



Volume 12, Issue 12

Tyler, Texas

December 2011

# Monthly Group Meeting Tyler Area Meeting

Monday, Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m. 3600 Old Bullard Rd., Bldg. 1, Ste. 101B, Tyler Jacksonville Meeting Tuesday, Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m. Sam Smith's office, 1401 E. Rusk Lufkin Meeting

Thursday, Dec. 15, 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 Leader .......Tina Loper Meeting Facilitators Tyler ......

Don & Leslie Dixon, Cheri Zucca Meeting Facilitators Lufkin ......

Sherri Tutt, Lauri Maner Newsletter/Web Site ......Mary 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, Lisa Schoonover

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 Ceremony**

Our Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony will be December 11, 2011 at Crossroads Community Church, 13730 Hwy 155 South, Tyler. The service begins at 6:30 p.m. Family and friends are welcome. (See announcements on page 4 and flier on page 7.)



# 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 candle light 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 and Miami-Whitewater Chapters

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.



"Though the holidays can never be as they were, we who are further along in our grief journey can offer the gift of hope with the knowledge that with time, patience, support and compassionate friendship, you will find new ways (when you are ready) to bring a measure of joy and light back into the holiday season again." —Cathy L. Seehuetter

## 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."

# **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.

Please share your stories, poems or love messages for inclusion in our newsletter.

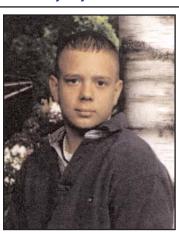
This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Claudette Brown.

In loving memory of
Terry Wayne
Brown
7-13 ~ 5-27
Son of
Claudette Brown



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Phyllis Cavazos.

In loving memory of
Chad Cavazos
9-24 ~ 4-20
Son of
Phyllis Cavazos



Call (903) 258-2547 to sponsor a monthly newsletter.



"Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: 'What! You too? I thought I was the only one." —*C.S. Lewis* 

## **Love Gifts**



Stephanie Luther in memory of Dex McLean
Joyce Stewart in memory of Stephanie Settle
Danny, Pat & Stephen Settle in memory of Stephanie
Jim & Linda Crawford in memory of Jared Sheets
Herb & Sandy Parr in memory of Herby

Thanks to the following members who have made a rent donation for our meeting place this month:

Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O'Leary
Jim & Cheri Zucca in memory of Leah
Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper
in memory of Christopher
Carol & Shane Johnson & Touched By Suicide
in memory of Jared Sheets





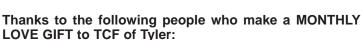












Claudette Brown in memory of Terry Wayne
Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad
Sam Smith in memory of Stacey use of his office for the Jacksonville meeting
David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy use of a storage building

# **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 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: 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: bluebutterfly6@gmail.com ~ Pat's email: beachbum2201@gmail.com

Sign up for Google Groups to stay connected! Visit us at TylerTCF.org to sign up for our Google Groups email list. This is a moderated, private list for you to receive notices about upcoming events.

# **Announcements**



...that their light may always shine.

Light a candle for all children who have died.

2nd Sunday in December, 6:30 p.m.

TCF Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony:
Our Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony will be Dec. 11, 2011 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, will be collected at the Candle Lighting. Please remember to collect canned goods and bring them that evening. This is a great idea from one of our Jacksonville members, Claudette Brown. If you would like to help with the Candle Lighting set-up and take-down and anything in between, please call the TCF line at 903-258-2547. 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. Thank you! (See our flier on page 7.)

**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! The date and location of the next steering committee meeting will be announced. Call 903-258-2547 for details.

"The present is driven by where we are in our grief. So for this and every Christmas holiday season, be who you are and mark the day as 'you' choose." —Annette Mennen Baldwin

# **December Birthdays**



Jonathan Reynolds 12-14 ~ 11-16 Son of Addison & Debra Reynolds



Erica Smith
12-21 ~ 10-25
Daughter of
Todd & Sabrina Thoene



Graham Gill 2-19 ~ 7-25 Son of Pat Gill



Zackery Browne 12-14 ~ 4-13 Son of Timothy & Kay Browne



Heath Hopson 12-8 ~ 4-23 Son of Karen Hopson



Reneé Seale 12-21 ~ 7-13 Daughter of Lana Kay Taylor



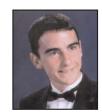
Dex Bailey McLean 12-18 ~ 7-4 Son of Charles & Chanda McLean



Daniel Anderson 12-27 ~ 5-15 Son of Kerry & Cheryl Anderson



Christopher John Fisher 12-18 ~ 6-22 Grandson of Grace & Tom Fisher



Adam Knott 12-29 ~ 3-20 Son of Bobby & Virginia Knott



Stephanie Settle 12-22 ~ 5-27 Daughter of Danny & Pat Settle



Salvador Estrada 12-11 ~ 11-3 Son of Charlotte Estrada



Phillip Kuhn 12-28 ~ 3-27 Son of Carolyn Kuhn



Jessica Noelle Kirkpatrick 12-30 ~ 12-30 Daughter of Barry & Christel Kirkpatrick



Jeremy Simpson Brown 12-27 ~ 12-12 Son of Shari Brown



Tiffany Johnston 12-29 ~ 2-20 Daughter of Sherrel & Greg Smith



Ryszard Spakovsky 12-2 ~ 2-20 Son of Sherrel & Greg Smith



Alexander Fleming 12-4 ~ 5-8 Son of Amy Fleming



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



Brandon Weatherly 12-14 ~ 5-20 Son of Ike & Diane Weatherly



Sarah Harvey 12-12 ~ 4-26 Daughter of Brian Harvey & Lisa Kirley



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



Ashley McCaa 12-22 ~ 1-2 Daughter of Pat McCaa



Taylor Davis 12-31 ~ 1-21 Son of Diane Ecker



Cory Blackmon 12-31 ~ 3-13 Grandson of Charles & Billie Bridges

Birthdays continued on next page

"The real treasure comes when others introduce our children's names and stories into an everyday conversation. Knowing our sons and daughters are remembered and live on in the hearts and lives of others is a measure of the meaningful legacy that our sons and daughters have left to us and to the world." —Nita Aasen

# **December Birthdays**



Lindsey LeMon 12-20 ~ 4-27 Daughter of Lisa LeMon



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



Burke Warren Lewis 12-20 ~ 11-14 Son of Martha Lewis



A.J. Frazier 12-29 ~ 9-18 Son of Leslee Frazier



Lauren Campbell 12-30 ~ 1-1 Daughter of Mark & Kathy Campbell



Logan Alexander 12-9 ~ 1-30 Son of Joyce Horton



Tamy Land 12-25 ~ 12-23 Daughter of Dot Land

**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!

# **December Anniversaries**



**Tosha Nichole Minatrea** 8-11-82 ~ 12-30-99 Daughter of Tim Minatrea



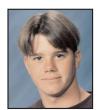
Christopher Loper 4-28-94 ~ 12-21-00 Son of Tina Loper



Felicia Hobbs 7-19-61 ~ 12-1-09 Daughter of Muriel Rogers



Gena Forest 8-22-62 ~ 12-9-98 Daughter of Joice Bass



James Fincke 7-15-80 ~ 12-25-99 Son of Sara Fincke



Cheryl Graebner Cook 4-25 ~ 12-10 Daughter of Connie Graebner



Jocelyn McCormick 1-11 ~ 12-7 Granddaughter of June McCormick



Karen Lowe 2-13 ~ 12-5 Daughter of Muriel Rogers



Mike Loughmiller 11-14 ~ 12-6 Son of Suzanne Loughmiller



Jessica Noelle Kirkpatrick 12-30 ~ 12-30 Daughter of Barry & Christel Kirkpatrick



Lee Sammons 9-4 ~ 12-10 Son of Martin & Martha Sammons



Theresa Kay Talley 9-16 ~ 12-20 Daughter of W.A. & Ruby Talley



Kelly Ann Campbell 6-27 ~ 12-4 Daughter of King & Angie Campbell



Margie Starkey 4-30 ~ 12-3 Daughter of Bettie Abbie



Jeremy England 6-7 ~ 12-25 Son of Sandra & Roger Perry



"It goes without saying what would be #1 on all bereaved parents' holiday wish lists; a wish that we know can never come true. However, we can wish, hope and pray for peace on Earth, good will to all men, that all of the occupants of this troubled world will love more and wars will cease." —Cathy L. Seehuetter

# **December Anniversaries**



Matt Thomas Crooks 4-17 ~ 12-24 Son of Sylvia Crooks



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



Jeremy Simpson Brown 12-27 ~ 12-12 Son of Shari Brown



Jake Higgins 6-29 ~ 12-4 Son of Donna & Joel Griffin



Whitni Danielle Ray 11-16 ~ 12-22 Daughter of Rachelle Threadgill Brooks



Tamy Land 12-25 ~ 12-23 Daughter of Dot Land



Ashton Wayne Yates 7-9 ~ 12-6 Son of Kim Yates

Please share your stories, poems or love messages for inclusion in our newsletter.

# Chanukah Then and Now

#### Then...

Chanukah was always a special and joyous holiday in our home. Peter, Carol, Linda, and I gathered around the dining room table, lit three menorahs, and sang the blessings. We had a repertoire of songs and we took turns choosing the song we would sing next. We especially enjoyed teasing Peter with one song that added a verse each night.

At least once during the holidays, we had potato latkes (pancakes) which Linda loved.

Sometimes when the girls were at college, they would call and we would sing the blessings long distance.

We usually had at least one party with extended family and friends celebrating our heritage and our connectedness.

#### Now...

I light one menorah in the kitchen. If Carol is home, she joins me, but Peter chooses not to participate. The tears no longer stream down my face as they did the first year, but my voice quavers as I sing the familiar words.

There are no latkes just as there aren't some of her other favorites on other days. I have guests on other occasions but there are no Chanukah parties.

Although Chanukah brings little happiness at this time, perhaps there will be joy and laughter in the future. But for now, I'm doing what is right for me and coping as well as I can.

Stephanie Hesse TCF, Rockland County, NY TCF, North Palm Beach County, FL In Memory of Linda



# The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting

Come be part of the Candle Lighting Service.

For 24 hours straight candles stay lit in every time zone around the globe for one hour to remember our NOT FORGOTTEN children. Please mark this day on your calendars.

All family members and friends are welcome.

Light a candle in memory of all children who have died.

Sunday, December 11, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.

Crossroads Community Church, 13730 Hwy. 155 S., Tyler, TX

Call The Compassionate Friends at 903-258-2547 or email info@TylerTCF.org for information or to have your child's picture added to the slide presentation. Candles are provided. Visit our website for additional information at www.TylerTCF.org.



# ...that their light may always shine.

Light a candle for all children who have died.

2nd Sunday in December, 6:30 p.m.

www.TylerTCF.org • 903-258-2547



"Regardless of the circumstances of our child's death, for most of us, anger and guilt are a part of our grieving. We may not always be able to label these emotions or to acknowledge them, but they are there and we must deal with them. Failure to do so often results in our experiencing worse physical and emotional problems later on." —Bill Ermatinger

# **A Christmas Story**

When I was just a little girl Around the age of three I remember a Christmas When Santa came to see me

A doll wrapped up
In a pretty bright red bow
Long golden hair to stroke
Oh my, how my heart glowed

And then came a Christmas
Later on in time
When I shared my first Christmas
With a son that was all mine

A few years later down the road When he was only five I didn't know it would be The last Christmas in my life

Now on Christmas
As many in all these years
I spend my days at a grave
Shedding many tears

The Holidays come every year That, I cannot change But through all my memories My memories I can rearrange

I can remember all the good years
That he and I had shared
I can still here the giggles
When he got that talking teddy bear

I can remember the hugs and squeals of "OH MOM"
As each gift he opened on that day
I can sit back and smile remembering
Before the angels took him away

Now I am older than I once used to be But my mind drifts back To what once was on Christmas When my son was on earth with me

I tuck my head to fight the snow As I wade through the fenced in graves I've got my gift to give to him On this years' Christmas Day

Sharon Bryant
In Memory of my son, Andrew Frank Dunbar
January 22, 1972 - October 24, 1977
I'm his mom and he's my angel...forever
Reprinted by permission of author

## **Candles in December**

My sadness seems reflected in the music that I hear...
Every young one's glowing face reminds me you're not here.
Shoppers crowd the festive stores; emotions all run high
This world I was a part of once, before that sad July.

This season's meant for happy times; for love, warm hearts, and cheer. But grieving families 'round the world remember those not here. We struggle through the season, lighting candles to proclaim Our children aren't forgotten, 'round the world our candles flame.

I slowly pass through gates thrown wide one clear, cold Christmas Day.

No toys or playthings do I bring—those gifts of yesterday.

I carry with me just a polished heart of granite made And walk with grief to where she lies in a silent, silvered glade.

"Merry Christmas, love," I whisper—
the quiet words seem so forlorn.
"I've brought my heart for you to keep,
my gift this Christmas morn.
It is filled with all my love,
though this one's carved of stone...
I'll place it here—it will be near—
you'll never be alone."

We parents don't forget, my love;
this month we will unite
To honor all we'll light a wall
of candles through the night.
The world will know our memories glow
with love that's deep and true
We'll stand as one, and 'fore it's done
the Heavens will know, too.

Please keep my gift, beloved child, close to where you lie,
And know my love surrounds you 'til the day I too shall die.
On the tenth of December my candle's flame will light I pray you'll see the love we'll free into the starry night.

Sally Migliaccio

# 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 o	Cause of Death:		
Address:					
			Zip:		
Home Telephone:					
E-mail:					
Please check any of follow	ving that apply.				
☐ Please continue sending	g the newsletter.				
☐ No thank you, I'd prefe	er to stop receiving the newsletter. (N	Newsletters are posted mor	nthly on our Web site.)		
☐ Please include my child	I's name and picture in the slide pres	sentation at the Candle Lig	ghting Ceremony.		
☐ Please include my child	I's picture and information on the TO	CF Tyler Web site. (www.	ГylerTCF.org)		
☐ I am enclosing a memo	rial to support The Compassionate F	Friends in the amount of			
-			Please make check payable to TCF		
☐ In memory of					
Please use this gift for:					
☐ TCF Newsletter ☐ But	terfly Release   Candle Lighting	☐ TCF Events ☐ Other			
	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.		
Lighting Ceremony or any	1	be withdrawn at any time l	re in the newsletter, Web site, Candle by written request. This information is activities such as the newsletter.		
			Date:		
(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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