



Volume 12, Issue 8

Tyler, Texas

August 2011

Monthly Group Meeting Tyler Area Meeting

Monday, Aug. 15, 6:30 p.m. 3600 Old Bullard Rd., Bldg. 1, Ste. 101B, Tyler Jacksonville Meeting

Tuesday, Aug. 2, 6:30 p.m.
Sam Smith's office, 1401 E. Rusk
Lufkin Meeting

Thursday, Aug. 18, 6:30 p.m. Southside Baptist Church, 1615 Tulane Drive

Contact

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

Chapter LeaderTina Loper Meeting Facilitators Tyler

Don & Leslie Dixon, Cheri Zucca Meeting Facilitators Lufkin

Sherri Tutt, Lauri Maner Newsletter/Web SiteMary Lingle Steering Committee: Sam Smith, Carol Johnson, Carol Thompson, Mary Ann Girard, Cheri Zucca, Mary Lingle, David & Teresa Terrell, Janet Majors, Don & Leslie Dixon, Kathy McKinney, Margie Newman, Pat Settle

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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First Anniversary

When a bolt of lightning took the life of my son, Curtis, my life changed forever. The first winter after the loss was the darkest period of my life. In my misery I'd often day-dream of sitting on a warm, sandy beach, watching the waves roll in. I believed this might bring some peace to my aching heart.

At last, winter turned to spring and then summer. For many weeks I dreaded the coming of the first anniversary, July 24th, but knew I wanted to spend the day by the water. My husband and I made plans to travel to Bayfield County, Wisconsin. The 24th was a beautiful, sunny day when we arrived on the shores of Lake Superior. As we set up our chairs in a shady spot on the beach, we looked around at the many families surrounding us. Parents were relaxing as their children played in the sand and water. Tears ran down our cheeks as we watched and remembered Curt and his sister, Pam, doing the same thing as youngsters. The memories were hard to bear-this wasn't the soothing, peace-filled day that I had hoped for. As we left the beach, I wondered if people noticed my tear-streaked face. The next evening we traveled to a different, more secluded beach. The sun setting over the water was a beautiful sight, and the photo I took is one I love to look at, especially in the cold winter months.

Bayfield County is known for its many orchards. The sweet cherries and blueberries were ready for picking, so we decided to take advantage of the opportunity. For several hours we worked side by side, first picking the cherries from low-hanging branches, and then kneeling to pick the loaded blueberry bushes. We talked as we worked, occasionally sampling the delicious fruit, and surprisingly, even laughing. For short periods of time we were able to put aside the sadness and enjoy the moment. When we arrived back home, the "anniversary" cards and messages waiting for us from thoughtful friends touched our hearts. We took great pleasure in sharing our fruit with family and friends.

As the 4th anniversary of Curt's passing approaches, I look back and see the progress I've made. The grief process is exasperatingly slow. Healing doesn't magically happen with the passage of time, but requires lots of hard work and patience. My journey through grief continues, and sometimes I question if it will ever end. However, I do know that the crushing sorrow I once felt no longer rules my life. I've done what I thought was impossible—I've survived the loss of my precious son and have become a more caring, compassionate person because of it. I know that I must live for today, appreciating the beauty and surprises that each day brings. I will do the best I can because this is what my son would want.

Ruth Ann Meyer TCF ~ Greater Antigo Area, WI In loving memory of my son, Curtis

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.



"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. As death closes doors behind us, new doors open before us." —*loanetta Hendel*

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."

Suicide—An Eternal Pain

Suicide is the one form of death that has quite a stigma attached to it. It brings with it a feeling of shame and betrayal. It is not the same as saying to someone "My father died in a car crash," nor is it the same as saying someone died from a heart attack. Having to explain that someone took their own life can be quite a difficult thing to do as we have no explanation as to why this dreadful occurrence took place.

Suicide amongst young men is currently growing quite significantly around the world and I hope that by reading my poem people can see the effects that suicide has on those that are left behind.

I have dedicated my poem below to the memory of my father the late James Evans who sadly took his own life on the 29th October 1990. May his soul find eternal peace.

Suicide

The power to suppress

The pain and the loss

The tears and the sadness

The grief inside

Lying there

Dormant

Sleep please, oh sleep

The memories suppressed

No power to deal

With the pain that you caused

The gap no one can fill

Your selfish act

Leaves me broken

Afraid to love

Afraid to live

Through suppression I survive

Suicide not only killed you

Copyright © Amanda Evans www.amandawrites.com ~ Here you can view all her poems and articles and also subscribe to the Writers Passion Newsletter. "Tears don't erase all the hurt. Tears don't bring the dead to life. But tears do help to ease the pain." —Phillip W. Williams

Love Gifts



Martha Lewis in memory of Burke
Mary & Erin Lingle in memory of Candice
Sherry Smith in memory of Scottie Baker

Sue Langdon in memory of A.J. Huggins and Brad "B.J." Huggins

Anonymous in memory of James Permenter





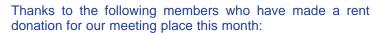












Jim & Cheri Zucca in memory of Leah
Dale Cavazos in memory of Chad
Carol Johnson in memory of Jared Sheets
Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O'Leary
Danny, Pat & Stephen Settle in memory of Steph
Don & Leslie Dixon in memory of Austin
Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper
in memory of Christopher

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

Claudette Brown in memory of Terry Wayne
Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad
Martha Lewis in memory of Burke
Sam Smith in memory of Stacey use of his office for the Jacksonville meeting
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: Please notify us if any of your information is incorrect.

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

Announcements

Tyler TCF Meeting (New Location): The meeting in Tyler is held on the third Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at 3600 Old Bullard Rd., Bldg. 1, Ste. 101B in Tyler. For more information, please email beachbum2201@gmail.com or lilbluebutterfly6@gmail.com, or call 903-258-2547.

Jacksonville TCF Meeting: The meeting in Jacksonville is held on the first Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at Sam Smith's office, 1401 E. Rusk, Jacksonville. For more information, please email beachbum2201@gmail.com or lilbluebutterfly6@gmail.com, or call 903-258-2547.

Lufkin TCF Meeting: Join us at the Lufkin meeting held at 6:30 p.m. every 3rd Thursday of the month at Southside Baptist Church, 1615 Tulane Drive, Lufkin, TX 75901. For more information, contact Lauri Maner at 936-854-2002 or Sherri Tutt at 936-404-9517.

The Touched by Suicide meeting is held the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in the same, new location as TCF, 3600 Old Bullard Rd., Bldg. 1, Ste. 101B in Tyler. Anyone who has lost someone they love to suicide is welcome to attend this peer support group. For more info please call 903-330-0678 or visit www.touchedbysuicideeasttexas.org.

Save the Date! 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! Our next meeting is Wednesday, August 3 at 6 p.m., location TBA. Call 903-258-2547 for details.

General Assembly: Join us each month to assemble the newsletter and mail out cards. We hope to get some new volunteers to help with this monthly project. Call 903-258-2547 for details.

MADD Heart meets 2nd Tuesday of the month at the MADD office, 215 Winchester Dr. Ste., 100, Tyler, TX 75701. For more info call 888-665-6233 or email Melissa at melissa.granberry@madd.org.

"When your mind cannot find an answer, open your heart and ask for peace." —sascha

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 Web site and more!

"Because grief requires so much emotional energy, our finesse for social gameplaying is greatly diminished." — loanetta Hendel

August Birthdays



Brennen Applegate 8-10 ~ 1-22 Son of C.R. & Kathryn Applegate



Gena Forest 8-22 ~ 12-9 Daughter of Joice Bass



Rowdy Cunningham 8-10 ~ 3-7 Son of Peggy Cunnningham



Ashley Allison 8-3 ~ 4-12 Daughter of Roger & Robin Allison



Crystal Greene 8-6 ~ 11-13 Niece of Audrey & Claude Mapps



Tosha Nichole Minatrea 8-11 ~ 12-30 Daughter of Tim Minatrea



Shanette Bland 8-9 ~ 4-26 Daughter of Clarence Thomas



Joey Green 8-16 ~ 12-24 Son of Jessica Green



Ron Mitchum 8-3 ~ 4-15 Son of Glenda Mitchum



Christal Murphy 8-14 ~ 4-22 Daughter of Debbie Johnson



Cory Wayne Channon 8-17 ~ 10-19 Fiancée of Lauri Dillman



Ashlee Ann Davis 8-27 ~ 9-4 Daughter of Regina Davis



Scottie Baker 8-3 ~ 11-29 Son of Steve Baker Son of Julie Stokes



Quinn Martin Muirhead 8-12 ~ 4-30 Son of Alice Fiedler



Hannah Collie 8-30 ~ 10-25 Daughter of Jason & Amanda Cole



Dawson Nathaniel Harned 8-21 ~ 8-12 Son of Jennifer Thompson



Lori Campbell 8-27 ~ 2-28 Daughter of Pam Johnson



Calan Cameron Decker
McKeethan
8-10 ~ 11-29
Son of Mary Decker



Justin Bynum 8-22 ~ 6-13 Son of Steve & Linda Bynum

Notice about Newsletter Birthdays & Anniversaries

We are following the guidelines from TCF National regarding the publishing of our children's birthdays and anniversaries. While we will leave the year intact on our printed copy, we will remove the year on the online copy. Thanks for your understanding while we comply for privacy reasons.

"Beware that each family member will grieve differently. Treasure the moments of sharing that do come, but understand that each must also grieve alone and in their own way and at their own pace." —Sue Holtkamp, Ph.D.

August Anniversaries



Michael Holdway 6-18 ~ 8-3 Spouse of Kathy Dowdy Holdway



Justin Dover 9-14 ~ 8-15 Son of Stacey Dover



Austin Cheek 9-2 ~ 8-3 Son of Tracey Bales



Aaron Willman 9-23 ~ 8-12 Son of Robin Mitchell



Jill Marie Rozell 3-14 ~ 8-2 Daughter of Peggy & Terry Rozell



Shannon Scheffler 12-21 ~ 8-22 Daughter of Dolly Mobley



Lorie McLain 11-14 ~ 8-9 Daughter of Sandy White



Sandi McLain 10-20 ~ 8-9 Granddaughter of Sandy White



Joe Maland 4-2 ~ 8-17 Son of Mary Ann Girard Son of Dave & Jeanelle Maland



Cathy Key 3-26 ~ 8-19 Sister of Cindy Murray



James Jenkins 2-16 ~ 8-9 Son Becky & Eddie Jenkins



Dustin Dewayne Bruce 5-5 ~ 8-3 Son of Bonnie Jones



Jaime Arellano, Jr. 7-31 ~ 8-27 Son of Marie Arellano



Tiffany LeAnn Tanner 12-2 ~ 8-24 Daughter of Kathy LeAnn Tanner



Cameron Robinson 1-4 ~ 8-9 Son of Julie Robinson



Dawson Nathaniel Harned 8-21 ~ 8-12 Son of Jennifer Thompson



Boston Kade Porter 5-27 ~ 8-12 Son of Jim Bob & Kim Porter



Erik Scott McKinney 11-26 ~ 8-16 Son of Kevin & Kathy McKinney



Dawn Marie Wilson 12-29 ~ 8-21 Daughter of Bonnie Thompson



Patton Ross 10-1 ~ 8-15 Son of Dorothy Ross

July Anniversaries continued on next page:

"Wanting to live again and learning to live again takes time. The path out of the other side of the valley is steep, and we all often stumble. But with time—time spent doing the work of grief—you can find the path to a world made richer by your love." —Bronna Romaoff, Ph.D.

The Sounds of Silence

The sounds of silence are everywhere—it is the silent pain of the loss of our son Andy, it is the silence of our home because one of our children is gone, and it is the silence of the sudden quiet that comes over people when we mention Andy.

We have become both better and worse in the six years since Andy died of cancer at the age of 22. We are better because we are able to get on with our lives and even enjoy ourselves occasionally. We have gotten worse because, as the years go by, we feel his loss more deeply.

We feel his loss every time we participate in a celebration marking some milestone of our friends and relatives or their children. We feel the loss because any celebrations of our own will always be incomplete-one person will always be absent and not there to celebrate with us or to enjoy his own milestones. The pain of his absence is always present at these events.

When Andy died, the pain of his loss was a sharp acute screaming pain that tore a hole inside of us. Now, the pain is a silent quiet steady pain. The hole is still inside us, covered by a scar, but it is still there. It doesn't scream out loud any more but instead just remains as a quiet steady and never-ending ache and sadness-a silent pain.

The silence of our home is a different kind of quiet. By now, if Andy had lived, he probably would have been out on his own. We would have been "empty nesters" anyway. But, when a home becomes empty because of the death of a child, it is a different kind of empty nest. Our daughter Lesley is married and out on her own, the way it should be. But, Andy is gone for a different reason.

So, the silence of our empty nest is not the silence of knowing we raised two children and now they are both out leading their own lives. Instead it is the silence of a home that is empty because one child is gone forever—of having to deal with the reality that phone calls only come from one child, not two; that only one child stops by for a visit, not two; that one child is forever gone from the nest. There is a silence in our home that often seems to pervade every space. It is a sad silence, not the temporary quiet of a happy home.

And then, there is the silence of relatives and friends when we talk about Andy-not about his death but about the things he did while alive. It is as if Andy has become a forbidden topic because he died, as if his death wiped out the 22 years he did live. It occurs when a relative whispers that our son died when someone asked how old he was—like his life and what happened to him was a big secret. It occurs when people suddenly get a funny look on their faces and don't know what to say next when you mention something about Andy. It occurs when you get the feeling that people want to avoid you because you remind them of a horror that could happen to anyone. It is a silence that reminds you that your emotions and feelings are different from that of others and that you will always have to live with the sounds of silence resulting from your son's death.

Mel Winer In Memory of my son Andy Published in We Need Not Walk Alone, ©1997

On Memory

When you remember me, it means that you have carried something of who I am with you, that I have left some mark of who I am on who you are. It means that you can summon me back to your mind even though countless years and miles may stand between us. It means that if we meet again, you will know me, and hear my voice and speak to me in your heart. For as long as you remember me, I am not entirely lost. —Frederick Buechne

"The depth of your sorrow diminishes slowly and, at times, imperceptibly. Your recovery is not an act of disloyalty to the one who has died. Nor is it achieved by forgetting the past. Try to strike a delicate balance between a yesterday that should be remembered and a tomorrow that must be created." —Author Unknown

Please Don't Forget Our Child!

January 6, 1997, was the day we lost our 20-year-old daughter, Summer Rae, in an automobile accident. Of course, we went into the typical parental shock. Regretfully, some of our friends had lost their daughter the previous year, and in trying to help them, we had read several books about losing a child. Having done that, we knew the following months would be very stressful on our marriage. The night our daughter died, we vowed to each other never to let this tragedy separate us.

It was shortly after this that my husband and I began to have the panicky feeling that our daughter might be forgotten.

Over the years, our family has continued to do things for us that let us know Summer has not been forgotten.

Summer shared the same birthday, December 21, with her cousin, Randy. Our family had always thrown a great birthday party for Summer and Randy on the Saturday night before Christmas. The first birthday after her accident, I had no idea how my husband and I would survive that party, but we knew we still had to celebrate Randy's birthday. Of Course, the party was just as difficult for Randy!

At this party, though, our family presented us with a small artificial Christmas tree, and each member hung an ornament on it that reminded them of Summer. As they told their stories of why they'd chosen the ornament, we laughed and cried together. It was wonderful!

The tree had a wide variety of ornaments-a boat, a Cabbage Patch doll, a "best babysitter" charm, a sunflower, and even a fish for teaching a younger cousin how to give fish kisses! My husband and I share a special time when we put this tree up each year and remember the stories. Needless to say, it stays up through January!

At another December birthday celebration, our family surprised us with sports-type button pins made up with different pictures of Summer. My sister brings the box of buttons to each family gathering and we wear them. This is a very real reminder that Summer is still with us.

On the fifth anniversary of Summer's death, we were surprised to see all of our family at church when we arrived. After the service, we gathered at the cemetery and played music, read poems, and released balloons. Our family gave us a memory scrapbook in which each person had written their memories of Summer. This book, which sits on our sofa table, is a treasure that we enjoy reading again and again.

Summer's favorite flower for several reasons was the sunflower. Often our family sends us cards with sunflowers on them or gifts that are wrapped in paper with sunflowers. It is just another reminder that they are thinking of Summer and want us to know it.

Probably the biggest gift from my family is that they are not afraid to mention Summer's name—whether they are talking about missing her, recalling a memorable time, or wishing she were at a family event.

Instead of calling this article "Please Don't Forget Our Child!" I should call it "Thank You for Not Forgetting Our Child!" Our family has been a special blessing with their remembrances of Summer.

If your family is not helping you to keep the memory of your child alive, I encourage you to speak with them and let them know how important it is. Chances are, they have not forgotten your child but think they will make you uncomfortable and don't want to hurt you. Let them know it is okay to have hurt, but in remembering there is love and joy!

Judy Austin
In Memory of Summer Rae Austin
Published in We Need Not Walk Alone, © 2003-2004

John and Judy Austin live in Redlands, CA. Their daughter, Summer Rae Austin, was a student at Baylor University in Texas. On January 6, 1997, at the age of 20, she had a single-car accident on an icy mountain road while home for the holidays. Besides her parents, she is survived by a younger brother, Brent, to whom she was very close and who misses her very much.

"I know that I must live for today, appreciating the beauty and surprises that each day brings. I will do the best I can because this is what my son would want." —Ruth Ann Meyer

The Gift of Someone Who Listens

Those of us who have traveled a while Along this path called grief Need to stop and remember that mile, That first mile of no relief. It wasn't the person with answers Who told us of ways to deal. It wasn't the one who talked and talked That helped us start to heal. Think of the friends who quietly sat And held our hands in theirs. The ones who let us talk and talk And hugged away our tears. We need to always remember That more than the words we speak, It's the gift of someone who listens That most of us desperately seek.

Nancy Myerholtz
TCF ~ Waterville/Toledo, OH

The Child That's Not There

The child that's not there
Takes up every piece of me
The child that's not there
Consumes my every thought
The child that's not there
Makes me feel like I failed
The child that's not there
Took away a main reason for being
But

The children that are there
Still somehow bring me joy
The children that are there
Still need my love
The children that are there
Don't need any more grief
The children that are there
Force me to go on.

Tricia Palmer
In memory of my son, Gabriel Boyer
TCF ~ Tidewater, VA

Scottie

It was November 29th, 2004 When Jesus decided I couldn't see you anymore.

There are so many things
That run through my head
And so many things
I wish I would have said.

I cry every day
Now that we are apart
But I want you to know
You are "always" in my heart.

I know that you are in heaven And it is a much better place And that thought somehow Brings a smile to my face.

But, I still wonder, in time
If the pain will go away?
So I have been talking
To Jesus everyday
And He keeps reassuring me
That you are okay.

I tell Jesus I'll come up Right now, if need be To watch you, to guide you And keep you near me.

But Jesus just keeps saying
That you are not alone
And that it will be soon enough
When I will come home.

But until that day comes
Jesus wanted me to know
That you're being watched over
By an Angel, that we call
Daddy Co.

I love you, Uncle Shawn

Submitted by Sherry Smith in memory of Scottie Baker TCF ~ Jacksonville, TX

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:	ld's Name:		Relationship:	
Birth Date:	Death Date:	Cause o	Cause of Death:	
Address:				
			Zip:	
Home Telephone:				
E-mail:				
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☐ Please include my child	I's picture and information on the TO	CF Tyler Web site. (www.	ГylerTCF.org)	
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Please use this gift for:				
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	napter's work depends on donations. Onsider taking this time to give a gift	•	opportunity to give a donation in memory of other newly bereaved parents.	
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(Signature)				

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

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"I don't think you ever stop giving. I really don't. I think it's an on-going process. And it's not just about being able to write a check. It's being able to touch somebody's life." — Oprah Winfrey



P.O. Box 9714 Tyler, Texas 75711





www.TylerTCF.org

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