

February, 2012



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



## Upcoming Events

February 16th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church  
March 15th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

## 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 February 16th, 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.**

## Pikes Peak Chapter Steering Committee

### CHAPTER LEADER

LARAINÉ 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

## 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?*

## 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 - [www.tcfcolorado.org](http://www.tcfcolorado.org)

Colorado Springs - [www.tcfcolorado.org/coloradosprings](http://www.tcfcolorado.org/coloradosprings)



### 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](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

### WE'RE NOW ON FACEBOOK

I have recently started a Facebook Group called The Compassionate Friends of the Pikes Peak Region.

Through this medium I hope to be able to share information, news, poems, activities, photos and stories to our parents, family & friends. You, additionally, may post your photos, comments and feelings, provide feedback to our chapter about the group, newsletter or meetings.

Once a member, you may add others to our group by clicking “Add Friend” under the member listing.

I will accept all requests as long as each member conducts themselves according to what The Compassionate Friends is about, “Supporting Family After a Child Dies.”

Use the following link to view our page;  
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/233806390012780/233818376678248/>



### TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

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

### 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

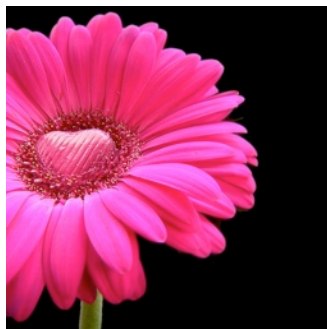
<b>Child's Name</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Compassionate Friend</b>
James R. Hurst	Feb 1	Kim Troeger
Karen-Jean Slade	Feb 2	Sheila Slade
Ian Matthew Anderson	Feb 2	Joann & David Butler
Adrienne Levett Berger	Feb 3	Stewart Levett
Kent Curtis Junglen	Feb 3	James Junglen
Cynthia Claypool Martin	Feb 4	Steve & Ann Claypool
Ethan Ford Mosman	Feb 5	Christi & Mike Mosman
Stephen Merle Schmoker	Feb 5	Shirley & Ralph Greer
Michael William Sarmiento	Feb 7	Donna (Sarmiento) Pugh
Tyler Glicken	Feb 8	Ginger Jones
Kimberley Dawn Leir	Feb 8	Adaline and Herb Leir
Jillian Overly	Feb 9	Dauna Overly
Samuel Hesselberg	Feb 9	Steve & Leanne Hesselberg
Ryan Rickman	Feb 11	Jean Rickman
Claire Palmer	Feb 12	Jo & Lawrence Palmer
Jay Aguanno	Feb 12	Jean Aguanno
Gary Carlson	Feb 15	Phil & Rose Carlson
Aaron Steffens	Feb 16	Lynn Nickel
Ember Maria Arthur	Feb 16	Jeanette Newville
Alyssa Eck	Feb 17	Patricia Eck
Zachary Dean Glenn	Feb 18	Kristin & Larry Glenn, Janice Bren
Chance Tyler Nichols	Feb 19	Charlie Nichols
Kendall Ford Young	Feb 20	Ford & Ann Young
Nikolas Chunn	Feb 21	Monica & Doug Chunn
Michelle Sandra Seal	Feb 23	Walter & Diana Seal
Mari Lilline Ferrara	Feb 25	Carol & Andrew Ferrara
Darrell Lewis Mitchell	Feb 27	George & Freda Mitchell
Fred Chavez	Feb 27	Annette Atchison
Jason Lamb	Feb 28	Jan Lyons-Lamb





## Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

<b>Child's Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>	<b>Compassionate Friend</b>
Paul A. Behr	2 months	Feb 1	Cynthia & Steve Behr
James Craig Stieglmeyer	25 years	Feb 2	Betty Stieglmeyer
Katie Shorkey	24 years	Feb 3	Robert & Karen Shorkey
Craig Matthews	30 years	Feb 4	Cathy Genato
Scott Michael Gerwatowski	21 years	Feb 4	Linda Gerwatowski, Helen & Walter Rakocy
James R. Hurst	5 days	Feb 5	Kim Troeger
David Allen McGough	25 years	Feb 7	Lillian McGough
Tristan Millman Troeger	25 years	Feb 7	Lisa & Joel Millman
Karen-Jean Slade	30 years	Feb 7	Sheila Slade
Patrick Casey Hildebrand	21 years	Feb 9	Dr. Jan and Judi Hildebrand
Darrell Lewis Mitchell	20 years	Feb 9	George & Freda Mitchell
Yancy Hufford	26 years	Feb 11	Patty & Larry Hufford
Steven Miller	17 years	Feb 11	Mike Miller
Amy Feight	30 years	Feb 12	Patty & Bill Feight
Noelle Pearl	17 years	Feb 13	Michelle Fleming
Peter Joseph Noel	20 years	Feb 16	Janet Noel Starritt
Eric Cowles	3 months	Feb 17	Doug & Leah Cowles
Alyssa Eck	1 day	Feb 17	Patricia Eck
Stella Elliott	6 months	Feb 17	Donna Elliott
Kent Curtis Junglen	31 years	Feb 18	James Junglen
Graham Stingley	23 years	Feb 18	Mary Winter-Stingley
Logan Lawrence	23 years	Feb 22	Janet & Edward Lawrence
Kirsten Evelyn Cornell	9 years	Feb 23	Will & Marion Cornell
Marisa Nicole Pilant	2 years	Feb 23	Stephen & Julie Pilant
Joshua Samuel Shelton	7 weeks	Feb 24	Richard & Elizabeth Jamison
Jeremy Laurence	25 years	Feb 26	Cherie Berglund
Sean Thompson	24 years	Feb 26	Ted & Sherrill Laurence
Richard Joseph Armstrong	4 years	Feb 27	Rick Korcsog & Frankie Thompson
			Chuck & Helen Armstrong





## THOUGHTFUL POEMS

Roses are Red  
Violets are Blue  
No Words Can Express  
How Much We Miss You!

### A Special Valentine

A touch of your hand  
a smile on your face  
another time, another place.

You were my girl  
I was your mom  
together we met  
the world head on.

Death cannot dim  
the memories so fine  
your place is there  
this world is mine.

But you will always be  
**MY SPECIAL VALENTINE**

Arlene Burroughs,  
TCF Pikes Peak, CO

### 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](http://www.everashleymusic.com)

### A Valentine for You, Son

I remember when you were so tiny  
that I could cradle you in my arms and  
watch you sleep -  
so oblivious to the world.

When you awoke, you'd smile at me  
and curl all of your fingers around one  
of mine. And hold on so very tightly  
that I thought you'd never let go.

Those same precious fingers curled  
themselves around my heart, too...  
and to this day, they have never let go.

You will stay in my heart forever until  
I can hold you again in Heaven

Son, I Love and miss you so much...  
Mom

TCF - Atlanta, GA

In Memory of Keith Jones

### A VALENTINE FOR YOU

There's a valentine waiting for you  
That's different from all the others.  
It's there every month at our meetings  
For fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers.  
It's envelope is made of caring.  
The glue of understanding seals it tight.  
This non-judgmental group who've been there  
Help to take away your fear and fright.  
So come join with us together.  
Read your loving message printed clear,  
In not only this month's Valentine  
But all those throughout the year.

Mary Cleckley, TCF, Atlanta, GA

### I Believe

I Believe  
That someone can die  
And still be Alive and Living.  
I Believe  
That someone can die  
And Not Be Dead.  
I Believe  
That when we talk about Our Children  
That have died,  
We keep them Alive and Living  
In our hearts, In our minds, In our souls.  
I Believe  
This is the only way We can keep them  
Alive and Living  
By talking about them.  
And Remembering.  
~ By Tommy Patrick - TCF Raleigh, NC





## HEALING WORDS

### GRIEF: OUR ACT OF LOVE

"I had a child who died." How simple these words are, yet how painful they are to say. The death of a child is the harshest blow life has to offer; it destroys our trust in the world at the most basic level. Grief is our total response to the death of a child; our body, mind, emotions and spirit all react to the loss. While many of us wish to stop the intense grief work we are doing, we find it impossible for many reasons.

First, grief is an act of love, not a lack of strength or faith. The more we loved our child, the greater will be our grief. The more integrated our lives were with the life of our child, the more we will miss his or her very presence. The intensity of our grief is often representative of our love.

Second, grief is a necessary process that we must go through in order to maintain our wholeness and sanity. If we do not grieve, we will not heal. One of the earliest and hardest lessons we bereaved parents learn is that men and women grieve differently; women, in general, grieve more openly than do men, and women, on the whole, are more comfortable verbally expressing their feelings of loss. While segments of our culture indicate it is more "manly" not to cry, we know this is not true.

Grief work also helps us to complete unfinished business with our child and close the past relationship that we had. We will never "get over" the loss of our child, nor would we ever really want to. We are who we are partly because of our relationship to that child. Our lives will always be influenced by our son or daughter, but most of us will eventually learn to live a meaningful life, despite our tragedy.

Our child will always be with us in spirit and in love, and we often feel a need to hold on to tangible items, such as toys or clothes, to maintain that feeling of closeness. But, intense grief work allows us to let go of the relationship we had and create a new relationship with our child. Our remembrances, love and feelings of oneness with our child can never be destroyed. I cannot see nor touch my Philip, but I vividly remember him. I have completed earthly mothering, but I still have an intense mother-child relationship with my son.

Grief over the death of a child is the hardest work that most of us will ever do. While we all wish for the pain to stop, we need to remember that we grieve intensely because we loved intensely. It is unrealistic to expect that grief to ever totally go away, because the love we have for our child will never go away.

Our grief is an act of love and is nothing for which we should be ashamed.

Elaine Grier - TCF, Atlanta, Georgia

### 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.

Anne Dionne – TCF Online Community Services





## *Anniversary Days Mean Saying Good-bye*

“Does it get easier?” “Will I always feel saturated with pain?” “Will I ever be happy again?”

These are questions we ask after the door has slammed and we’ve sunk into a dark and bleak pit.

These are the questions that crowd our weary bereaved minds, along with all of the “what ifs” and “whys.” Our child has died. Our world has caved in. Breathing is difficult. Misery and hopelessness are eaten with breakfast. The ache in our heart is so profound we are certain we will die of a heartache.

We dread each day without our child. Holidays approach and he is not with us to join in the fun. Her birthday arrives, without her here. And then a year since her death is about to pass.

We relive how we felt when first told our son or daughter or sibling had died. We replay in our minds how it was on that horrible day, the day we lived the worst possible nightmare.

We have what no parent wants—a death date to place next to the birth date. We call the death date, the anniversary date. It doesn’t matter what we name it, it means the same—a day that belongs to us that we wish was just another

any-ol’-day.

The years pass. We gain a little strength. We learn the bereavement ropes. We find others like us to help hold our hand on this rocky and uncertain journey of longing for our child’s voice. We try not to let others who do not understand bother us too deeply. Yet each year that date arrives.

For me it is February second, known in the USA as Groundhog Day. February second is the day I watched my son Daniel die. I told him good-bye then, although the words came out unwillingly from my mouth. No one wants to have to tell a child good-bye forever. Each February second, I light my vanilla-scented candle in memory of my tomato-picking-pee-ing-in-the-woods-watermelon-and-Little-Foot-Dinosaur-loving boy.

Each year I am acknowledging his life of four years and his cancer death. I am saying those words I never wanted to say. I am saying good-bye. After eight years, I am still not ready to say good-bye.

Yes, the pain has diminished. Yes, I can smile and laugh again. I can get through months without tears. But the hole in my heart is as real and as present as sand at the beach.

After eight years, February second is still a day I wish never came and a day I wish would never show its face again.

Because saying goodbye each year always makes a part of my heart feel chopped up and pounded.

So do the passing of years make it easier on the bereaved? I think so. But anniversary days are always filled with bleak and unique sorrow. Light the candles. If you can remember the pleasant times, do. If you can soak in the love your child has for you and you for him, do it. And when the impact of the day grips your heart, freely cry. And if you still find it hard to say good-bye, know you are not alone.

By Alice Wisler, Borrowed from *The Healing Garden* - TCF South Bend, IN



“If you practice compassion, it will benefit not only yourself, but create a positive atmosphere (around you). If you keep fear and distrust here (in your heart), you will live with suspicion and distrust and be more cautious and deep inside, you will have a lonely feeling. When we are facing problems, we deal with them with the sense we are the same human beings. If, as humans, we are happy, peaceful, more compassionate, we can overcome them.” - Dalai Lama

February, 2012

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



**Pikes Peak Chapter  
The Compassionate Friends**