

June, 2012



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

PIKES PEAK CHAPTER  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



## Upcoming Events

June 21st - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church  
July 19th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church  
August 16th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

### Pikes Peak Chapter Steering Committee

#### CHAPTER LEADER

Kimberly Argo  
Son, Jonathan Charles Frazier

#### 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/PAST CHAPTER LEADER

Laraine Asaro-Boyd  
Son, Michael Edward Anderson

#### SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON  
Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

#### SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

LEONIE CRAMER  
Son, Julian Anthony King

## 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 June 21st, 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.**

## TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

#### CHAPTER LEADER

KIMBERLY ARGO 217-0155

#### INFANT LOSS

COLLEEN & ART MANNON 535-9868

#### LEUKEMIA

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL 282-1924

#### SUICIDE

LARITA ARCHIBALD 596-2575

#### SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

RAYE WILSON (303) 814-9478

#### DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS

STEWART & LETA LEVETT 531-5488

#### TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON 573-2743

#### TEEN / YOUNG ADULT LOSS

BARB REYNOLDS 599-0772

#### GENERAL GRIEF

LARAINÉ ASARO-BOYD 351-7653



## 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)

## 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)

## LOVE GIFT DONATION

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Anniversary Date \_\_\_\_\_

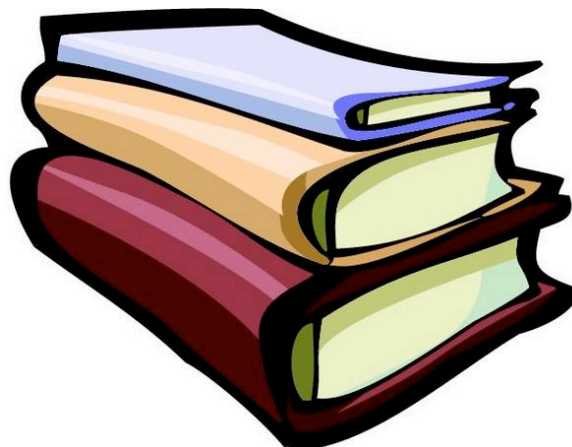
Dedication \_\_\_\_\_

Picture Enclosed: YES ☐ NO ☐

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

## 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.



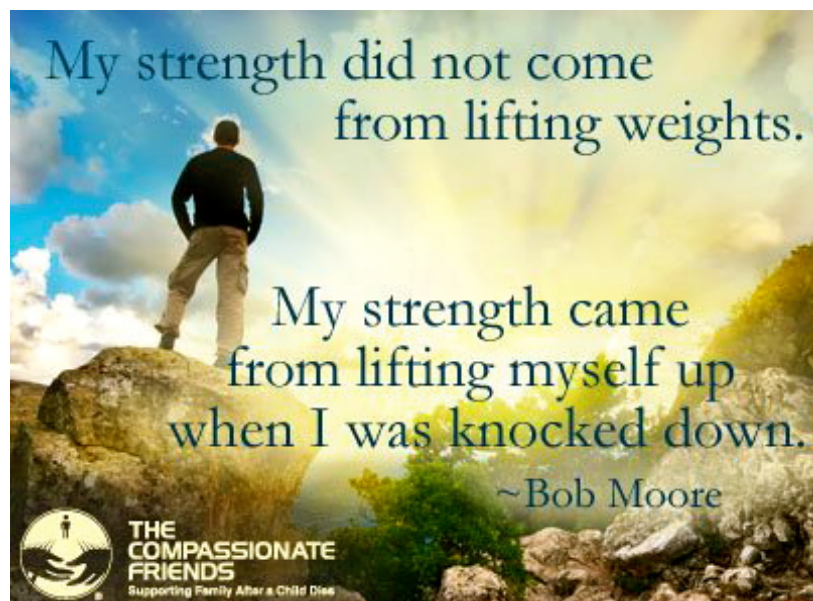


**CREDO**

We need not walk alone.  
We are The Compassionate Friends.  
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding  
and with hope.  
Our children have died at all ages and from many  
different causes;  
but our love for our children unites us.  
Your pain becomes my pain just as  
your hope becomes my hope.  
We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.  
We are a unique family because we represent many  
races and creeds.  
We are young, and we are old.  
Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful  
that we feel helpless and see no hope.  
Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength;  
some of us are struggling to find answers.  
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression;  
others radiate an inner peace.  
But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of  
The Compassionate Friends,  
it is pain we will share just as we share with each other  
our love for our children.  
We are all seeking and struggling to build  
a future for ourselves,  
but we are committed to building a future together  
as we reach out to each other in love,  
and share the pain as well as the joy  
share the anger as well as the peace,  
share the faith as well as the doubts  
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.  
**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE**

**WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.©





## Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Madalynn Ann Bergevin	Jun 3	Mollie Bergevin
Benjamin Stewart Easton	Jun 3	Susan Stewart
Renee Lee Seiberlich	Jun 6	Joe & Leda Seiberlich
John Doles	Jun 6	James & Susan Appleman
Tyler Schmidt	Jun 6	Valerie & Jeff Schmidt
Sandra Steckiel	Jun 10	Beth Steckiel
Yancy Hufford	Jun 13	Patty & Larry Hufford
Jessica Robison	Jun 14	Terri Robison
Matthew Flint	Jun 14	Cathy Flint
Andrea Mischel	Jun 14	Gary & Jerri Zimmerman
Gryphen Barber	Jun 16	Sean & Cherie Barber
Nathan Gentry	Jun 16	Susan Gentry
Laura Dean	Jun 17	Barbara Dean
Jason Bradford Pfeif	Jun 17	Chris & Brad Pfeif
Jay William Sheridan	Jun 18	Mary & Tim Sheridan
Michael Jeffery Micke	Jun 18	Alice Micke
Jim Eley	Jun 19	Judy Eley
Richard McShan	Jun 20	Paul & Angelika McShan
Jeanne Burroughs Widmar	Jun 20	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Dennis Lynn Gerringer	Jun 21	Kim Gerringer
Patrick Clabeau	Jun 23	Vince & Lori Clabeau
Robert Beynon	Jun 25	Bill & Donna Beynon
Adam J. Hurst	Jun 25	Kim Troeger
Noah R. Wilkerson	Jun 26	Sarah Wilkerson
Kirsten Evelyn Cornell	Jun 26	Will & Marion Cornell
Amy Feight	Jun 27	Patty & Bill Feight
Scott David Stiegelmeyer	Jun 27	Betty Stiegelmeyer
Jimmy Schmidt	Jun 28	Jim & Laurie Schmidt
Jason Nathaniel Lurch	Jun 28	Kathleen & John Lurch
James Bishara	Jun 28	Phebe Bishara





## Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
Evan Carara	18 years	Jun 2	Cindy & J.D. Carara
Madalynn Ann Bergevin	1 day	Jun 3	Mollie Bergevin
Billy E. Hendrickson	19 years	Jun 3	Grace & Delbert Hendrickson
Konrad Ferrar	20 years	Jun 4	Maria Hymes
Aaron Steffens	36 years	Jun 5	Lynn Nickel
Sean O'Connor	20 years	Jun 5	Dennis & Tracy O'Connor
Anton "Andy" George Horn	13 years	Jun 6	Levi & Emma Horn
Ashley Meston	14 years	Jun 7	Jerry Meston
Nicole Johnson	34 years	Jun 10	Sherry Turner
Sandra Steckiel	4 days	Jun 13	Beth Steckiel
Arthur Lipphardt Jr	24 years	Jun 15	Art & Chris Lipphardt
Gryphen Barber	1 day	Jun 16	Sean & Cherie Barber
Ryan Sayers	20 years	Jun 16	Tom & Kate Sayers
Vinnie Franz	18 years	Jun 17	Barb Franz
Michael Jeffery Micke	1 day	Jun 18	Alice Micke
Andrew Evan Neely	2 months	Jun 18	Tamara Noble
Kyle Joe Manning	11 years	Jun 19	Carol & Don Manning
Abbi Rose Starzynski	2 years	Jun 20	Sherry Starzynski
Tucker Ray Graef	14 years	Jun 21	Kathy Graef
Jackie Sanchez	22 years	Jun 21	Mary Sanchez
Nicholle Guy	14 years	Jun 22	Lezlee Guy
Karen Sue Crawford	16 years	Jun 23	Joy Andrews
James Michael Burroughs	43 years	Jun 24	Arlene & Charles Burroughs
Andrea Mischel	30 years	Jun 25	Gary & Jerri Zimmerman
Daniel J. Whisler	38 years	Jun 27	JoAnn Mowdy
Tyler Joseph Budfuloski	2 years	Jun 28	Rob & Alice Budfuloski
Anthony James "Tony" Pisor	25 years	Jun 28	Cynthia Pisor-Zapel
Stephen Lucas Tyler	19 years	Jun 28	Catherine Tyler
Kimberly Ann Hayes	22 years	Jun 30	Patty and Patrick Hayes
Noah R. Wilkerson	5 days	Jun 30	Sarah Wilkerson







## THOUGHTFUL POEMS

### Happy Father's Day

Today is Father's Day, Daddy.  
This is your special day.  
I realize this is hard for you since your  
son went away.

Today should be a happy day for fathers  
far and near.  
But for you it's not that way because not  
everyone is here.

Along with the joy you feel because you  
are a Dad,  
comes the hurt you have for the son you  
once had.

The rest of us kids realize that Wade is  
on your mind.  
The card looks so strange without his  
name signed.

WE all miss him a lot, and we really hurt  
for you.  
Even though he is gone now, his Dad is  
still you.

Although he can't tell you, the rest of us  
can.  
"Happy Father's Day, Daddy!" We do  
understand.

Delaine Reindel, TCF, Houston, TX

### What Makes A Dad

God took the strength of a mountain,  
The majesty of a tree,  
The warmth of a summer sun,  
The calm of a quiet sea,

The generous soul of nature,  
The comforting arm of night,  
The wisdom of the ages,  
The power of the eagle's flight,

The joy of a morning in spring,  
The faith of a mustard seed,  
The patience of eternity,  
The depth of a family need,

Then God combined these qualities,  
When there was nothing more to add,  
He knew His masterpiece was complete,  
And so,  
He called it ... Dad  
Author is unknown

### Simple Wisdom Through a Child's Eyes

The child asked, "Why do you cry?"  
"Because I am sad," I said.  
"Why are you sad?" asked the child.  
"Because Marc is dead and I miss him," I replied.  
"But Marc has been dead for more than four years.  
Why are you still sad?"  
"Because the longer he is gone, the more I miss him."  
"Will you always be sad?" asked the child.  
"Yes, I replied, "but; only sometimes."  
"Is this one of those times?"  
"Yes" I said.  
"I love you" said the child.  
"I love you, too" I replied.  
And then we both smiled.

TCF/Atlanta Area Chapters





## 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?*



Arlene & Gene Burroughs in memory of

**James Michael Burroughs**

DOB: September 29th - Anniversary: June 24th

**Memories shared are blessings that keep on giving.**



Arlene & Gene Burroughs in memory of

**Jeanne Burroughs Widmar**

DOB: June 20th - Anniversary: July 18th

**Memories are a family album filled with images and dreams.**

## Strangers & Friends

Bereaved parents gather monthly and tell their stories again and again. The pain is evident on their faces yet strength comes deep from within. To simply attend these meetings is courageous. We enter as strangers, and we depart as friends. I've attended our group meetings for over four years. I never had the honor of meeting these children in life, yet I know them intimately—how each lived, and how each died. Some of us were blessed to have our children several years, and others only a few. Some children lived just a few months, days or minutes—and some never took a breath. Still, our pain and emptiness is universal. Our grief is universally unique. As individuals our journeys lead us in many directions, yet once a month we come together, to tell our stories again and again. These strangers, these people I call friends.

Kathy A. ~ TCF, Fort Collins, CO

## Is This Your Child's Birthday Month?

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday, bring pictures or favorite items that belonged to your child to our monthly meeting! You may also bring a dessert or other food to celebrate... If you plan on doing this, please let Kimberly know ahead of time so that we can allow enough time for the celebration.



## HEALING WORDS

### Feeling Alone on Father's Day

Written by Clara Hinton

When we use the name father, several thoughts automatically come to mind. Strong. Protector. Problem solver. Guardian. Wise. Open arms. Tender. Loving. Forgiving. Always there.

A father takes great pride in living up to these expectations.

In fact, you can watch most any father's posture change to reflect the characteristics of being the strong one, the leader, and the fixer of problems for his children.

When a child dies, a father's world is turned upside down. Losing a child is something that nobody can fix – not even a father. There is a sense of failure and guilt that washes over a father time and time again. He no longer feels like he is the glue that holds the family together. A father experiences many different emotions when his child dies, but he is very seldom able to verbally express those emotions.

Men grieve quite differently than women. This is a fact that we now acknowledge; yet in society we tend to question a father in grief if he does not openly talk about his loss and pain. Verbalization of emotions are a difficult thing to do for most men, especially for a father that has lost his child.

When Father's Day approaches, there are many feelings of loss and failure that are experienced. Pictures of fathers interacting with their happy, healthy children are found everywhere – in stores, on television, in magazines, and in the newspaper.

Most churches give special lessons dedicated to fathers, but very little recognition is ever given to the father that has gone through child loss. By planning ahead for the difficult emotions of Father's Day a father can cope much better. Plan a project such as planting a flower garden in memory of your child. Build a memorial bench and stencil your child's name on it. Write a letter to your child expressing your thoughts, then release the letter with a balloon.

Above all else, remember that you will always be a father! Be especially kind to yourself as you prepare for the array of emotions you will experience on Father's Day. As you work through these feelings of loss, you are taking steps forward towards healing in this difficult journey we call grief!



### Father's Day Is Still a Time for Celebrating

A long time has passed since I've enjoyed a holiday—or for that matter any special occasion.

With Father's Day coming up shortly, I've decided that this year I'm celebrating.

The kids used to love when special occasions came along. I can still remember Stef's eighth birthday, only three months before her death, and how proud she was when we told her she could invite her best friends over for a birthday party. She wore her prettiest blue trimmed party dress with the lace ruffles.

The games they played still stick in my mind. There was "pin the tail on the donkey" and then "Simon Says." I remember clothes flying everywhere in a contest to see which child could put on a complete set of clothes fastest over her party clothes. I remember the hotdogs, punch and cake, the party favors. I remember Stef's giggles.

The memories also wander back to the party our family threw for Stephen's fifth birthday, only three days before the accident which also claimed his life. I still have the picture in my mind of that goofy orange cap someone had given Steve. He loved it, but it was at least two sizes too small. When he tried to put it on, the bill of the cap was up and Stephen flashed us one of those impish grins that reminds you of Spanky and Our Gang.

As I'm writing this, the tears are flowing down my cheeks remembering the good times we had together.

A lot of things changed when the kids died. Christmas, Easter, birthdays all became days other people celebrated. But not us.

I've done a lot of thinking since then. I know Stef and Steve are in a better place than I could ever imagine and that every day is a holiday for them.

In my mind, I think Stef and Stephen would be sad if they felt their Mom and Dad couldn't celebrate life anymore.

Pat and I now have another son, Christopher, plus we have our fourth child on the way. We're trying to rebuild our lives and I feel we have been blessed along the way. Of course, Christopher is too young to understand Father's Day, but even without him here, I would still consider celebrating Father's Day.

I still remember the Father's Day a couple of years before Stef and Stephen died. With their mom, they had searched all over for something special for me, finally deciding on a T-Shirt that proclaimed "World's Coolest Dad." I still wear that now faded shirt on occasion despite the many grass stains and grease marks.

When Father's Day arrives, I think I'm going to pull that old T-Shirt out and wear it.

I'm going to lay down out in the grass, letting the warm breeze hit me. And I'm going to pretend I'm being caressed by Stef and Steve. I'm going to remember . . . and I'm going to celebrate!!!

Wayne Loder  
TCF Lakes Area, MI





## The Myth of Closure

When will I begin to feel better? When will I return to normal? When will I achieve some closure? Griefers often ask these questions. Closure, our culture tells us, will bring about a tidy ending, a sense of completion. Others are confident it will come once they have cleared out their loved one's room, or maybe after a special personal ritual.

Or perhaps, after the first anniversary comes and goes – “surely then, we will have closure” we think. We pray this is so.

The reason that we long for closure, of course, is because we would like to neatly seal away all of this pain. We would like to close all of the sad, confused, desperate, angry feelings out of our life. We would like to put all of this behind us. Closure. What an odd concept really, as if we could really close the door on pain – turn the lock and throw away the key. The truth is far more complex, of course. Closure is for business deals. Closure is for real estate transactions. Closure is not for feelings or for people we love.

Closure simply does not exist emotionally, not in a pure sense. We cannot close the door on the past as if it didn't exist because after losing someone dear to us, we never forget that person or the love that we shared. And in some ways, we never entirely get over the loss. We learn to live with loss, to integrate it into our new reality.

Imagine if we really could end this chapter in our life, completely. It would mean losing our memories, our connections to those that we love. If we really found closure, it would ironically hurt even more because the attachment would be severed. And this attachment is vital to us - the memories are treasures to be held close, not closed out.

Perhaps it is better to think in terms of healing. Yes, we can process our pain and move to deeper and deeper levels of healing. Yes, we can find ways to move on and channel our pain into productive activities. Yes, we can even learn to smile again and laugh again and love again.

But, let's not ever think that we'll close the door completely on what this loss means, for if we did that, we would unwittingly close the door on all the love that we shared. And that would truly be a loss too terrible to bear.

Borrowed from TCF Winnipeg Chapter  
Newsletter, Sept/Oct 2005

## Finally, Someone Understands; The After Loss Credo

I need to talk about my loss. I may often feel the need to tell you what happened- or to ask you why it happened.

I may frequently need for you to listen while I explain what this loss means to me. Each time I discuss my loss, I am helping myself face the reality of the death of my child.

I need to know that you care about me. I need to feel your touch, your hugs. I need you just to be with me. And I need to be with you.

I need for you to believe in me and in my ability to get through this grief in my own way—and in my own time. Please don't judge me now—or think that I'm behaving strangely.

Remember, I'm grieving. I may even be in shock. I may feel afraid. I may feel deep rage. I may even feel guilty. But above all, I hurt. I am experiencing a pain unlike any I've ever felt before.

Don't be concerned if you think I'm getting better and then suddenly I seem to slip backward again. Grief makes me behave this way at times.

And please don't tell me you “know just how I feel” or that it's time for me to get on with my life. I am probably already saying this to myself. I just need for you to be patient now and to try to understand.

Finally, allow me the time I need to grieve and to recover. I want to get on with my life—but I know that first I must walk through the dark shadows of my grief. And, although it is almost impossible for me to believe this now, I know that one day my grief will end.

Most of all, thank you for being my friend. Thank you for caring, for helping, for understanding. Thank you for praying for me. And remember, in the days or years ahead—after your loss—when you need me as I have needed you, I will understand, and then I will come and be with you.

Lindy McClean ~ TCF, Medford, OR



**Pikes Peak Chapter  
The Compassionate Friends**



**The Compassionate Friends  
Pikes Peak Chapter  
PO Box 51345  
Colorado Springs, CO 80949-1345**

**June, 2012**

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