

March, 2012



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



## Upcoming Events

March 15th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church  
April 19th - 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 March 15th, 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)



### 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><br>LARAINE ANDERSON                  | 351-7653       |
| <b>INFANT LOSS</b><br>COLLEEN & ART MANNON                 | 535-9868       |
| <b>TODDLER / YOUNG CHILD LOSS</b><br>BOB & YVETTE THOMPSON | 573-2743       |
| <b>LEUKEMIA</b><br>JANE & STEVE GABRIEL                    | 282-1924       |
| <b>TEEN / YOUNG ADULT LOSS</b><br>BARB REYNOLDS            | 599-0772       |
| <b>SUICIDE</b><br>LARITA ARCHIBALD                         | 596-2575       |
| <b>DRUG / ALCOHOL LOSS</b><br>STEWART & LETA LEVETT        | 531-5488       |
| <b>SKATEBOARD / AUTO ACCIDENT</b><br>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>                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Wayne Allen Garrett       | Mar 4                | Joyce and Greg Garrett                                 |
| Logan Lawrence            | Mar 5                | Janet & Edward Lawrence                                |
| Steven Warren             | Mar 6                | Linda & Mark Warren                                    |
| Erin Marie McCallister    | Mar 7                | Steve & Carol McCallister                              |
| Keith Andrew Barrett      | Mar 8                | Ree Barrett  |
| Samuel Christensen        | Mar 9                | Stacy Christensen                                      |
| Owen William Howard       | Mar 10               | Mike & Carol Parker                                    |
| James Craig Stiegelmeier  | Mar 11               | Betty Stiegelmeier                                     |
| Conri Lee Barber          | Mar 13               | Sean & Cherie Barber                                   |
| Marisa Nicole Pilant      | Mar 14               | Richard & Elizabeth Jamison,<br>Stephen & Julie Pilant |
| Cathleen Bartlett Maxwell | Mar 17               | Dick & Marty Maxwell                                   |
| Julian King               | Mar 18               | Carl Reese & Leonie Cramer                             |
| Megan Huyge               | Mar 21               | Stan & Rebecca Huyge                                   |
| Billy E. Hendrickson      | Mar 22               | Grace & Delbert Hendrickson                            |
| Clayton Champion          | Mar 24               | Jessie & Phyllis Roark                                 |
| Christopher J. Novich     | Mar 24               | Susan & Joe Novich                                     |
| Marc Darby                | Mar 25               | Lori & Steve Darby                                     |
| Scott Martinson           | Mar 26               | JoAnn Martinson  |
| Justin A. Clayton         | Mar 26               | Terry & Sharon Clayton                                 |
| Kari Ann Kirt             | Mar 28               | Lon and Andrea Kirt                                    |
| Sarah Jo Card Ferrara     | Mar 28               | Carol & Andrew Ferrara                                 |
| Kira Ann Schager          | Mar 28               | Frank & Lori Schager                                   |
| Michael Eck               | Mar 31               | Patricia Eck   |



Hey you. Yea you. How would you like to help some folks in need? I mean *reaaaally* help. It doesn't require a whole lotta time, mainly a few hours a week. Okay, maybe a bit more but not much. The pay is nothing unless you count the love and appreciation of hundreds of people.

You see our Chapter Leader will be leaving us soon and we need someone like you to take her place. Laraine will be starting a new life soon and she'll need to spend some of her previously devoted time she spent with us on a new husband.

We know you probably have some great ideas for our group so why not come on board? If you'd like to share your passion and compassion with others and would like to give us a try, please contact Laraine or any of the Steering Committee members so we can get you involved.



## Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

| Child's Name              | Age      | Date of Death | Compassionate Friend      |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------|---------------------------|
| Kevin Michael Burns       | 16 years | Mar 3         | Stan & Willie Burns       |
| Jessica Robison           | 17 years | Mar 3         | Terri Robison             |
| Steven James Gantz        | 13 years | Mar 4         | Diana Gantz               |
| Brian Michael Gregory     | 16 years | Mar 6         | Roy & Phyllis Gregory     |
| Terry A. Shank            | 28 years | Mar 6         | Carol Vierling            |
| Tiffany Maxwell           | 34 years | Mar 7         | Diane Maxwell             |
| Michelle Sandra Seal      | 3 years  | Mar 7         | Walter & Diana Seal       |
| Jay William Sheridan      | 27 years | Mar 9         | Mary & Tim Sheridan       |
| Jillian Overly            | 1 month  | Mar 10        | Dauna Overly              |
| Michael Jeffrey Waller    | 25 years | Mar 10        | Jeanie Young              |
| Sean William Staat        | 25 years | Mar 11        | Susan & William Staat     |
| Andy Cope                 | 27 years | Mar 14        | Debbie & Kurt Adelbush    |
| Adam J. Hurst             | 32 years | Mar 14        | Kim Troeger               |
| Jim Agnew                 | 31 years | Mar 17        | Tom Agnew                 |
| Jody Elizabeth Houtz      | 17 years | Mar 18        | Jane and Chris Houtz      |
| Danae Lynne Marie Mannon  | 3 months | Mar 18        | Colleen and Art Mannon    |
| Keltryn Lenae Brinkman    | 2 years  | Mar 19        | Jim & Judy Brinkman       |
| John Daniel Bernard Ringo | 8 years  | Mar 21        | Angela Randle, Paul Ringo |
| Christopher Calegar       | 10 years | Mar 22        | Kevin & Linda Calegar     |
| Megan Huyge               | 2 days   | Mar 22        | Stan & Rebecca Huyge      |
| Gary Michael Owens        | 32 years | Mar 27        | Freda Maria Garcia        |
| Jonathan Frazier          | 21 years | Mar 28        | Kimberly Argo             |
| Colin Peter Baerman       | 32 years | Mar 28        | Paul & Kerry Baerman      |
| Timothy Patrick Shea      | 21 years | Mar 31        | Joe & Paula Shea          |

### LETTING GO

One evening at the kitchen table my four-year-old daughter Barbara watched with interest as I was preparing to mail out some letters concerning *The Compassionate Friends*. She showed a keen interest in the logo sticker I attached to the corner of a large brown envelope. Her big blue eyes took on a seriousness I had never seen before as she asked, "Mommy, why is the 'kid' so far away from his hands?" I replied as honestly as I could "Because the 'kid' has died and the hands are a mommy's and a daddy's reaching for the child." She turned those blue eyes to meet mine and said "I think you're wrong, Mom. I think the hands are letting him go." How remarkably perceptive children are! I sat there astounded by what she had suggested: then I grabbed a pen to write down what she had said. This was, I thought a sage piece of wisdom from someone who believes in old Santa and the Tooth Fairy and wishing on stars.

In her innocent way, she made me see I was still reaching. It has been two years since BJ. was still-born. But I continue to reach for something. Just what that some-thing is, I don't know, but I'll know what it is when I find it. Perhaps then part of me can let go.

Part of me will never let go. Barbara's comment made me wonder though. Do children sense that death is a process of letting go, that letting go is okay for those whose time it is to let go?

I don't have an answer yet, but maybe my blue-eyed Barbara does. Maybe, just maybe, all children do!

Edith Fraser

TCF. Winnipeg, Canada





## THOUGHTFUL POEMS

### Spring's Tears

*By Sally Migliaccio TCF Babylon, New York*

When the sun's sharp brilliance echoes in the luminescent  
blue

A grim, oppressive darkness stabs my aching heart anew.  
Its golden glow upon my face, the warmth of winter's sun  
Holds the promise of renewal when the icy months are  
done.

It is this vow of nature's resurgence in the spring  
That bows my head, and breaks my heart; unlocks my  
suffering.

For you will miss again the beauty of this time of year  
The growing warmth, the sunny days when life will  
reappear.

For nature has no power over death that holds you still,  
And though I know, I still resent spring's early daffodil.  
Oh, would that I could speak to Mother Nature face to face!  
To beg she work her magic on your lonely resting place.

Why can't it be YOUR rebirth when the gray, cold days are  
done?

Why mightn't YOU not live again to see spring's fresh new  
Dawn and feel the warmth of sunshine relish in the Greening  
earth ... to open arms, embracing life  
Why can't it be YOUR birth?

You were so young, your life so new when death crept in the  
door,  
And in my grief, beloved child, I'll ask forever more  
The reason why the earth's renewed when spring comes  
round each year  
Yet in your grave you're silent still, and I condemned am  
here.

### Together Once More

Eyes the color of sky blue that  
He saved for you.  
Strawberry blonde for your hair  
Yet, skin that was so fair.  
Tho' years have come and gone  
In my mind's eye I can see how you had grown.  
Carried all ladies in his hands  
Yes, he even led the marching bands.  
When he saw an injustice among men  
He wasn't afraid to step right in.  
He stands with his Daddy on Jordan's far shore  
Waiting till we are all together once more.  
*Betty Abbie ~ TCF, Tyler, TX*

### Grandparents are a Special Gift

*Author unknown*

Grandparents are a special gift...  
God gives them to each child.  
Their love outshines the brightest star ...  
Their love can never be defiled.  
Oh, but when a child becomes an angel, Grandparents feel  
the pain and sorrow.  
Beyond any pain they've known in life,  
Or will ever come to know tomorrow.  
For a grandparent holds a special love  
For the child their child has had.  
And to lose what they hold dear ...  
Leaves them heartbroken and sad.  
Their legacy is their grandchildren ...  
So how can they learn to survive?  
Will the dreams of their tomorrows  
Somehow be kept alive?  
Yes, a grandparent is a survivor ...  
And life has taught them how to be.

### Seasons of the Heart

Your special days are unchanging  
Seasons of the heart I celebrate.  
Your birth, forever spring,  
Tender memories relate,  
New and green, a dream  
From which too soon I awake.  
The summer of your life was bright  
Laughter needed no reason,  
Seemingly endless days of sharing.  
Sixteen summers. Short in season.  
Your death brought winter without warning,  
What sense in all this can be found?  
Summer dreams replaced with mourning.  
Where is hope now?  
But the heart knows what  
The mind cannot accept  
That when all is lost,  
It is love that is left.  
Love knows no barriers  
Time or distance recognize.  
Love does not diminish,  
But is constant in our lives.  
And like a summer breeze  
Uplifts and inspires us  
With healing memories.

*Peggy Walls ~ TCF, Alexander City, AL*



## HEALING WORDS

### Prayer for Spring

Like springtime, let me unfold and grow fresh and new from this cocoon of grief that has been spun around me. Help me face the harsh reality of sunshine and renewed life as my bones still creak from the winter of my grief. Life has dared to go on around me as I recover from the insult of life's continuance. I readjust my focus to include recovery and growth as a possibility in my future. Give me strength to break out of the cocoon of my grief. But may I never forget it as the place where I grew my wings, becoming a new person because of my loss.

*Janice Heil - TCF - Vancouver, Canada*

### Of Parent and Child

Between Alexander and me was an unspoken arrangement. My job was to teach the lessons of the world, his was to grow and learn. In the two and a half years that we were together, we utilized this system to the fullest. From my accumulated wisdom and experience, Alexander was taught all that a growing child needed to know. Together we studied the mysteries of the universe—the softness of kitten fur and how rain makes mud. He learned the social graces, table manners, and bathroom etiquette. He was taught care and consideration for himself, his sibling, and other human beings. Under my gentle tutelage, Alexander learned of love and life. As his mother, I took the responsibility for protecting him from all hurt and harm. It was my job to go before, to pave the way for the child that follows. But somewhere in the stillness of a February night, Alexander and I reversed roles. He died quietly in his sleep, making his journey to the other side alone, without me. I was left as the child—he as the parent. I am the child who must struggle, stumble, and falter, unsure of my way. Alex is the parent, possessing spiritual completeness for which I am still searching. He has jumped ahead and now he turns to hold out his tiny hand to me. “Come, Mother, do not be afraid. The path ahead has been paved by me and I will not let you fall.” Through Alexander’s gentle tutelage, I have learned of love and life...and death.

Joanetta Hendel  
TCF, Naples, FL

### Butterfly Gardening

Turning your backyard into a haven for a host of colorful butterflies is easy. All you need is a sunny spot and a garden plan that includes both nectar plants for the adults and food plants for the young.

Before you plant your butterfly garden, do some research. Find out which butterflies are native to your area and what they like to eat. If possible, incorporate as many of these plants into your garden plan as you can.

Since butterflies get thirsty, you may want to sink a shallow pan or plate into your garden soil and fill it with water for them. When they are not feeding, butterflies often relax on a sun warmed stone. Be sure to set a few flat stones around your garden for resting butterflies. And finally, never use pesticides in your garden. If insect pests do make an appearance, handpick the marauders.

You'll attract the most butterflies to your garden if you plant their favorite flowers in drifts or clumps. Zinnias are a preferred food for many butterfly species, especially when the flowers are crowded together in large masses. Sometimes the least likely plants will lure the most butterflies. When the oregano is in bloom, it will be smothered with butterflies, including the snout butterfly.

Monarch butterflies will feast on almost any colorful bloom. Their young, however, eat only milkweed plants. During migration, monarch butterflies depend on fall blooming flowers such as New England asters, for nourishment during their long trek south. Aster is a perennial and blooms in early September. Be sure to include at least one butterfly bush (*Buddleia davidii*.) These bushes grow to ten feet high and produce a summer-long banquet of pink, purple, blue or white blooms. Be sure to protect your butterfly bush in the winter in the north.

Always set out extra parsley plants to share with the butterflies. You can use a half-dozen parsley seedlings in the front of your garden plots.

Anne Baklarz  
TCF, Pittsburgh, PA





## Seasons of Grief

*Jeanne Davis, TCF Chapter Leader - Green Bay, WI*

Do you ever wonder “when is winter going to end?” When is it going to get warmer? When will the snow melt and the spring flowers come up? When will they bloom?

Grief can be compared to the seasons. All of those questions can also be asked of grief. When will my pain end? When will I feel something other than pain? When will the shock and numbness go away? When will I be able to remember and smile?

Autumn is a sudden frost – the first moments of our child’s passing. Life has changed forever and everything feels strange and unfamiliar. Our emotions shift like the wind; one moment we feel the warmth of fond remembrance and the next we are startled back into our horrible reality. Our child who we love is gone! We drift through most of those first days in a fog. We become exhausted to the point of numbness and time stands at a strange angle to the rest of the world.

In the winter of our bereavement, one of the most tragic points in our life will come when the gripping reality of what it means to lose our child crashes down around us. Life changes so much that it is almost unrecognizable to us. This is the time when we might fall down and not find a reason to continue on. Depression and illness run rampant at this time because we feel helpless. The grief can cast a harsh, ugly light onto everything around us. We may be mad and angry at anything and everything.

The emotions we begin to experience in the spring of our grief are the first signs of our re-awakening from the winter of that grief. Our loss is like a wind or hail storm, where everything we knew and understood is battered by furious waves of despair that threaten to consume us at any moment. Somehow, though, something happens within us – some instinct to survive rises up within us to help carry us forward. We literally allow life to begin again for us; not quite the life that we knew; but, a life that we are still able to live.

Summer is a warm wind of peace, of sunshine, warm showers, blue skies, fluffy clouds. It is the time in our loss that we can actually look forward to what we have gained, rather than look back to what we have lost.

Just as the seasons of the earth go full circle, so will the seasons of our grief. Life will not be normal again; normal is a word that passes with our loved ones. But, we will eventually find a new normal, a new reality. Grief doesn’t go away, it changes. Life won’t ever be the same; but, it can become bearable and livable. We will be able to laugh again without feeling guilt and to take loss from its position of being our sole reason to live to a reason for having lived. To move forward after loss is not to forget our child; but, rather, to remember the life of that child with feelings of love, joy, fondness, and peace.

Our grief doesn’t necessarily follow the seasons in order. It may mix them up and repeat them in no understandable order. Be gentle with yourself, give your grief the space it needs; but, open your heart and your mind and go forward into your new reality. You will smile, laugh, and feel again.



March, 2012

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



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