



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of the Pikes Peak Region

October, 2011 Newsletter

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Upcoming Events

October 20th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
November 17th - General Meeting - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
Sunday, December 11th - Candlelight Memorial - 7:00 p.m. - First Baptist Church
December 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 August 18th, 2011.

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

WEBSITES:

National - www.compassionatefriends.org

Colorado - www.tcfcolorado.org

Colorado Springs - www.tcfcolorado.org/coloradosprings



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Angel Eyes: Giving Comfort, Providing Hope

Our group offers bereavement services for parents, families, friends and caregivers who have been affected by the sudden unexpected loss of an infant or toddler. This group offers you a comfortable place to heal and learn how to live with your loss. Nothing is asked of you; you do not have to speak if you choose not to.

People who have received bereavement services report that it is very helpful for them to have people to talk to who can understand the grief of losing an infant or young child. This group is a safe place where you can talk about both your grief and the precious memories you have of your child. Each month we will begin with a particular topic, talk about how you might be affected and have time for general sharing.

The group is led by an ANGEL EYES social worker whose mission is to help families and others cope with the sudden, unexpected death of an infant or toddler throughout the state by providing a range of bereavement services. For additional help and information: **Angel Eyes 1-888-285-7437**

Web site: www.angeleyes.org

Meetings are held the 3rd Monday of the Month

Location: Colorado Springs Penrose Library, 20 N. Cascade Ave

Time: 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

There is no cost and parking is free at the meters after 6:00 p.m.

Helping a grieving person: Provide ongoing support

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For more information, visit www.Helpguide.org.

Grieving continues long after the funeral is over and the cards and flowers have stopped. The length of the grieving process varies from person to person. But in general, grief lasts much longer than most people expect. Your bereaved friend or family member may need your support for months or even years.

- **Continue your support over the long haul.** Stay in touch with the grieving person, periodically checking in, dropping by, or sending letters or cards. Your support is more valuable than ever once the funeral is over, the other mourners are gone, and the initial shock of the loss has worn off.
- **Don't make assumptions based on outward appearances.** The bereaved person may look fine on the outside, while inside he or she is suffering. Avoid saying things like "You are so strong" or "You look so well." This puts pressure on the person to keep up appearances and to hide his or her true feelings.
- **The pain of bereavement may never fully heal.** Be sensitive to the fact that life may never feel the same. You don't "get over" the death of a loved one. The bereaved person may learn to accept the loss. The pain may lessen in intensity over time. But the sadness may never completely go away.
- **Offer extra support on special days.** Certain times and days of the year will be particularly hard for your grieving friend or family member. Holidays, family milestones, birthdays, and anniversaries often reawaken grief. Be sensitive on these occasions. Let the bereaved person know that you're there for whatever he or she needs.



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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

Going Home Angel



This angel, sculpted by Artist Marco Grove, is now being offered for sale through Archangel Gifts. Inspired and dedicated to my son Aaron Paul Levett, this angel depicts the soul of your loved one returning to the arms of the Father. The angel is cast from crushed selenite, quartz and angelite crystals. The sculpture is 3 1/2 inches tall and is finely polished.

We will be donating 25% of the proceeds from the sale of these and other angels to The Compassionate Friends through the end of the year.

You may order your own angel by going to our website at www.Archangelgifts.com. Angels can be shipped to any location throughout the U.S.

If you would like further information please feel free to email me at stewart@archangelgifts.com

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

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

CHAPTER LEADER LARAINE 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

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



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Remembering Our Children On Their Birthdays

Child's Name	Date of Birth	Compassionate Friend
Jim Agnew	Oct 4	Tom Agnew
Adam Herzog	Oct 5	Nancy Saltzman
Andy Cope	Oct 7	Debbie & Kurt Adelbush
Jack C. Jefferson	Oct 8	John & Dena Jefferson
Eric Sutton Skinner	Oct 9	David & Gail Skinner
Isaac Sartain	Oct 10	Gregory Sartain
Tucker Ray Graef	Oct 10	Kathy Graef
Anthony Lopez	Oct 14	Paul & Trudy Lopez
David Scott Mueller	Oct 16	Sandy Eversole
Margaret McKean	Oct 18	Lilo McKean
Jacob Sanchez	Oct 18	Janine McDonough/Denise Langhorst
Brian Hartzell	Oct 18	Fawn Batista
Richard Joseph Armstrong	Oct 19	Chuck & Helen Armstrong
Michael Edward Anderson	Oct 20	Laraine Anderson
Kimberly Benson	Oct 22	Debbie Diekman
Cody Austin Wilson	Oct 23	Elizabeth & Lance Wilson
Tyler Joseph Budfuloski	Oct 23	Rob & Alice Budfuloski
Wyatt Travis Wilson	Oct 23	Elizabeth & Lance Wilson
Dawn Michelle Wiley	Oct 24	Luanne Wiley
Brian Jensen	Oct 26	Deborah Jensen
Christopher Clayton Hodson	Oct 27	Eric and Janice Hodson
Christopher Skaggs	Oct 28	Ernest & Tanya Skaggs
		Carl, Annette & Felicia Cordova
Adrianna Opal Read	Oct 30	Natillie Read

Display Your Child

We have ordered one hundred badge holders to pass out to our TCF guests so that they may wear a name badge with a picture of their child. These badges measure 3 1/2" by 2 1/4" and can be worn horizontally or vertically. The intent is for all parents to wear a name badge whenever they come a meeting. Please bring a picture of your loved one with the above dimensions and ask for a name badge the next time you come to our meeting.



Healing

Sometimes you have to take it on blind faith that your heart is healing. It may not feel like the pain is going away. You might still cry just as hard as ever. But strength, confidence, and wisdom grow invisibly and you must trust that it is there.

~ Stephanie St. Claire



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Remembering Our Children On Their Anniversaries

Child's Name	Age	Date of Death	Compassionate Friend
John Walther	31 years	Oct 1	Joseph Walther
Joshua C. Attardi	12 years	Oct 2	Paula Attardi
Suzanne Bethany Thomas	4 years	Oct 3	Arnie & Mary Thomas
Angel Leah Kelley	5 months	Oct 4	James L. Kelley/Shirley McCleary
Michael Edward Anderson	20 years	Oct 4	Laraine Anderson
Chris Hatfield	28 years	Oct 6	Catherine Thompson/Cathy Hatfield
Fermin A. Vialpando	17 years	Oct 6	Sundae F. Vialpando
Sheri Cavin	21 years	Oct 9	Susan & Alan Cavin
Jessica Stockwell	24 years	Oct 12	Mark & Sally Stockwell
Cody Austin Wilson	5 years	Oct 13	Elizabeth & Lance Wilson
Rebecca Ann Reynolds	17 years	Oct 16	Ken and Barbara Reynolds
Melissa Sue Micke	19 years	Oct 17	Alice Micke
Aaron Paul Levett	26 years	Oct 18	Stewart & Leta Levett
Trevor "T.J." Franks	17 years	Oct 24	Penny Franks
Denise Elaine Bear	20 years	Oct 24	Dona & Tanya Flores
Owen William Howard	34 years	Oct 25	Mike & Carol Parker
Cody Darby	20 years	Oct 27	Lori & Steve Darby
Scotty Strader	24 years	Oct 28	Kathrine Strader
Steven Ellis Erickson	19 years	Oct 28	Jaque Baldwin
Matthew Dale Wilson	14 years	Oct 28	Raye & Rick Wilson
Cris Cruz	23 years	Oct 29	Henrietta Madrid
Michael Christopher Rushmore	29 years	Oct 29	Bob & Carol Rushmore
Kimberly Denise Patterson	16 years	Oct 30	Sigrid Patterson

My Wish List

I wish you would not be afraid to speak my loved one's name. They lived and were important and I need to hear their name.

If I cry and get emotional if we talk about my loved one, I wish you knew that it isn't because you hurt me: the fact that they died causes my tears. You have allowed me to cry and I thank you. Crying and emotional outbursts are healing.

I will have emotional highs and lows, ups and downs. I wish you wouldn't think that if I have a good cry my grief is all over, or that if I have a bad day I need psychiatric counseling.

Being Bereaved is not contagious, so I wish you wouldn't stay away from me.

I wish you knew all the "crazy" grief reactions that I am having are in fact very normal. Depression, anger, fear, hopelessness and a questioning of values and beliefs are to be expected following a death.

I wish you wouldn't expect my grief to be over in 6 months. The first few years are going to be exceedingly traumatic for me. As with alcoholics, I will never be "cured" or a "formerly bereaved", but forevermore be recovering from my bereavement.

I wish you understood the physical reaction to grief. I may gain weight, lose weight, sleep all the time or not at all, develop a host of illnesses and be accident prone, all of which are related to my grief.

Our loved one's birthday, the anniversary of their death and the holidays can be terrible times for us. I wish you could tell us that you are thinking of us and them on these days. And if we get quiet and withdrawn, just know that we are thinking about them and don't try to coerce us into being cheerful.

I wish you wouldn't offer to take me out for a drink, or to a party, this is a temporary crutch and the only way I can get through this grief is to experience it. I have to hurt before I can heal.

I wish you understood that grief changes people. I am not the same person I was before my beloved died and I will never be that person again. If you keep waiting for me to "get back to my old self" you will stay frustrated. I am a new creature with new thoughts, dreams, aspirations, values and beliefs. Please try to get to know this different me — I'm the one who'll be here from now on.

—Author unknown



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THOUGHTFUL POEMS

The following poems were submitted and taken from the TCF Facebook page.

Memories

The certain special memories
That follow me each day,
Cast your shadow in my life
In a certain way.
Sometimes the blowing wind
Or the lyrics of a song
Make me stop and think of you
Sometimes all day long
Memories are good to have
To share and keep in my heart,
Just knowing that you're still inside
Makes sure we'll never part.
Collette Covington
Lake Charles, LA, TCF

A Tear Fell

I rode by your school by chance today
And I just happened to look that way.
The boys all had their ball caps on;
then I remembered my son was gone.
Just when I thought I was doing so well,
Before I knew it - a tear fell.
Then on Sunday as I sat in church.
I looked around and missed you so much.
I saw other boys in their Sunday suits
And I remembered you were just as cute.
People all think I'm doing so well;
They don't know today - a tear fell.
When I'm reminded of what might have been
It gets too hard to hold it in.
When life will catch me off my guard,
That's when I seem to be hit so hard.
It seems all roads lead back to you
As I take each day and try to get through.
They say time makes it better, but I cannot tell.
I only know today - a tear fell.

~ Carolyn Bryan, Orange Park, FL TCF

The Ship

I am standing by the seashore.
A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze
and starts for the blue ocean.
She is an object of beauty and strength,
and I stand and watch
until at last she hangs like a peck of white cloud
just where the sun and sky come down to mingle with each other.

Then someone at my side says, 'There she goes!
Gone where? Gone from my sight - that is all.

She is just as large in mast and hull and spar
as she was when she left my side
and just as able to bear her load of living freight
to the places of destination.

Her diminished size is in me, not in her.

And just at the moment when someone at my side says,
'There she goes! ',
there are other eyes watching her coming,
and other voices ready to take up the glad shout:
'Here she comes!'

by Henry van Dyke



By TeriAnn Sargent

Used by Permission



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HEALING WORDS

"An Ugly Pair of Shoes"

I am wearing a pair of shoes.
They are ugly shoes and uncomfortable shoes.
I hate my shoes.
Each day I wear them, and each day I wish I had another pair.
Some days my shoes hurt so bad that I do not think I can take another step.
Yet, I continue to wear them.
I get funny looks wearing these shoes.
They are looks of sympathy.
I can tell in others eyes that they are glad they are my shoes and not theirs.
They never talk about my shoes.
To learn how awful my shoes are might make them uncomfortable.
To truly understand these shoes you must walk in them.
But, once you put them on, you can never take them off.
I now realize that I am not the only one who wears these shoes.
There are many pairs in the world.
Some women are like me and ache daily as they try and walk in them.
Some have learned how to walk in them so they don't hurt quite as much.
Some have worn the shoes so long that days will go by before they think of how much they hurt.
No woman deserves to wear these shoes.
Yet, because of the shoes I am a stronger woman.
These shoes have given me the strength to face anything.
They have made me who I am.
I will forever walk in the shoes of a woman who has lost a child.

- Author Unknown

Falling Leaves

The autumn leaves are falling all around me. The colors of the leaves are beautiful gold, red and yellow but my life is void of color in the fall. I am saddened and I remember that day in October when you fell down from life and the color left my life.

Inside my heart I'm fighting this time of the year—the fall. For with the fall comes many sad memories of you. In November, your body was placed in the ground. In my heart I want to think about spring and rebirth and new life but in the fall I cannot.

In November, Thanksgiving comes without you and then the barren cold winter comes. Now no leaves are falling down for they have already reached the cold ground. Then comes Christmas without you and then comes your birthday in December but you are not here.

I think about the cold, snowy winter day that you were born and I remember the warmth of summer in my heart as I held you close, my son.

I know that my heart will feel the warmth of summer again. Someday I will go to the eternal spring of heaven with you, my son. The leaves will never have to fall again.

Beverly Elero, TCF Leesburg, VA

The Fall of Fall ~ Author Unknown

What is it about the season that takes me back in time? Everything I do; I find you are on my mind. Haunting dreams find me at night when I try to sleep, and every little detail is replayed, and the sadness far too deep.

Something about the close of summer seems to bring it back, making it so hard to move onward and stay on track. Something about the dying and fading of the trees brings my heart to sorrow, with the falling of the leaves. How I long to stop it, to keep the fall away, but time marches on, and summer just won't stay.

I know with the fall, winter is not far behind, another lonely season, and the memories flood my mind. I cry my tears of sorrow, and pray for spring to come a rebirth of the earth, and the warmth of the sun. It makes the memories softer and gentler to recall but now my life is saddened with the nearing of fall.



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Death of an Adult

Reprinted in part from the website [The Compassionate Friends \(UK\)](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

We do not expect to outlive our children: it defies the laws of nature. All bereaved parents suffer much the same emotions of sorrow and loss. Our expectations, hopes and dreams for the future are ended, and our world has changed for ever. Our family unit will never be complete again, and every relationship within it has changed. If there are surviving siblings, they have the double problem of coping with their own grief as well as supporting us in ours.

Those of us whose adult child has died have to contend with some unexpected responses. One of these is that many people believe that, because the child was "adult", the pain of losing them is, therefore, much less. They do not appreciate that the role of a parent lasts for all of our lives, and the death of our child, regardless of age, makes us feel that we have failed to protect and support them. Our relationship with them could have matured from parent and child to equality as adults. We will miss the friendship that has grown from knowing and loving them over the years.

Many deaths of adult children are sudden and unexpected; some are the result of suicide or homicide. These deaths often require an autopsy, sometimes followed by an Inquest. Even when the officials are striving to be sympathetic, the proceedings can seem like a nightmare. Complications can arise if the death occurred some distance away, perhaps even abroad. *The Compassionate Friends* (TCF) produces a wide range of pamphlets dealing with many of these different circumstances.

The tendency nowadays is for children to stay longer in the family home; so many of us who lose an adult child have not experienced their leading an independent life. We may have been supporting one who was physically or mentally ill, disabled or having difficulties with misuse of substance, alcohol or drugs. Their death will have left a huge void in our daily routine, adding further to our grief. Some children could have led unconventional lives, been involved in prostitution, living rough, or serving a prison sentence. We may then suffer a complex grief, with shame, guilt and regret mixed with our other emotions.

Our son or daughter may have left home, and settled in their own accommodation. We will have already adjusted to their daily absence, the changed routine and the empty bedroom. The sad task of clearing out their home may fall to us, as well as notifying everyone of the death and arranging the funeral. If our child was married, then our bereaved son- or daughter-in-law will be next of kin, and he or she will have the responsibility for planning the funeral, and all the legal matters dealing with the estate. We will wish to express our views, and help wherever possible, but must accept that they have the legal right to have their decisions carried out, however hard that may be for us to bear.

If our child had a partner, different issues may arise. There will be doubt about who is next of kin, and, in particular cases, disputes could start, at the very time when we are least able to cope with them. If we do have to deal with our son's or daughter's estate, this may be the first time we encounter the complications of executorship and administration. We will have to search through their personal papers to establish their assets and any debts. It could be helpful to seek the advice of a lawyer.

The loss of a child of any age is devastating. In time, however, the pain ceases to be constant, and we are gradually more aware of the happy memories that our child has left. Although life will never be the same again, we can pick up the pieces, helped by the knowledge that there are still other people who need us. In the future, we will be able to have times of happiness and laughter again - impossible to imagine when we are newly bereaved.



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Worldwide Candle Lighting Ceremony Pikes Peak Chapter

6:30 p.m. – First candle lit promptly at 7:00 p.m.

First Baptist Church, 317 E. Kiowa St. - Downtown.

We invite all families and friends to take a short break from the hectic holiday rush and join us as we remember and honor our children with an evening of music, inspirational readings, memorial slideshow and the soft glow of candle light.

Throughout the evening, each child's picture and dedication will be shown amidst touching music in a very private moment honoring their absence.

The Compassionate Friends of the Pikes Peak Region are proud to put together this evening of remembrance.

As we put together our slide show of our children, please use the form below and include your favorite photo of your loved one along with a brief dedication if you wish. These can also be emailed as well. All photos will be returned to you. *Prior years' submissions will be read as a dedication if we don't hear back from you.*

Share this evening with us—as we remember with pride, tears, and hugs that the love for our child endures and grows. Refreshments will be served immediately following our program.



TCF CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL

Your Name _____

Your Address _____

Your Phone _____ Email _____

Child's Name
As You'd Like it to appear _____

Cause of Death (Optional) _____

Child's Birthdate _____

Child's Memorial Date _____

Number of Pictures Included _____ (no more than 3 please)

Dedication _____

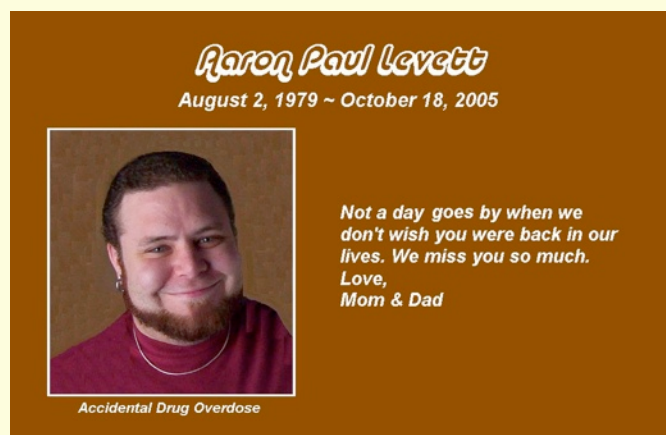
Create my slide with information & pictures provided.

Please use last year's slide.

Please return pictures when finished.

Email information to stewart@archangelgifts.com or send to:

Stew Levett, 160 El Dorado Lane, C.S. CO 80919



Example of Memorial Slide

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION IS
NOVEMBER 26th**

Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly - Return Service Requested

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

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October 2011

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



**Pikes Peak Chapter
The Compassionate Friends**