

June, 2013



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

PIKES PEAK CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



Upcoming Events

June 20th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

July 18th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church

Pikes Peak Chapter Steering Committee

Chapter Leader

Laraine Asaro-Boyd - Acting
Son, Michael Edward Anderson

MAILINGS & DATABASE

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL
Son, Jonathan Steven Gabriel

TREASURER

FRANK SCHAGER
Daughter, Kira Ann Schager

NEWSLETTER EDITOR & EMAILINGS

STEWART LEVETT
Son, Aaron Paul Levett

SC MEMBER/FACILITATOR

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON
Son, Ryan Barry Thompson

SC MEMBER

LEONIE CRAMER
Son, Julian Anthony King

WELCOME NEW SC MEMBER

CHAEA CHRISTIANSON
Son, Damon Christianson

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 20, 2013.

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 - ACTING

LARAIN ASARO-BOYD
Mom of Michael E. Anderson

★ 351-7653

TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS

BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON

★ 573-2743

SUICIDE

LARITA ARCHIBALD

596-2575

DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS

STEWART & LETA LEVETT

★ 531-5488

LEUKEMIA

JANE & STEVE GABRIEL

★ 282-1924

TEEN / YOUNG ADULT LOSS

BARB REYNOLDS

599-0772

SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT

RAYE WILSON

(303) 814-9478

★ Please feel free to contact any Steering Committee member if you are unable to reach our Chapter Leader.



Please consider submitting an article or poem for our newsletter. Whether you would like to tell us about your child, about your feelings, or just submit something you have read somewhere else that you found helpful or meaningful, the newsletter is for you and your input is most welcome. Contact your editor, or bring your article or poem to a meeting and give it to the facilitator and we'll see that it gets published. Testimonials about how TCF has helped you are always needed. It does not have to be lengthy; a paragraph or two would be just fine. It is important to let people know that TCF exists and that it is helpful to those who have suffered the loss of a child, grandchild or sibling.

There are two moments I WILL NEVER FORGET:



The *first time* I looked into *your eyes*
and the *last time* I saw *your face*.



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

- author unknown

Father's Day

As this day approaches I wonder how I will react. Am I still a father? I will sit quietly never allowing family and friends to see how I feel. I will miss my son, but I can't allow myself to "break". I must remain strong and always be the "rock". I wish I could just let someone know how much I miss my little angel. How much I cry and how much I miss hearing "Dad I love you." I am a father, but I wonder, will I just pretend, as usual, that it doesn't bother me? Remember me, for I hurt too, on this special day.

TCF – Tampa, FL

Father's Day Revisited

Now I can look back upon that first Father's Day, the first after the death of our son Jeff. I was a mess, a man without hope, with little or no reason to continue living, deep in my own depressive grief. I could not share any joy with others.

I look back now, wondering how could I have treated my wife and children as I did while they were trying to celebrate in my honor. Inside I was crying out, "What are these useless gifts? Don't you know the only gift I want is to have my son back?"

But it was the love, caring, understanding and nurturing of those loved ones which has brought me so far from that first Father's Day. Now I can enjoy the joy of others. I can laugh once again. There is a life worth living.

For all those fathers for whom this is the first Father's Day without your child, have the best day you can, with the understanding other fathers are with you on this day. One day, you too will be able to revisit this first Father's Day.

Paul Kinney - TCF Louisville, KY

**The fondest memories of your child, to you, this
Father's Day!**



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 Appelman
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
Giorgiana Elizabeth Gordillo	Jun 16	Jennifer Gordillo
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
Robert Beynon	Jun 25	Donna Beynon
Adam J. Hurst	Jun 25	Kim Troeger
Noah R. Wilkerson	Jun 26	Sarah Wilkerson
Kirsten Evelyn Cornell	Jun 26	Will & Marion Cornell
Kyleigh Peltzer	Jun 26	Ashleigh Peltzer
Amy Feight	Jun 27	Patty & Bill Feight
Scott David Stieglmeyer	Jun 27	Betty Stieglmeyer
Jimmy Schmidt	Jun 28	Jim & Laurie Schmidt
Jason Nathaniel Lurch	Jun 28	Kathleen & John Lurch
James Bishara	Jun 28	Phebe Bishara



A Love Gift Donation from Betty Stieglmeyer
In memory of her son

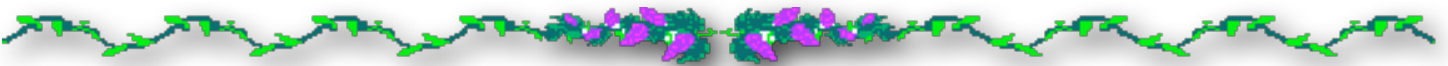
Scott David Stieglmeyer

Thank you for your many years of supporting our chapter!



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
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
Giorgiana Elizabeth Gordillo	4 days	Jun 19	Jennifer Gordillo
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
Kade Riefenberg	19 years	Jun 29	Andy Gibson
Kimberly Ann Hayes	22 years	Jun 30	Patty and Patrick Hayes
Noah R. Wilkerson	5 days	Jun 30	Sarah Wilkerson



Are You Interested?

Would you like to become more involved in the Pikes Peak Chapter of The Compassionate Friends?
We'd love to have you contact us and sit in on a Steering Committee meeting to see what we do.

Many of our regular meeting members are just the type of people we're looking for to help us move our chapter forward with new and exciting ideas. Are you interested?



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

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

Love Gift Donations

A "Love Gift" is a wonderful way to remember your child, while also helping our TCF chapter "reach out" to bereaved families. There is no charge to attend meetings, use the library, or receive the newsletter. We depend solely upon these gifts, monetary or gifts-in-kind, to support our chapter. You may choose to donate a tax deductible "Love Gift" at any time. Let us be here for the families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

Our chapter exists entirely through your donations which are tax deductible. 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?*

➡ **Send Love Gifts to Frank Schager, 2235 McArthur Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80909** ➡
Thank you for contributing and supporting the work of our local chapter!

LOVE GIFT DONATION



Costs are rising. We need your Love Gift to support our chapter & newsletter! If you can, please help.

I would like to make a donation ☐ in Memory of ☐ a Chapter Gift

In loving memory of: _____

Love Gift Donation: \$ _____ Please make check payable to: The Compassionate Friends

Cut and mail this form with your Love Gift to: Frank Schager – 2235 McArthur Ave – Colorado Springs, CO 80909

Contributor Name & Address: _____

Relationship: ☐ Son ☐ Daughter ☐ Grandson ☐ Granddaughter ☐ Friend ☐ Other

Photo Enclosed: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Photo To Be Returned: ☐ Yes ☐ No



THOUGHTFUL POEMS

When Fathers Weep at Graves

I see them weep, the fathers at the stones,
taking off the brave armor they are forced
to wear in the work place; clearing away
the debris with gentle fingers. Inhaling
the sorrow diminished by anguish, their
hearts desiring what they cannot have ~~
to walk hand in hand with children no
longer held ~~

To all the fathers who leave a part of their
hearts at the stones – may breezes
underneath tree of time, ease your pain, as
they receive healing tears...the gift the
children give.

Alice J. Wisler - c/o Greenville, SC TCF

Father's Day

Warm and sunny day in June, father's day.
Children, small and grown give gifts to father
say thanks to father
say I love you.
But there are fathers
whose children are not here to give gifts and
say thanks and say I love you.
Remember the fathers whose children are
gone, because all too often
they grieve in heartbreak silence.
Sascha

HIS ROOM

I walk past it a hundred times a day,
Sometimes pausing at the door;
It hurts to look inside,
It's not his room anymore.
We folded his clothes and put them away,
The closets are all bare;
Our little boy is dead you see,
Only memories are there...
The wallpaper's stripped, the furniture's gone,
The room is empty now;
I know that life does go on,
So please tell me how.
The room is just an empty space,
Four walls and a door;
I cry as I step inside,
It's not his room anymore.

By; Tom Wyatt Bereaved Father St. Louis, Mo.

My son, a perfect little boy of five years and three
months, had ended his earthly life.

You can never sympathize with me; you can
never know how much of me such a young child
can take away.

A few weeks ago I accounted myself a very rich
man, and now the poorest of them all.

Ralph Waldo Emerson
In a letter to Thomas Carlyle

Father's Day ...not a big holiday like Christmas or Thanksgiving, but one that holds a lot of meaning for those to whom it applies. For first-time fathers, that Sunday in June brings a feeling of joy and pride. For a long time Dad, it's a reminder of the richness children may have brought to his life. For those men who have lost a child, it can be a painful time. For those you must endure their pain in secret and in silence, either through their own desire for that approach or through society's expectations that they must be strong and controlled, it can become a horror. But we in TCF wish to acknowledge the day because the death of a child does not negate the parenthood of the mom and dad who loved him or her. Love for one's offspring does not die when the body dies, and death does not succeed in robbing us of our parental identity. We wish all our bereaved fathers a day of peace. In the midst of the grief and loss, may you experience a taste of good memories and remembered love for your child.



HEALING WORDS

Where's David Sobey?

We think we live in a rational world, then suddenly nothing makes sense. Everything we've come to believe about what's logical, fair, right or wrong goes out the window when parents outlive their children. Living through grief means slowly adjusting to a strange new world. Friends tell us "it will get better." That's hard to believe while our bodies are in true physical pain. We're trapped in a crashing avalanche of irrational events that threaten to bury us--and sometimes we wish they would.

In a while though (a long, long while) it does seem to get better. Or, we get better at remolding our lives around the absence.

It's especially difficult to accept that life around us goes on as if nothing earth shattering has happened. People in the supermarket still tell us to "have a nice day." Friends ask how we're doing then chat about the weather. Strangers honk at us in traffic for sitting too long at the green light. They're concerned with the old world which for us, no longer exists. Deep down we're always aware that the universe is thrown off its original course. We find new meaning in every earthly event.

Recently, a question appeared in Parade Magazine. Teenagers were asked, "When you go to your high school reunion, what do you want your classmates to say about you?" One 14-year old answered, "I'd like them to ask, 'Where's David Sobey?'" This doesn't sound like much, but if my name is remembered after all those years, it'd show that I was part of someone's life." I was blown away by this child's grasp at the meaning of the word imprinted on the hearts of all bereaved parents--"remember." We want the world to remember they lived.

A short time later, an invitation addressed to my son arrived in the mailbox. "We are searching for all classmates in anticipation of our Ten Year Reunion. Please fill out the contact information on the reverse side and return to your Reunion Committee. We look forward to hearing from you soon and are excited to reunite this summer."

It's ironic. Since his death I've been searching also. I'd love to know how to contact my son and would give anything if he could miraculously appear this summer. I envy other parents whose children will attend the Class Reunion, while mine won't.

At a recent TCF meeting I asked other parents, "What should I do about the invitation?" We decided I'll send a "memory book" and ask that former classmates and teachers share their memories of my son. I hope they will. It seems like a rational request.

Carol Clum ~ TCF, Medford, OR

A Bear Hug for Father's Day

As Father's Day approaches, we are reminded of the significant contributions and unique love of fathers and stepfathers. Their defined role, after the death of their children, is to support their wives and surviving children. But their pain is deep.

Men, by their nature and in response to our society's expectations, do not usually grieve as openly as women. They do not talk as candidly about their loss. They generally do not reach out to others for comfort. They are, after all, the rock, the solid center of the family. Their wife's pain supersedes their pain because women are fragile. Or so we are told.

Yet, as I look into the eyes of so many bereaved fathers, I see a deep, gripping pain. The tears left unshed, the words that are never spoken, the anger, guilt and agony ... all remain in the eyes of the bereaved father.

What can a father do? Talk with other bereaved fathers. Read books written by bereaved fathers. Talk with spouses, private counselors and close friends who are not as structured in their "male" societal roles. Try to attend three meetings of Compassionate Friends. You don't have to talk. But you might decide to express a single thought or idea, logically presented, to the small group. You might find peace in this place, and then again, you might not. But, as my own dad often said, "Step up to the plate and see what happens." He was a pretty wise man ... a child of the Great Depression, a football player, Greatest Generation, WW II Marine, a fighter, a provider, a protector ... a man's man. He endured much in his 78 years, and I only saw him cry a few times.

But when his friend lost a child, my tough dad was the first one to reach out with a bear hug that wouldn't let go until the tears began to flow. They both cried. They both knew that the agony of losing a child was far worse than the horrors of war. Together, they cried.

This Father's Day may your bear hugs be many and your memories become sweeter with each passing year. May your child live forever in your heart so that peace embraces you always.

Annette Mennen Baldwin - TCF, Katy, TX

In memory of my son, Todd Mennen & my father,
James M. Mennen

**Pikes Peak Chapter
The Compassionate Friends**



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

June, 2013

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