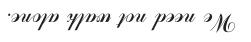


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P.O. Box 9714 Tyler, Texas 75711







Volume 16, Issue 12

Tyler, Texas

December 2015

Monthly Group Meeting

Tyler Area Meeting
3rd Monday of Each Month
1901 Rickety Ln., Tyler

Contact

Phone: (903) 258-2547 www.TylerTCF.org • info@TylerTCF.org P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

Chapter LeaderTina Loper SecretaryPat Settle Newsletter/Web SiteMary Lingle Tyler Meeting Facilitators: Leslie & Don Dixon

Steering Committee: Pat Settle, Sam Smith, David & Teresa Terrell, Mary Lingle, Lisa Schoonover, Cheri Zucca, Ellen Jenkins, Pam Pickett, Don & Leslie Dixon, Janet Majors, MaryAnn Girard, Trisha Mann Taylor

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

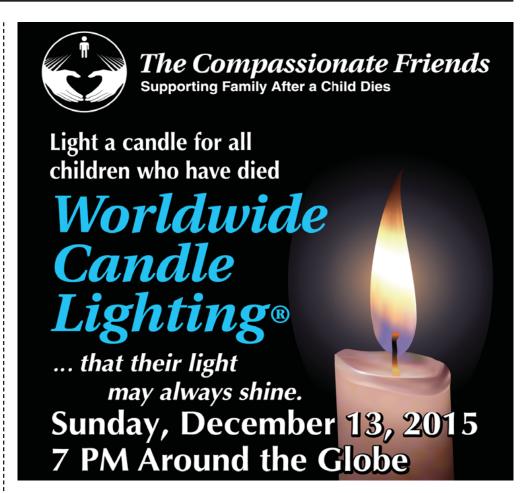
The Meeting Agenda

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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Annual Candle Lighting Memorial

Our Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony will be Sunday, Dec. 13, 2015 at Crossroads Community Church, 13730 Hwy 155 South, Tyler. The service begins at 6:30 p.m. This year canned food for the food pantry at our host church as well as new toys will be collected at the Candle Lighting. This is a great way to meet and get to know the members of The Compassionate Friends. Getting involved will likely help you as well as the other members! Everyone is needed and welcomed! Please consider bringing a finger food of your choice. We need everything from sandwiches and chips to sweets and drinks. Your contribution will be appreciated and enjoyed on this special evening. If you would like to help with the Candle Lighting set up, Saturday, the day before the event, take down and anything in between, please call the TCF line at 903-258-2547. Thank you!

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.



"Grief is neither an illness nor a pathological condition, but rather a highly personal and normal response to life-changing events, a natural process that can lead to healing and personal growth. The transition through this difficult time is the courageous journey." —Sandi Caplan and Gordon Lang, in Grief's Courageous Journey: A Workbook

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."

The Compassionate Friends

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.

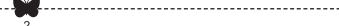
Group Meetings for Survivors of Trauma and Survivors of Suicide Loss, sponsored by Michael's House of Hope at the New Life Worship Center, 18535 Hwy. 69 S., Tyler, room 620. Call Dr. Timothy M. Roddam at 903-681-3161 for more information. Survivors of Trauma meets the the second Thursday of each month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



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



(Signature)



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:	Relationship:	
Birth Date:	Death Date:	Cause	Cause of Death:	
Address:				
City:		State:	Zip:	
Home Telephone:				
E-mail:				
Please check any of following	ng that apply.			
☐ Please continue sending t	he newsletter.			
☐ No thank you, I'd prefer	to stop receiving the newsletter.	(Newsletters are posted mo	nthly on our Web site.)	
☐ Please include my child's	name and picture in the slide pr	resentation at the Candle Li	ghting Ceremony.	
☐ Please include my child's	picture and information on the	ΓCF Tyler Web site. (www.	TylerTCF.org)	
☐ I am enclosing a memoria	al to support The Compassionate	Friends in the amount of_		
☐ In memory of			Please make check payable to TCF	
Please use this gift for:	ΓCF Newsletter □ Butterfly Rel	lease	☐ TCF Events	
	pter's work depends on donations sider taking this time to give a g	•	opportunity to give a donation in memto other newly bereaved parents.	
Lighting Ceremony or any o	other TCF event. Permission may	be withdrawn at any time	re in the newsletter, Web site, Candle by written request. This information is r activities such as the newsletter.	
			Date:	

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

"Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. Love still stands when all else has fallen.' —Author unknown

We need not walk alone.

"Whether we cry on the inside or cry on the outside is predetermined by society, our genetics and a host of other factors. But we do cry these beautiful tears for our deceased children. These tears somehow remind us of the connection to our children, their departure and our deep, deep loss." —Annette Mennen Baldwin

December Birthdays



Jonathan Reynolds







Zackery Browne





Logan Alexander





Dex Bailey McLean





Christopher John



Shelby Williams







Salvador Estrada





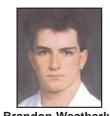
Kirkpatrick



Jeremy Simpson













The Compassionate Friends







Burke Warren Lewis



Tiffany LeAnn Tanner







In loving memory of Christopher

Christopher Loper

Tina, Johnathan & **Heather Loper**



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper. Call (903) 258-2547 to sponsor a monthly newsletter.

Stephanie Settle

In loving memory of Steph

Danny, Pat & **Stephen Settle**



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Danny, Pat & Stephen Settle. Call (903) 258-2547 to sponsor a monthly newsletter.





"No matter where you are in your journey toward healing, bolster the hope that arises within you. Your healing is probably the best memorial you may erect to your dead child!" —Robert Gloor

December Anniversaries Cont.



Matt Thomas Crooks



Joey Green



Jeremy Simpson Brown



ns Linds



Lindsey Goen James Snyman



Scarlet Lynne



Jason Lee Eubank



John Miller



Cashley Jackson



Joshua Wilson



Gauge Austin

dan Mims Wrangler Akin



Robin Reynolds



Aaron Yarbrough



Suzanne Glover



Martha Field

As the Holidays Approach

When the holidays are fast approaching, we who are bereaved always have mixed emotions about having a nice holiday when our child or loved one is no longer with us. We wonder if we will ever be as happy and if we can ever again celebrate the holidays or any meaningful family occasion, especially the first birthday, first thanksgiving, or first Christmas since our loss. We try to look ahead to how we are going to feel when the time arrives, but it is usually not as hard as we had anticipated. Still, the occasion may not be as enjoyable as we'd like it to be or as we remember it from the past.

I would like to offer a few ideas for what we can do to make our holidays a little better. Consider buying gifts for less fortunate children, adopting a child/family at Christmas time, or inviting a lonely person to share your holiday meal. Make your child's favorite foods and discuss your loved one as you share the meal. Some people like to volunteer to serve holiday dinners for the homeless. Some bereaved parents want to visit familiar places their child loved to go, while others want to travel where their child had never been.

Several of our Compassionate Friends members put a small Christmas tree at the cemetery and decorate the graves with Christmas flowers and/or a grave blanket. Making a grave blanket is very fulfilling; we did that for 10 years after our daughter Teresa died. Attending a Candlelight program is a wonderful way to honor your child or loved one.

These suggestions are things we feel we can still do for our child, but they are not reserved for bereaved parents only. All of them can be done for any member of a family or a friend who has died. After someone dies we must keep going and doing things that lift us up. We can't always try to please any people who feel we should act in a certain manner.

Jackie Wesley, TCF East Central Indiana & Miami-Whitewater Chapters



"You loved; therefore, you grieve. You may succeed in postponing your grief for a time, but it will resurface some day in some way. You are encouraged to deal with it now so that it won't be waiting ten or fifteen years down the road for you." —Mary Cleckley

A Holiday To-Do List:

As a reflection back on the past 13 (Wow! has it really been that long?!) Christmases, I would like to share some ways that I have handled the holidays, as well as some additional thoughts. This time of the year is bittersweet for me now, as opposed to the first Christmas without my older brother, David. That was the worst.

At any rate, I can handle November and December much better now. I suppose I've learned a little along the way, and gained strength each year. Nonetheless, the anniversary of his death always gets to me. Unfortunately, it falls between Thanksgiving and Christmas on December 9th. Here's my list of suggestions for honoring a sibling whom you have lost, and on simply making it through yourself:

- 1. Hang that stocking. Go ahead. Put up your sibling's stocking. It isn't as though your brother or sister never existed, and isn't still a part of your life.
- 2. Write a poem or letter to your sibling and put it in the stocking.
- 3. Put up a tree, or continue with your holiday traditions. Yes, this is VERY difficult. But for most of our siblings, this was their favorite time of year. Celebrate how blessed you have been to have had your sister or brother for holidays past. Decorate the way THEY would have wanted to, instead of the way you would do it.
- 4. Create a "memory" box. This is simply a box of belongings from your sibling, or pictures of your sibling, etc. Wrap it in festive holiday paper, and put it under your tree if you have one.
- 5. Buy a gift for your sibling. Maybe it is something they truly would have wanted for the holidays, maybe it's something the two of you would have enjoyed together or gotten a good laugh out of. This can be VERY therapeutic.
- 6. Go somewhere that your sibling would have wanted to go—the beach, a movie they would have liked, a favorite restaurant, wherever. "Share" this time with your sibling. This is also good on their birthday. Celebrate that they had a life and that they are a part of yours!
- 7. Bake a favorite holiday goody of your sibling's.
- 8. Get together with your family and cry (and LAUGH—it's OK to do this) at some great family memories from years past that involved your sibling. Share thoughts on great places you may have visited for the holidays, or anecdotes of you and your sibling trying to peek at what your gifts were ahead of time.
- 9. Put together a photo album of your sibling. This could be of your sibling's life in general, or of a specific subject, like the sport your sibling played, or holidays past. 10. Give your album to your parents. Cry (and LAUGH!) at the pictures and the memories they generate.

I hope that you are blessed this holiday season, and that my suggestions are helpful. Please know that the holidays get easier with time, and that you WILL make it through, even though it may seem impossible.

Amy Baker Ferry ~ TCF, Heart of Florida Chapter

Thanks for your continued support of TCF of Tyler.

In loving memory of Missy Rogers by Cece & Dan Brotton



In loving memory of Alec Thigpen by Nanette Ray



In loving memory of Jared Sheets by Jim & Linda Crawford





"In time, we learn there is no loss without gain and no sorrow without joy. As death closes doors behind us, new doors open before us." — Joanetta Hendel

We need not walk alone.

"Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. Love still stands when all else has fallen."

What Makes Suicide An Especially Difficult Loss?

Suicide is a reaction to overwhelming feelings of loneliness, worthlessness, helplessness, hopelessness and depression. It occurs when a person's pain exceeds his or her resources and ability to cope. It is the third leading cause of death for people 15-24 years of age.

The suicide of a loved one raises painful questions, doubts and fears. Cultural and religious interpretations of an earlier day are responsible for the stigma associated with suicide. The knowledge that your love was not enough to save the person you loved, and the fear that others will judge you, may raise feelings of failure, of shame and blame in addition to the sorrow of loss.

Here are things you can do when you have lost a loved one to suicide:

- For those with concerns of a spiritual nature, do try to find a gentle, non-judgmental member of your faith, and open yourself to that person.
- Rather than being concerned about the stigma surrounding suicide, concentrate on your own healing and survival.
- It is important that you confront the word suicide, difficult as it may be. Keeping the cause of death a secret will deprive you of the joy of speaking about your loved one and will isolate you from family and friends who want to support you.

If you don't allow yourself to have that experience, you are blocking your healing. Instead of trying to deny or medicate the pain, realize that the hurt is necessary in order for you to heal. Our experience of mental suffering offers us the chance to grow stronger in the process.

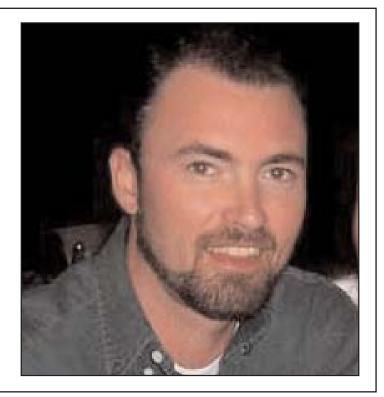
Author unknown; Submitted by David Terrell, TCF Tyler, TX

Burke Lewis

In loving memory of Burke

Martha & Henry Lewis

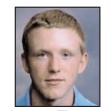
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This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Martha & Henry Lewis. Call (903) 258-2547 to sponsor a monthly newsletter.

—Author unknown

December Birthdays Cont.









Alec Heath





Justin Turbeville



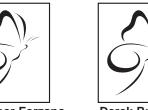




Allison Hiett



Shelby Williams **December Anniversaries**



Christopher Forzano



Derek Russell



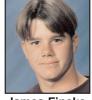


Christopher Loper



Felicia Hobbs











Jocelyn McCormick

Ashton Wayne Yates

Theresa Kay Talley





Mike Loughmiller

Margie Starkey



Jessica Noelle **Kirkpatrick**



Minatrea



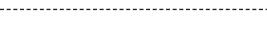








Continued on next page.



The Compassionate Friends

Kelly Ann Campbell

Guthrie. III



"Let us all heed the quiet message heard so softly in that maelstrom of the spirit. Forgive...forgive...forgive until forever. Let love enfold our anguish, helping us to

learn to grow and strive beyond this hour to a rich tomorrow." —Don Hackett

First Christmas

It can't possibly be Christmas without her being here. Yet the world is singing 'round me, joyful tidings and good cheer.

> Though I try to put on armor and brave the sights and sounds, a few moments worth of shopping, and the tears are spilling down.

I pray for strength to do it, find a path through holidays, look for shortcuts, good ideas, some directions through the maze.

> Then I find at last the answer: I'll include her symbolically. And the giving becomes perfect; her love's flowing down through me.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry From Stars in the Deepest Night— After the Death of a Child

Dancing In The Air

By David Denny, Vendor Street Sense - D.C. Metro Area Street Newsletter

Life is so fleeting you never know When our spirits will bound or decide to flow. We dance with rhythm Keeping in cadence with the rhyme Trying to find our niche in the allotted time. So are you there dancing in the air You had much more magic to share. Give me a whisper, any subtle sign Or just one familiar, poetic line. You filled the world with love and care Your untimely journey just doesn't seem fair.

Wishing You The Colors of Christmas

This year I will leave behind the clanging reds and the vibrant greens, the glowing golds and the silver glittering plaids of Christmas. I will tune out "Jingle Bells" and "Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer" and let "Silent Night" and "Hark The Herald Angels Sing" play softly in my heart.

This year I will allow time for silence and quiet meditation on the birth of The Christ Child. and turn off the squawking and shrieking of holiday commercials.

I want to be drawn in and comforted by the peace of soft blues and the calm of snowy whites, and to search the sky, the moon and the stars for promise and hope during the winter nights.

I will decorate with Christmas angels who stand still in my home, guarding my heart from pain, and the nativity scene which keeps me focused on the truth.

I will not yet open those sacred boxes of Christmas ornaments and priceless mementos which filled my home in Christmas past. I want to think about the praise of the angels where our children celebrate Christmas, and leave behind the chaos the world has created and named Christmas.

I wish for each of us to have the courage to search the memories in our hearts and to not shut them out because of our unspeakable pain.

I wish for us to allow the presence and comfort of family and friends who love us, and remember that their celebration is tinged with lingering pain and private sorrow.

I wish for you the peace and softness of Christmas.

Carol Thompson, TCF Tyler, TX Always Remembering Sarah December 2012



"In time, we learn there is no loss without gain and no sorrow without joy. As death closes doors behind us, new doors open before us." - Joanetta Hendel

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 on their Birthday and Anniversary dates.)

Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O'Leary - rent Martha Lewis in memory of Burke - rent Carol & Shane Johnson in memory of Jared Sheets - rent Danny & Pat Settle in memory of Stephanie - rent Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad - newsletter Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper in memory of Christopher - TCF Phone

See more love gifts on page 6.

David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy -

use of a storage building



Newsletter Submissions

TCF Tyler welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to: TCF Tyler, 5401 Hollytree Drive, 1204, Tyler, Texas 75703. Or email 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 903-258-2547. 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 Tina or Pat so that we may email you announcements and updates about TCF of Tyler. Tina's email: lilbluebutterfly6@gmail.com ~ Pat's email: beachbum2201@gmail.com

Thanks to all our families who Support TCF of Tyler with their love gifts.

Announcements

Tyler TCF Meeting: The meeting in Tyler is held on the third Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at 1901 Rickety Lane in Tyler. For more information, please call 903-258-2547.

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! For more information about our next meeting, call 903-258-2547.

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.

New Chapter in our area:

#2477 TCF of Brazos Valley 4201 St Hwy 6 S College Station, TX 77845 Phone - 979-595-6022 Email: tcfbrazosvalley@gmail.com Chapter Leaders: Tommy & Polly Myrick

Sixth and Final Quilt

We are compiling names and photos for the 6th and final quilt. Please mail your \$25 donation for a square, child's name, and make sure we have a quality picture of your child that will show up well. This will be the last guilt for our chapter so please let us know quickly as we anticipate the list of 30 will fill up fast. David and Teresa Terrell have generously donated their time and talent for the completed guilts and are no longer able to physically continue. You can mail your donation to TCF Tyler PO Box 9714 Tyler Texas 75711, please note on your check what it is for. Photos or questions can be emailed to lilbluebutterfly6@gmail.com.



