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IMPORTANT NOTICE: We have a NEW meeting location!
Please join us at 17555 Hwy. 155 S. (off Loop 49), Flint, TX 75762.
We hope to see you at our next meeting!

We need not walk alone.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, Texas 75711




**The
Compassionate
Friends**

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



We need not walk alone.

Volume 18, Issue 8

Tyler, Texas

August 2017

**Monthly Group Meeting
Tyler Area Meeting**
17555 Hwy. 155 S.
(off Loop 49) Flint, TX 75762

Contact

Phone: (903) 422-0358
www.TylerTCF.org • info@TylerTCF.org
P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

Co-Chapter Leaders:
Cheri Zucca & Trish Mann Taylor
Secretary: Trish Mann Taylor
Newsletter/Website: Mary Lingle
Tyler Meeting Facilitators:
Leslie & Don Dixon

Steering Committee: Lisa Schoonover,
Cheri Zucca, Don & Leslie Dixon, Janet
Majors, Trisha Mann Taylor, Barbara
Barton, Heather Ogg, Mary Lingle,

Joan & Bill Campbell, Regional
Coordinators: (972) 935-0673
TCF National: (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

The Meeting Agenda

6:30 p.m. - Meeting will begin with refreshments followed by announcement of birthdays and anniversaries and reading of the Credo. We will then have open discussion.

8:00 p.m. - Meeting will close by recognizing our childrens' names. Feel free to visit after the meeting or check out books from our library.

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Thoughts About Progress

One thing that is frequently discussed at our meeting is the despair of thinking you are on the road to "recovery," when all of a sudden you seem to be back at square one. But are you really?

Let's keep in mind most of us have had no experience in "recovering" from the loss of a child. Therefore, we have no point of reference—it's all new to us. Actually the "roller coaster" of emotions is perfectly normal. In the very beginning most of us seem to vacillate between dead numbness and excruciating pain. Constant crying, to not a tear left—just dried up and limp. We actually are living minute to minute.

After a couple of months we might actually have a few hours that we have not cried or felt that deep overwhelming despair. Then—wham—back to where we started. We tend to panic and think something is wrong with us. Let's be realistic! There is something wrong—terribly wrong. We have each lost a child.

Let's be fair to ourselves. We started to play a role to the outside world. Like the old song says, "laughing on the outside—crying on the inside." We want to be acceptable to society. "You are doing so well," we hear. If only they knew! We may feel we have to fool others, but let us really be honest about our feelings. To deny our feelings, particularly to ourselves, is to block the road to recovery. Remember that recovery in this case does not mean "getting over it;" it means to gain control of our lives again.

So, let's not worry about what other people think, say, or expect. Our friends (well—meaning as they are), sometimes members of our family, even someone who has lost a child, should not sit in judgment. Each person grieves differently, due to a person's general make-up and the relationship with the dead child. Unless someone has totally withdrawn from everything and everybody over a lengthy period of time, the chances are all is in the realm of normalcy. Only after we have walked down the long road of grief and can look back, remembering those early days and weeks, can we see we really are not on square one again. We have just slipped backwards for a time. This is all. Allow yourself that and then strive forward again. It takes time, a lot of time! We tend to expect too much from others, others expect too much from us and therefore, we tend to expect too much from ourselves.

Mary E., TCF Valley Forge, PA

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.



We need not walk alone.

"You don't heal from the loss of a loved one because time passes; you heal because of what you do with the time." —Carol Crandall

Welcome

We extend a warm welcome to those who attended their first TCF meeting last month.

We deeply regret the circumstances that brought you to our TCF Chapter. The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance, not-for-profit, self-help organization that offers support and understanding to families who have experienced the death of a child. You are cordially invited to attend our monthly meeting (held the third Monday of the month). The meeting is open to everyone and free of charge. You are free to talk, cry or to sit in silence; we respect the individuality of mourning. Comments shared in the meetings remain confidential.

Our chapter is operated entirely by volunteers dedicated to furthering the work of TCF. Your voluntary, tax deductible donations honor your loved one(s) in a meaningful way by enabling us to print and mail this newsletter and meet other expenses involved in reaching out to other grieving families (100% of funds are used for this outreach). Donations, along with the name of the person being honored, may be sent to:

The Compassionate Friends of Tyler
P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, Texas 75711

To Our New Members

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But, you have nothing to lose and much to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person—or just the right words spoken that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Old Members

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting we have new parents. Think back—what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "Your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer."

Grief Resources

Note: Some resources are based on individual opinion and experience and are not officially endorsed by the organization. The hope is that you may find a grief resource helpful to you and your family. We will continue to build on our resources column. Please let us know of any of your personal recommendations. Thank you.

Compassionate Friends (International Website) compassionatefriends.org
Also offers grief support for **siblings & grandparents**

Children Are A Gift Foundation: www.childrenareagift.com

GriefShare: www.griefshare.org

MADD East Texas (Mothers Against Drunk Driving)
www.madd.org/local-offices/tx/east-texas

Smith County Victim Services Division
www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs/counties/smith.html

The Hospice of East Texas: www.hospiceofeasttexas.org

Victim Services Division - Texas Department of Criminal Justice - Online Resource Directory
www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs

Survivors of Suicide: www.allianceofhope.org

Samaritan Counseling of Tyler: www.scctyler.org

Tyler Counseling & Assessment, LLP: www.tyler-counseling.com

Angel Layettes brings comfort to families grieving over the loss of an infant from miscarriage, stillbirth or death shortly after birth, and honor and dignity to the memory of the precious baby. Angel Layettes provides without charge custom designed burial layettes and keepsakes. angellayettes.org • 903-534-5212

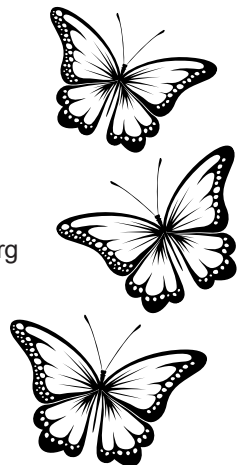
University of Texas at Tyler Psychology and Counseling and Training Clinic: 903-593-2348

The Cope Foundation: www.copefoundation.org

Grief Camps for Kids: www.moyerfoundation.org/programs

WINGS was established through Hospice of East Texas in 1993 to help children navigate the grieving process. WINGS, "a comprehensive bereavement program that provides both emotional support and grief education," offers a camp (Camp G – grieve, grow and go forward) twice a year. For more information or to register for a grief support program, contact the Hospice of East Texas Bereavement Department at 903-266-3400 (Extension 127) or call 1-800-777-9860.

Group Meetings for Survivors of Trauma and Survivors of Suicide Loss, sponsored by Michael's House of Hope at the New Life Worship Center, 18535 Hwy. 69 S., Tyler, room 620. Call Dr. Timothy M. Roddam at 903-681-3161 for more information. Survivors of Trauma meets the second Thursday of each month from 6-7 p.m.



We're on Facebook! Search for The Compassionate Friends of Tyler and Like our page.



The Compassionate Friends of Tyler

P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, TX 75711

We are happy to send our newsletter to you. We hope that it is helpful to you to be kept informed of chapter resources and activities and that you still wish to receive our newsletters that contain excellent material relating to grief issues.

To keep our mailing list current, we do ask to hear from you each year making sure that our information is correct and that you still wish to receive our mailings. If we did not hear from you in the last year please indicate any appropriate choices below and return the form to the address at the bottom of this page.

Your Name: _____

Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____ Cause of Death: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please check any of following that apply:

Due to the rising cost of postage, please send newsletters via email. My email address is _____.

I prefer not to receive the newsletter via email and would like to continue having a hard copy sent to the mailing address you have on file for me.

Please update my mailing address: _____

No thank you, I'd prefer to stop receiving the newsletter. (Newsletters are posted monthly on our website.)

Please include my child's name and picture in the slide presentation at the Candle Lighting Ceremony.

Please include my child's picture and information on the TCF Tyler Web site. (www.TylerTCF.org)

I am enclosing a memorial to support The Compassionate Friends in the amount of _____
Please make check payable to TCF

In memory of _____

Please use this gift for: TCF Newsletter Butterfly Release Candle Lighting TCF Events

The continuation of this chapter's work depends on donations. If you have not taken the opportunity to give a donation in memory of your child please consider taking this time to give a gift that will help reach out to other newly bereaved parents.

We must have your written permission on file to use your child's name and/or picture in the newsletter, Web site, Candle Lighting Ceremony or any other TCF event. Permission may be withdrawn at any time by written request. This information is used to maintain our Chapter Database. It is confidential and is only utilized for Chapter activities such as the newsletter.

(Signature) Date: _____

Please return completed form to: The Compassionate Friends of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711



We need not walk alone.

"When I grieve, when I stand by others as they grieve, even in the midst of seemingly unbearable sorrow, grief becomes a way to honor life—a way to cling to every fleeting, precious moment of joy." —*Cortney Davis*

August Birthdays



Brennen Applegate



Gena Forest



Marcos Lopez



Rowdy Cunningham



Ashley Allison



Connie Allred



Crystal Greene



Tosha Nichole Minatrea



Montie Norvell



Shanette Bland



Joey Green



Jonathan Eubank



Ron Mitchum



Christal Murphy



Haven Grace Davis



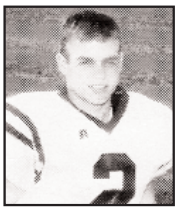
Cory Wayne Channon



Ashlee Ann Davis



Pharaoh Lydia



Scottie Baker



Quinn Martin Muirhead



Jonathan Russell Eubank



Hannah Collie



Dawson Nathaniel Harned



Dwayne Russell



Lori Campbell



Calan Cameron Decker McKeethan



Kristi Otteson



Justin Bynum



Alyssa Kathryn Crim



Alyssa Howerton



Phoebe Fair



Addison Rost



Nathaniel "Blake" Dark

Thank you for your generous donations to TCF of Tyler. These 'love gifts' allow us to provide our local chapter with special events, the TCF Newsletter, our website and more!



We need not walk alone.

"In this universe nothing is ever wholly lost. That which is excellent remains forever a part of this universe. Human hearts are dust. But the love which moves the human heart, abides to bless the last generation." —*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

A Grandmother's Grief

My mother, recently diagnosed with lymphoma, died just before Mother's Day. Only two months prior, she was a high spirited fun-loving woman, the heart of our family, who was looking forward to her 90th birthday celebration this fall. As I cared for my dear mother, knowing I would soon lose her, I reflected back on my daughter Kristen's death at age seven and my mother's concerns about me at that time. I had been so consumed by my own grief then, and the grief of my young son, only nine when his sister died, that I was hardly aware of others' grief. Not until a few years ago did my mother confide her pain of not only grieving for her precious granddaughter, but her daughter as well. Her fear was that the tragic sudden loss of Kristen could also mean the loss of her daughter. "Kristen drowned in the ocean but you were drowning in grief. I know you felt helpless to save her, but I felt the same about you. I had no idea how to rescue you." Surprised to hear this, even though I had also feared losing myself, I became aware for the first time of the unique role a grandparent plays when their grandchild dies.

I recently became a grandmother myself and have been overjoyed with this new role of welcoming Joseph into the world. My favorite picture is of my mother, shortly before she died, with a huge smile and her arms outstretched reaching for baby Joseph when meeting him for the first time. While my mother's death, unlike Kristen's, is part of the natural cycle of life, I will miss her deeply. She taught me so much and I think of her now in my new role as a grandparent. When Joseph was born, I had the luxury of spending the first several weeks with him, watching him change daily and his parents move nervously into their new role. I loved being witness to the bond developing as they changed from being a couple to being a little family. My son, a resident in anesthesiology, studies nightly with Joseph often nestled against his chest in a baby sling. He once shared how much he misses his baby with his long hours at the hospital. Watching the creation of this strong parental bond, I became aware of the unique dual bond of the grandparent. A bond that takes her heart to places she never thought possible—a bond that should never be broken.

I now appreciate what my mother experienced. The lesson for me is that while the focus is often on the bereaved parent, we must also be sensitive to the grief of the grandparent. And, too, there is this: Staying mindful of the flow of life and death in one's family can be a source of renewal and joy, even (and especially) in the midst of our darkest grief.

Carol K., TCF Marin County, CA

The Face of Courage, The Heart of Strength

What characteristics define courageousness and strength? Many would say that courage is facing inherent fears. A person with an intense fear of heights would be courageous to parachute from an airplane, wouldn't he? Instead of running from the debilitating fear, he stood and faced it. And what about strength? A person with demonstrative strength, perhaps a professional body builder, will not run from a challenge. He works out everyday, learning the skills necessary to increase his potential and toning muscles in preparation to lift that arduous barbell. The grief process has captivating similarities to the physical challenges posed to athletes. Yet, while athletes are admired and revered by society, many families in the grief process say they feel isolated within their own community. There is a misconception that compelling emotions should be repressed—that a person who openly shares tears is powerless and vulnerable.

There are those individuals brandishing the "carry-on-chin-up" stoic posture after a tragedy. Too often, these individuals are praised for their courage and strength. Some are commended on how well they are doing with pat-on-the-back encouragement. They have seemingly "carried on" with life, and put the tragedy and pain behind them. Some are admired for maintaining such unemotional composure, mistaking this "business-like" acumen for courage and strength. Others remain surreptitious with their emotions thinking others will view them as weak.

But take a look at the real defining characteristics of courage and strength. Does it take more courage and strength to bury the frightening and overwhelming emotions? Or does it take more courage and strength to deal with the grief—to look into the face of sorrow—to stare into the heart of pain? Those who have wept—really wept from the depths of the soul can answer that. Is there any emotion more harrowing, intimidating and physically exhausting as those experienced during those times of deep grief? Certainly not.

So which individual is truly the strong and courageous one? It must be the one who faces the pain full force—the one who has the courage to tell others the truth about their sorrow—the one who, instead of running, stands and faces the inconceivable challenges of grief—the one who isn't afraid to share the raw emotions of grief with others, to encourage understanding and compassion—the one who will reach out to others in grief and help carry another. Those are the defining attributes of true and indisputable courage and strength.

Joanne Cacciatore ©1998





We need not walk alone.

"Wounds do not heal without time and attention. Yet, too many of us feel that we don't have the right to take the time to heal from emotional and physical wounds." —*Judy Tatelbaum*

August Anniversaries Cont.



Addison Rost



Brevon McCarty



Travis Morris



Hudson Ray Hutchins



Robbie Kempker



Xander Rebel Kelly



Derek "Lance" Moss

Break The Rules... Stand Apart... Ignore Your Head...

Follow Your Heart...

In Loving Memory of our Daughter...

Cheyenne Nicole Ramirez

04-20-1993 – 10-4-2011



If I Had Known

If I had known the last time I looked into your eyes that it was going to be the last time I was going to look into them, I would have looked into them longer. I would have taken the time to notice how they sparkled when you smiled at me.

If I had known the last time you hugged me was going to be the last time I would feel your arms around me I would have held on a little longer.

If I had known the last time I heard you laugh was going to be the last time I was going to hear it I would have paid more attention to the beauty of that sound.

If I had known that the last time I watched you walk away from me was the last I would have seen you alive, I would have run after you and asked you to stay.

If I had known the last time I talked to you on the phone was going to be the last I would hear your voice, I would have paid more attention to the sound of your voice and I would have told you how much you mean to me.

I miss you so much.

Love, Mom, Claudia Ellison; In Memory of Justin Michael Davis, November 27, 1976 – June 7, 2006

Sorry, But It's Your Journey

I wish there was a different message for you—but there isn't. The journey through grief is your journey. You can put it off, you can refuse to go, but you can't give someone else the burden of the journey—you must bear that yourself. If that is so—what are we doing here? If that is so—why bother with a support group? Why reveal your pain to strangers? What are they doing here pretending to help?

It's not pretense. We can't make your journey for you, but we can go along. We know the route, so we can point the way. We may not have finished our own journey, but we have traveled the road you have yet to travel. We can help you when you stumble. We can give you comfort when the pain becomes too much to bear. We can hug you when a hug is needed, listen when you must talk, and show you that the journey has an end. But we can't make your journey for you.

It's a gloomy message, I know. It's never pleasant to hear there's work to be done. But you can make the journey, you can do the work, you can get through your grief, and we're here to help you all along the way. Someday your gloom will lay in tatters, and there will be some sunshine—some day.

TCF South Bay, LA Newsletter



We need not walk alone.

"An important way to cope with grief is having an outlet, be it interpersonal, be it artistic, that will allow you to not have to contain your grief, but will give you an opportunity to express it, to externalize it to some degree." —*R. Benjamin Cirlin*

Grandparents' Remembrance

We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives. Our grief is two-fold and at times we feel powerless to help. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts. We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild, and we have lost a symbol of our immortality. As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them, and when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together. We continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. We support the new ones, which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort.

Susan Mackey, TCF Rutland, VT

Simple Steps Towards Healing

Acknowledge the loss; embrace and own the experience and the loss whatever you are feeling; allow yourself to experience all the emotions of grief; find ways to express your anger and pain in non-destructive ways; find support; build a support system of compassionate listeners; skip the self-judgment; let the judgment of others pass through you without damage; forgive yourself for whatever you believe you have done or not done; release the hurt, the anger and the guilt; be careful what you release; once released those things are gone forever; work towards healing; practice forgiving yourself for living; concentrate on your loved one's life, not the death; discover the person you are now; begin to release the hurt in search of hope; never, ever, ever forget your loved one lived.

Thanks for your donations and continued support of TCF of Tyler.

In loving memory of
Christopher Molnari
by Anonymous



In loving memory of
Terry Wayne Brown
by Melton Brown



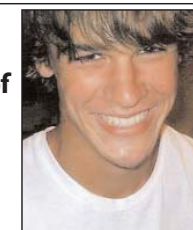
In loving memory of
Alex Conway by
Robert & Trisha
Taylor



In loving memory of
Andy Terrell by
David & Teresa
Terrell



In loving memory of
Chris O'Leary by
Merri Walsh



In loving memory of
Leah Zucca by
Jim & Cheri Zucca



In loving memory of
Chad Cavazos by
Dale Cavazos



In loving memory of
Christopher Loper
by Tina Loper



In loving memory of
Jared Sheets by
Carol & Shane
Johnson



In loving memory of
Stephanie Settle by
Danny & Pat Settle





We need not walk alone.

"At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us." —Albert Schweitzer

On Dealing with a Violent Death

Generally it takes 18-24 months to stabilize after the death of a family member. It can take much longer when the death is a violent one. Recognize the length of the mourning process. Beware of developing unrealistic expectations of yourself.

Your worst times are usually not at the moment a tragic event takes place. Then you're in a state of shock or numbness. Often you slide "into the pits" 4-7 months after the event. Strangely, when you're in the pits and tempted to despair, this may be the time when most people expect you to be over your loss.

When people ask how you're doing, don't always say, 'Fine.' Let some people know how terrible you feel.

Talking with a true friend or with others who've been there and survived can be very helpful. Those who've been there speak your language. Only they can really say, "I know, I understand." You are not alone.

Often depression is a cover for anger. Learn to uncork your bottle and find appropriate ways to release your bottled-up anger. What you're going through seems so unfair and unjust.

Take time to lament, to experience being a victim. It may be necessary to spend some time feeling sorry for yourself. "Pity Parties" sometimes are necessary and can be therapeutic.

It's all right to cry, to question, to be weak. Beware of allowing yourself to be "out on a pedestal" by others who tell you what an inspiration you are because of your strength and your ability to cope so well. IF THEY ONLY KNEW.

Remember you may be a rookie at the experience you're going through. This is probably the first violent death you've coped with. You don't know what to do or how to act. You need help.

Reach out and try to help others in some ways, at least. This little step forward may help prevent you from dwelling on yourself.

Many times of crisis ultimately can become times of opportunity. Mysteriously your faith in yourself, in others, in God can be deepened through crisis. Seek out persons who can serve as symbols of hope to you.

The above thoughts are offered by Father Kenneth Czillinger of Cincinnati, Ohio who, for many years has been involved in working with the dying and grieving. He also participated in forming support groups.

May 2008 Valley Forge Newsletter

Time

"Time marches on" is the old cliché. It does march on with fury and determination, but some things stay the same. Your seat is still empty at the dinner table. Your bed is still not slept in. The sound of your laughter is only in our memories. Your photo framed in the family gallery of pictures stays the same while everyone else's ages. Your phone number never shows on the caller ID. Your clothes are never found in the laundry; your name is hardly mentioned. But time marches on no matter how much we wish we could go back in time to the days when these things were common occurrences.

Somehow we have managed to move along with time. At times it has been a real conscious struggle to keep afloat. We resist, not wanting to leave you in times past. We have managed to survive your death, but we are forever wounded. Sometimes the wound doesn't show to others. Only to those who really take time to "peer" into the question. "How are you?" Those that dare venture and ask the question sincerely waiting for a heartfelt answer are truly special to us. These individuals touch our hearts in that special place where our children still live. They can make us smile and the tears flow without shame, just by acknowledging the pain is still there. They validate our child's existence.

To have someone mention our child is truly a gift to a bereaved parent. Few are the non-bereaved that will venture to this "special place" and have the courage to enter. You can be assured that the bereaved parent doesn't forget these instances when permission was given by you to share their son or daughter.

Karen C., TCF Frankfort, KY



We need not walk alone.

"Grief is like a long valley, a winding valley where any bend may reveal a totally new landscape." —C.S. Lewis

August Anniversaries



Boston Kade Porter



Justin Dover



Alex King



Austin Cheek



Dawson Nathaniel Harned



John Kluepple



Jill Marie Rozell



Shannon Scheffler



Paul Ragsdale



Lorie McLain



Sandi McLain



Bobby Jack Stanley



Michael Holdway



Evan Blake Alexander



Michael Toby Tobias



James Jenkins



Dustin Dewayne Bruce



LaDerrius Darden



Jaime Arellano, Jr.



Tiffany LeAnn Tanner



Cathy Key



Cameron Robinson



Aaron Willman



Montie Norvell



Joe Maland



Erik Scott McKinney



Dawn Marie Wilson



Tommy Jack Burchfield



Patton Ross



Matthew Skinner



Stephen "Chadwick" Williford



Darrell Lynn Sallas, II



Sheila Nolen



Dustyn Sandifer



Steve Short



Isaih Moa





We need not walk alone.

"The death of a loved one becomes a reference point around which we define where we've been and how we structure a path for tomorrow. Grief provides a 'crash course' in some of the most profound lessons life has to offer. As bereaved individuals, we find ourselves with fewer answers but far more insights. In time, we learn there is no loss without gain and no sorrow without joy." —*Joanetta Hendel*

My Angel's Unicorns

They look like tiny horses of porcelain and brass
But on their forehead there is a golden horn
Reminders of a daughter's life that ended much too fast
They are my angel's unicorns

For as long as I can recall she loved those little things
Those mystic creatures from a magic time
There was something about the way
they brightened up her room
And even in the darkness they would shine

Even now sometimes late at night I go into her room
All her other things are put away
Her unicorns are still shining bright like a shrine to her memory
Telling me she's still here with me today

In a meadow upon a hill in the shade of evergreens
I often sit alone at early morn
There stands a marble stone facing toward the rising sun
And thereon etched in stone is a unicorn

They look like tiny horses of porcelain and brass
But on their forehead there is a golden horn
Reminders of a daughter's life that ended much too fast
They are my angel's unicorns

Sam Smith, for Stacey, TCF Tyler, TX

Good-bye

It's August again,
Different than last.
A hot blanket covers the earth.
Blood red roses droop over your casket.

With weak limbs I stand.
Misty eyes gaze at you,
My only brother,
Lying prepared for earth.

Today we were to go hiking,
Explore the vast countryside,
Just you and I.
Tomorrow we would try golf, or maybe just talk.

You told me yesterday of your pride in me
That I might strive for more.
"But it is you I follow," I say.
And we broke through the barrier, declaring us true friends.

To say good-bye is to remember this, and smile.
And if I look, I will find them—
Memories that smother the good-bye,
And let me cling to your life.

Laura W., TCF Champaign, IL

The Space Between Thoughts

You are no longer in my thoughts constantly.
You are now dwelling in the space between thoughts,
a part of my every moment whether joyful or sad
or in between, or both simultaneously.

I walk, talk, work, play and you surround me.
You are in the sparkle of my smile
the wisdom in my thinking
the rainbow circles in my life.

As I breathe and live, you breathe and live.
As I learn, you are teaching, not only me
but all those who are in my life today.
You are a blessing, dear child, for all you were
and all you are and all you'll forever be.

*Genesse Bourdeau Gentry, June 2001
TCF Marin Chapter Leader, North CA Regional Coordinator*

Grief

It's an entity all its own, with its pain that's never really gone.
It has many thoughts and faces, but very few reality traces.

It makes you ask many a question, all of which you try to
shun; What-When-Where-If-Why?
Could I have done something so my child wouldn't die?

These are what every parent asks;
this part of grief is a heart wrenching task.

Hours turn to days; days to months; months to a year,
this is the war you fight without gear.

You feel bare and naked and all alone,
at times you feel like you can't go on.

You say "This happens to someone else, not me!"
This I think every parent would agree.

But this time it really was you,
you scream, No, No, No, but it's oh so true.

This nightmare that never seems to end, with these
feelings you cannot pretend.

People say "Well you sure look good"
don't they know that we would die if only we could.

Yes grief has its own way,
while we endure it and live day to day.

*Judy Craig, TCF Memphis, TN
Written in memory of her son, Travis Carter*



We need not walk alone.

"Only after we have walked down the long road of grief and can look back, remembering those early days and weeks, can we see we really are not on square one again. We have just slipped backwards for a time. That is all. Allow yourself that, and then strive forward again. It takes time, a lot of time!" —*Mary Ehmann*

Love Gifts



Thanks to the following people who make a MONTHLY LOVE GIFT to TCF of Tyler:

(For monthly donors we will post photos of your children.)

- Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O'Leary - rent
- Carol & Shane Johnson in memory of Jared Sheets - rent
- Danny & Pat Settle in memory of Stephanie - rent
- Jim & Cheri Zucca in memory of Leah - rent
- Robert & Trisha Taylor in memory of Alex Conway - rent
- Barbara Barton in memory of Lindsey - rent
- Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad - newsletter
- Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper in memory of Christopher - TCF Phone
- David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy - use of a storage building

See more love gifts on page 7.



Newsletter Submissions

TCF Tyler welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to: The Compassionate Friends of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, Texas 75711. Or e-mail text and photos to: info@TylerTCF.org; We reserve the right to edit for space and/or content.

Deadline for submissions is the 5th of each month. TCF Chapters may copy articles from this publication provided credit is given to the author and the original source.

Errors and Omissions: We try very hard to be sure that all of the names and dates of our children are correct. If you see an error in the newsletter, please contact TCF at 903-422-0358. We want to get it right and will correct the information for future use. Thanks very much.

Email Addresses: If we do not have your email address or it has changed, please email it to info@tylertcf.org so that we may email you announcements and updates about TCF of Tyler.

Sign up for email notifications of events and to be notified when the newsletter is posted online at: www.tylertcf.org

Announcements

NEW MEETING PLACE! The new meeting location is 17555 Hwy. 155 S. (off Loop 49), Flint, TX 75762. Our meeting is held on the third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. For more information, please call 903-422-0358.

Steering Committee Meeting: If you are interested in participating in our chapter by serving on the steering committee, please plan to attend a steering committee meeting. Anyone who would like to become more involved in TCF and serve on the steering committee is welcome to come! Email us at info@tylertcf.org to get involved!

News from National: Compassionate Friends National offers webinars for the public on grief related topics. Upcoming public webinars will include Death of a Child By Suicide, Pregnancy and Infant Loss, The Death of a Special Needs Child and How Can I Help When A Child Dies? Check out www.compassionatefriends.org for dates and times.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

Dear TCF Members,

As always, we welcome volunteers to serve in any capacity within our group, including sending out birthday and anniversary cards each month. We would like to get two people per month, as it's getting to be a lot for one person to do.

We had a beautiful Butterfly Release in May and appreciate all who helped.

It's only July, but before we know it, we'll be planning our Annual Candlelighting Ceremony for December.

If you'd like to get involved as a volunteer or steering committee member, please reach out to us. We'd love to have you aboard and we're sure you'll experience some healing in this capacity.

Sincerely,
Cheri & Trisha

