. I had to stop and think about that, too. I stood before her portrait today and stared a long, long time, and yes, I remembered the pain with total recall of July 9, 1971. I reached out, touching what’s left of my memory of her and I offered up a prayer of Thanksgiving to God—a prayer of gratitude, for giving me such a beautiful eight years with a lovely daughter, and most of all, the opportunity to be able to stand there and realize that I had said I could not do it, but I did.

YES, I DID

And each month when I come to a Compassionate Friends meeting with you, the new member, I share the pain that I know you are feeling—that hopelessness of the future. I smile to myself, because inside I know a secret—you will be okay. You will touch again, love again, laugh again, and live again. After all, I said I could not do it, but I did and...

YOU WILL, TOO!

Betz Crump

TCF, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Unconditional Caring

My son Philip died in August of 1994, when he was 26 years old. He died by suicide, influenced by a genetic illness, bipolar mood disorder (Manic Depression). I will remember how I flinched inwardly when people began referring to Philip’s having “committed suicide.” It seemed to diminish my wonderful son, to make him into what he never was — a kind of criminal.

I wanted people to remember the beauty of his soul, yet what they focused on was the shocking way in which he died.

So it has been personally important to me to learn that TCF has made a change in the language it uses related to suicide. TCF now uses the terms “died of suicide” in all publications and presentations.

The new, emotionally neutral language helps to lift the burden of stigma from all of us whose children or siblings died by suicide. It gives us strength and helps us heal.

If your child or sibling has died in one of society’s less “acceptable” ways — by suicide, murder, alcoholism, from a drug overdose, AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, or in prison, do know that TCF does not accept society’s stigmas. There is no room for blame or condemnation when all our hearts are aching for the children we no longer have. We honor your child and your grief, no matter the cause of death.

Similarly, if you are a parent or sibling who may feel “other” in our oft judgmental society, please know that you will not be “other” in TCF. We welcome you with understanding and compassion, whatever your age, your race, your ethnicity, or religion (or lack of). We welcome you. And if you have endured the most terrible tragedy, if you have had more than one child or sibling die, or have lost all of your children or siblings, you are welcome.

By Kitty Reeve, TCF Mann/San Francisco, CA

April, 2012

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



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