A special THANKS to Melissa at Landmark Business Park for discounting our rent so that we can continue meeting at our current location!



www.TylerTCF.org

Thanks to Skillern's Business Systems for printing our newsletter!

Skillern's Business Systems 1604 Grande Blvd., Tyler, TX 75703 903-561-5591 • www.skillerns.com

Please join us at 17555 Hwy. 155 S. (off Loop 49), Flint, TX 75762. We hope to see you at our next meeting!



Tyler, Texas 75711 P.O. Box 9714 **EBIEND2**







Volume 22, Issue I

Tyler, Texas

January 2021

Monthly Group Meeting

Tyler Area Meeting 900 S. Broadway Ave. Tyler, TX 75701 3rd Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m. Find us on Facebook @TylerTCF

Contact

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

Chapter Leader: Heather Ogg; Secretary: Trish Mann Taylor; Newsletter/Website: Mary Lingle; Tyler Meeting Facilitator: Heather Ogg

Steering Committee: Cheri Zucca, Janet Majors, Trisha Mann Taylor, Barbara Barton, Carol Johnson, Heather Ogg, Kim Cathey, 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 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.

In This Issue...

vveicome	∠
Grief Resources	2
Announcements	
Birthdays	4-5
Reflections on a New Year	5
Anniversaries	6-7
Resolutions	7
Please Let Me Mourn	8
Newsletter/Rent Sponsor	8-9
Poems	10
Bent But Not Broken	11
Donations	11

Important Notice Regarding Meeting Location:

Starting in February 2021, we will no longer be meeting at the location in Flint. Instead, we plan to meet at the Children's Park facilities at 900 S. Broadway Ave. in Tyler. Please consider donating towards the cost of the facility, in memory of your child. Also, donations to help with the rental of a climate-controlled storage room would be helpful so that we can afford to keep our supplies, decorations and more.

Pain

I am not a young man, and I thought I knew the meaning of pain. I have experienced pain from a toothache, arthritis, and even the loss of relatives and friends. But nothing in my fifty-four years had prepared me for the pain I experienced when we lost our son. I had no clue to real pain.

I think only a bereaved parent knows the true meaning. Not to belittle the loss of a parent or spouse, but those who have lost both tell me that it is not the same. My mother said to me at my brother's funeral, "Now I know how you feel." Even though she had lost a grandson, it was not the same.

It has been almost five years now, and there hasn't been a day go by that I don't see his picture or think of him and feel that pain. Pain for what we lost—and for what he lost. That pain is not as intense now. I have learned to tolerate it and still lead a normal life. The Compassionate Friends helped me to realize that I was not alone and that there were many others who felt that same pain. They helped me learn how to deal with it. Now it is my turn to try to help someone else.

Harold F. Underwood, TCF, Southern Maryland

"Suppressed grief suffocates, it rages within the breast, and is forced to multiply its strength." —Ovid

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.



"'Why me?' is a singular and lonely question, but it doesn't have to be. Together we can give hope to the hopeless and comfort to the suffering. All we need to do is reach out, then maybe the 'Why me?' will answer itself." —*Polly Moore*

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**

The Childrens Park: www.childrensparktyler.org **Glory Babies** meets the third Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at Alison house next to The Children's Park of Tyler: www.glorybabies.com

GriefShare: www.griefshare.org

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.





"Each of us finds an escape from the world after the death of our child...something to revise our history and help us survive. But eventually we must seek balance, find ways of coping with our soul-shattering loss and ground ourselves in our new reality. The Compassionate Friends has done all of that for me. But I had to take the first step." —Annette Mennen Baldwin

Bent But Not Broken

The beautiful flowering tree planted in Nina's memory on Memorial Day a year short of a decade ago (by her favorite cousins) looked so regal and smelled so delicious yesterday. I like to think it flowers this time of year as a special birthday message from my "baby girl." However, with the vicious storm we had last evening I watched the soft white petals drift and swirl to the ground, as if a deluge of tears from a breaking heart. Today, it sits almost bare—a few petals still hanging on for dear life, unable to let go, desperate to regain its former beauty.

I can't help but see a symbolism in that tree that I can associate with. It is as if it stands as a monument to my grief, the ebb and flow of emotions that I have felt for the past nine years since Nina no longer walks this earth. When the tree is in full flower it seems much like family life "before." Of course there were short-term crises, that now seem insignificant in comparison, and life's speed bumps along the way, but all in all, pretty good. I mean, at least our family was intact. When the leaves were suddenly stripped of their branches and thrown to the ground in the furious hailstorm, it was like our lives after Nina's sudden death; thrown suddenly into a world of intense pain and sorrow, trying desperately to survive the unthinkable.

But, yet this morning, the tree stands, more barren and most definitely battered, but still hanging in there. Nine years later, those who love her, have weathered the tornado-like force of grief and loss. And nine years later, much like Nina's tree, though the storm has taken its toll, we will still manage to be upright; definitely bent, but still standing. And somehow, life roars on...

With gentle thoughts, Cathy Seehuetter, TCF, St. Paul, MN



In Remembrance...

Our heartfelt condolences to the family of Steering Committee member, Debra Ritchie (mom to Michael Ritchie), who died in December of 2020. People who knew Debra speak of her generosity and encouragement. She helped many people over the years, especially those who had lost children. We will miss you, Debra.

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

In loving memory of T.J. Anderson by Mona Anderson



In loving memory of Burke Lewis by Martha Lewis



In loving memory of Alex by Robert & Trisha Taylor



In loving memory of Chris O'Leary by Mary O'Leary Walsh



In loving memory of Leah Zucca by Jim & Cheri Zucca



In loving memory of Chad Cavazos by Dale Cavazos



In loving memory of Tanner Douglas by Heather Ogg & Zach Reed

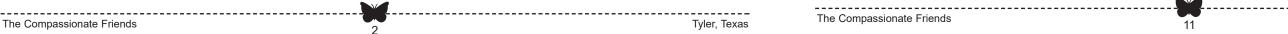


In loving memory of Christopher Loper by Tina Loper



In loving memory of Andy Terrell by David & Teresa Terrell





"I am grateful to my father for showing me I am not alone in my grief. Only time can lessen the pain of grief, but my pain is more bearable when I share my grief. I have grown up with the knowledge of people who believe real men don't cry. Maybe they haven't lost a son. Maybe they haven't had a chance to be an example to the daughters who share their grief." —Carrie Kears

We need not walk alone.

"When it seems that our sorrow is too great to be borne, let us think of the great family of the heavy-hearted into which our grief has given us entrance, and inevitably, we will feel about us, their arms and their understanding." —Helen Keller

January Birthdays



Joshua Paul Renaud







Hailey Rose



Cameron Robinson



Alexander Johnson



Amber Glasco



Erika Stafford





Benjamin Gilpin



Jocelyn McCormick









Matthew Skinner









Kimberly Pryor



Kelynn J'Davion

Amanda Michelle Valadez



Daron Adam Lee

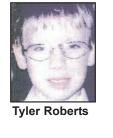






Daryn Keith Selman





Guill





James E. Abbie, Jr.

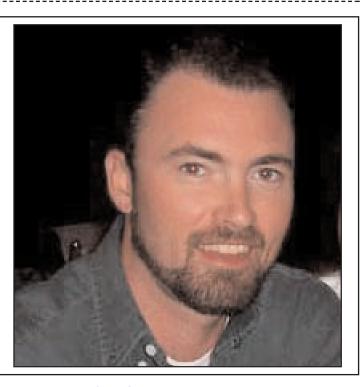
Fields

Glenn Ray Hawkins Continued on next page.

Burke Lewis

In loving memory of Burke

by Martha Lewis



Thanks to Martha Lewis for your generous donation.

Newsletter or rent sponsorship is \$75. Contact us if you'd like to be a sponsor in memory of your loved one.

Sarah Thompson

In loving memory of Sarah

by Carol Thompson



Thanks to Carol Thompson for your generous donation.

Newsletter or rent sponsorship is \$75. Contact us if you'd like to be a sponsor in memory of your loved one.

The Compassionate Friends The Compassionate Friends

"With the passing of years, I have learned that if I can hang on for just a little longer, these emotions—strong as they are—will pass and I can live again with the longing hidden deep inside my breast." —Shirley Muller

We need not walk alone.

"The pain of grief is still there, but I am living life one-day-at-a-time, enriched because my son came through my body into my life." —Helen Godwin

January Anniversaries



Ashley McCaa





Bonnie Lee Benson



Jason Brown





Jana Lauren Shearer





Eubank



Hailey Rose



January Anniversaries Cont.

Caleb Cecil Luther Callie Ann Graul



Connie Allred



Samuel Cade Castleberry



Joshua Baker



Brittany Butler

Dylan Corey



Green



David LaTrell Milton



Makenzie Shyanne Morehead



Benjamin Gilpin



Lauren Campbell





Aubreigh Yates



Rayvn Makynze Caldwell



Michael Anthony Gonzalez



Lincoln Garvt Allen



Michael R. Peymon





Blake Alexander



Haylee Lee



Danielle Celeste Yura



Logan Alexander

Betsi Marie Wyatt



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!



Resolutions

Every time the holiday season comes to a close, I feel as if I can hear a collective sigh of relief. This year was no different except that the sigh seemed louder and longer than in past years. Some years are like that for us. This one was certainly like that for me. No matter how difficult I thought the holidays would be to get through I was wrong. In some ways they were more difficult and in other ways, surprisingly, they were less difficult. The reality is that you and I, no matter how we anticipated the holidays, did get through them. We did survive the holidays and though it may be difficult for you to believe this now, there is no reason that this new year shouldn't be better.

Which brings me to a favorite topic for this time of year, New Year's resolutions. Resolutions that I think are most helpful are those that concern our well-being. Above all else, resolve to take better care of yourself. Try to eat right and exercise. Find ways to nurture yourself—both your body and your mind. Remember all things in moderation. Seek advice from others when you need it and above all, ask for help when you need it. You won't always get the help when you ask for it, but remember, if you don't ask for it, you surely won't aet it.

Another thing you can do to have a happier new year is to become more involved in our chapter of The Compassionate Friends. If you've not come to any meetings, or if it's been a while, give it a try. Commit to attending at least three meetings. If you were to attend only one, you would not necessarily get a very good idea of what our meetings are like. Join us and make your needs known to us.

This newsletter is another way you can become more involved in our chapter. Let us know what works for you and what doesn't. Consider becoming a contributor. Tell us how we might be able to better serve your needs.

Have a happier New Year!

Pat Akery, TCF, Medford, OR





Christopher Baggett

Eric Branch



Derek Nolan Brytnie Leah Stithem Simoneaux

Charles "Bryan"

Meadows

Clayton Norton



Haven Grace Davis

Mary Adams



Travis Carpenter

Susie Gorman

Shellae Vicknair





Ryan Glasco

Continued on next page.

The Compassionate Friends Tyler, Texas The Compassionate Friends "We must embrace pain and burn it as fuel for our journey." —Kenji Miyazawa

Please Let Me Mourn

I've never lost a child before, and I don't understand all these emotions I am feeling. Will you try to understand and help me?

Please let me mourn. I may act and appear together, but I am not. Oftentimes it hurts so much I can hardly bear it.

Please let me mourn. Don't expect too much from me. I will try to help you know what I can and cannot handle. Sometimes I am not always sure.

Please let me mourn. Let me talk about my child. I need to talk. It's part of the healing. Don't pretend nothing has happened. It hurts terribly when you do. I love my child very much, and my memories are all I have now. They are very precious to me.

Please let me mourn. Sometimes I cry and act differently, but it is all part of the grieving. My tears are necessary and needed and should not be held back. It even helps when you cry with me. Please don't fear my tears.

Please let me mourn. What I need most is your friendship, your sympathy, your prayers, your support, and your understanding love. I am not the same person I was before my child died, and I never will be. Hopefully we can all grow from this shared tragedy.

Please let me mourn. God gives me strength to face each day and the hope that I will survive with His help and yours. Time will heal some of the pain, but there will always be an empty place in my heart.

Please let me mourn. Please let me mourn and thank you for helping me through the most difficult time of my life.

Lonnie Forland, TCF, Northwood, IA

The Compassionate Friends

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

Chad Cavazos

In loving memory of Chad

by Dale Cavazos



Thanks to Dale Cavazos for your generous donation.

Newsletter or rent sponsorship is \$75. Contact us if you'd like to be a sponsor in memory of your loved one.





"Heaven knows we need never be ashamed of our tears, for they are rain upon the blinding dust of earth, overlying our hard hearts." —Charles Dickens

January Birthdays Cont.







John Miller



Kelbi Mathis



Richard Allen



Kammon Gebo Hudson Ayers





Brian Peel



Madelyn Moore



John Klueppel



Skyler Lucas



Miles McBrayer



Ryan Steele

Reflections on a New Year

We begin a new year, one that many of us enter with reluctance. After all, it means another year away from our child and another year to be lived without the physical presence of the one we have lost. Apprehensive about any new challenges that we may be called upon to face in our broken condition, we call out, "Wait, I'm not ready yet!"

The death of our child changed the course of our life; nothing will be the same again. But it also has shaped us into who we are today. And it will continue to do so as we learn to incorporate this loss into who we are to become.

Have you found that you have already begun to live differently? Compassion toward others is more profound. Trivial things are no longer important. Appreciation for life, and those in our lives, is paramount. We're living the same life—differently.

Tragedies, disappointments, and heartaches combine with beauty, love, and joy to fashion our life. These are all a part of life, and our challenge is to incorporate them into our world. The difference that our child's life has had upon the world continues

So, rather than being fearful of the challenges that lie ahead, perhaps a better question to consider at this time might be: What opportunities will present themselves in the coming year to honor this loss that is already a part of our life? Our child has become more integrally entwined into our being than ever before. We bring him or her to every situation that we encounter. How can we make that situation better because of this bond?

The start of a new calendar year is a good time to remember that we are in the midst of life. It is not perfect. Nor is it one that we might have chosen. But, our struggles do not put life "on hold." Rather they are a part of life itself! Our life is ours to make the most of, with many gifts that we can share with others. There is no better time than the present to gather up the pieces and recognize the uniqueness that we each call "me"—a uniqueness made more wonderful because of our child's presence in the life we choose to live.

Paula Staisiunas Schultz, In Memory of Melissa and Jeff

Author biography, 2002: Paula and her husband Bob live in Chicago, Illinois., where Paula serves as co-editor of the South Suburban Chapter newsletter. Their son, Jeff Schultz, is currently a student at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. Their daughter, Melissa Schultz Cleaves, and her husband, Jeff Cleaves, had been married seven weeks when they died in a car accident on Thanksgiving weekend, 1999.

Reprinted with permission from We Need Not Walk Alone, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends. Copyright 2002-2010

The Compassionate Friends





"I do not believe that sheer suffering teaches. If suffering alone taught, all the world would be wise, since everyone suffers. To suffering must be added mourning, understanding, patience, love, openness, and the willingness to remain vulnerable." —Anne Morrow Lindbergh

Missing You

Even though you're physically gone
in my heart you still remain.
Only God can explain all the pain that I feel
I wish your death was but a dream,
But in reality I know it's real when I visit your grave.
On the outside I show no tears
But inside I've cried a flood over the years.
As life goes on, there's one thing I can't wait to do
That thing is to go to heaven where standing and
waiting will be you.

By K.J. Burt, in memory of my Uncle, Terry Wayne Brown

The Mask

I feel as if I am buried alive
A constituent of my earthly being
Has been violently amputated
Yet I laugh at the mediocre conversations
A verbal splash in a shallow puddle
Pretending to be a player of the words
That no longer have meaning

My heart has been ripped from my bosom
No benevolence granted
No explanation
No apologies
Only cataclysmic pain
No anesthesia remains, just the bitter pain
Yet I wear the mask
Day by Day

Pretending I fit in
But really I'm a foreigner to the new land
An alien language they speak
And as I attempt to translate the words
Still, they mean nothing to me

Sequestered in the mask
They hear not the music I dance to
Not the words I speak
Not the pain I echo
Nor the native language of my eyes
The will never really know me, behind the mask

©1998 Joanne Cacciatore

Tomorrow

Tomorrow
I'll try to understand her,
Try to understand the excitement behind
Those piercing hazel eyes,
Try to understand her zeal for life,
Tireless energy and love for others.

Tomorrow
I'll sit down beside her and get to know
This big sister of mine.
I'll get to know the skinny little girl
I grew up with and shared a bedroom with
For all our childhood years.

Tomorrow
I'll ask her about her boyfriend.
I'll ask her about her girlfriends.
I'll even ask her what her favorite subject is in school.

Today?
I'm too busy.
I have too much to do.
She's getting on my nerves.

Today
She's borrowing my clothes and ruining them.
Today she's telling me to do all these chores for her.
Today she's asking stupid questions
I just don't feel like answering.

Today I'm too tired.

But tomorrow
I'll tell her how much I love her,
I'll hug her and tell her she's pretty,
I'll tell her I'm glad I have a sister...

Tomorrow,
Tomorrow
Has finally come and she is gone!

Written by Jean Anne Read ~ TCF, Tulsa, OK Reprinted with permission. 'This Healing Journey: An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings,' The Compassionate Friends, 1993, 2002.



"Although not all bereaved fathers and mothers feel anger toward God, many parents do, and these feelings need not to be stifled. Remember, God can certainly handle the anger of humans!" —Rev. Al Miles

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

Donations Appreciated!

Please consider making a donation to your local TCF group, which serves East Texas. Donations help pay for meeting location fees, electric, mailing and paper cost of our newsletter, bank fee, P.O. Box fee, office supplies and more.

We are thankful that Skillern's Business Systems has printed our newsletter at no cost for years. If you need office automation solutions, please contact them and tell them TCF sent you. Visit them online at www.skillerns.com, or call 903-561-5591.

Announcements

Meeting Info: The NEW meeting location is 900 S. Broadway Ave., Tyler, TX 75701. 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.

TCF Quilt Announcement!

We are compiling names and photos for our 7th quilt! Please mail your \$30 donation for a square, child's name, and make sure we have a quality picture of your child that will show up well.Let us know quickly as we anticipate the list of 30 will fill up fast. 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 info@TylerTCF.org.



Remember to visit our website for a long list of TCF newsletters: www.tylertcf.org
Also, TCF's National website has lots of great resources: www.compassionatefriends.org

The Compassionate Friends

Tyler, Texas

The Compassionate Friends

Tyler, Texas

Tyler, Texas