



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



*We need not walk alone.*

Volume 15, Issue 12

Tyler, Texas

December 2014

## Monthly Group Meeting

### Tyler Area Meeting

3rd Monday of Each Month  
1901 Rickett Ln., Tyler

### Contact

Phone: (903) 258-2547

www.TylerTCF.org • info@TylerTCF.org  
P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

Chapter Leader .....Tina Loper  
Secretary .....Pat Settle  
Newsletter/Web Site .....Mary Lingle  
Tyler Meeting Facilitators: Leslie & Don Dixon

Steering Committee: Pat Settle, Sam Smith, David & Teresa Terrell, Carol Thompson, Carol Johnson, Mary Lingle, Lisa Schoonover, Cheri Zucca, Ellen Jenkins, Pam Pickett, Don & Leslie Dixon, Janet Majors, Margaret Hall, Robin Mitchell, Jancy Lovelace, Stuart Gilpin, 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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## TCF Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony



**...that their  
light may  
always shine.**

**Light a candle for all children who have died.  
2nd Sunday in December, 6:30 p.m.**

Our Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony will be Dec. 14, 2014 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. We will also collect new toys for the Children's Medical Center, Dallas. 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!



**We are selling T-shirts for our Annual Candle Lighting. The back side includes the following quote: "Who then can so softly bind up the wound of another as he who has felt the same wound himself?" –Thomas Jefferson**

**Small, Medium and Large shirts are \$20 each and XXL are \$22 each.**

**Please send us an email at [info@tylertcf.org](mailto:info@tylertcf.org) to place your order.**

**You may pick up your shirt at the Candle Lighting or at a monthly meeting.**

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



*We need not walk alone.*

"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*

## 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 (national home page)

Also offers grief support for **siblings** and **grandparents**  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

**Children Are A Gift Foundation:** [www.childrenareagift.com](http://www.childrenareagift.com)

**GriefShare:** [www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org)

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

**Smith County Victim Services Division**  
[www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs/counties/smith.html](http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs/counties/smith.html)

**The Hospice of East Texas:** [www.hospiceofeasttexas.org](http://www.hospiceofeasttexas.org)

**Victim Services Division - Texas Department of Criminal Justice - Online Resource Directory**  
[www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs](http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs)

**Survivors of Suicide:** [www.allianceofhope.org](http://www.allianceofhope.org)

**Samaritan Counseling of Tyler:** [www.scctyler.org](http://www.scctyler.org)

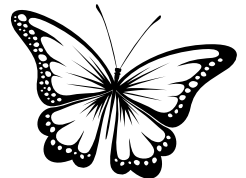
**Tyler Counseling & Assessment, LLP:** [www.tyler-counseling.com](http://www.tyler-counseling.com)

**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.  
[www.angellayettes.org](http://www.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](http://www.copefoundation.org)

**Grief Camps for Kids:** [www.moyerfoundation.org/programs](http://www.moyerfoundation.org/programs)



*Our condolences to Kathy McKinney and family on the loss of Kevin. Kathy & Kevin are the parents of Erik.*



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





*We need not walk alone.*

"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

## Love Gifts

**Michael & Jan Forzano**

**See more love gifts on page 6.**



**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.)**

Victor & Margie Newman in memory of Jeremy - rent

Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O'Leary - rent

Martha Lewis in memory of Burke - rent

Carol Thompson in memory of Sarah - rent

Carol & Shane Johnson in memory of Jared Sheets - rent

Danny & Pat Settle in memory of Stephanie - rent

Claudette Brown in memory of Terry Wayne - rent

Sue Roberts in memory of Jake Schoonover - rent

Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad - newsletter

Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper  
in memory of Christopher - TCF Phone

David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy -  
use of a storage building



**Thanks for Damsels in Defense,  
Sherry Thomason, Community Outreach**

## 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](mailto: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: [lil-bluebutterfly6@gmail.com](mailto:lil-bluebutterfly6@gmail.com) ~ Pat's email: [beachbum2201@gmail.com](mailto:beachbum2201@gmail.com)

**Save the date! The 38th National  
Compassionate Friends Conference will be**

## Announcements

**Tyler TCF Meeting:** The meeting in Tyler is held on the third Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at 1901 Ricketty 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.

**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 Carol King at [carol.king@madd.org](mailto:carol.king@madd.org).

**Looking forward:** Dallas will host the Compassionate Friends National Conference in 2015. Our regional coordinators, Joan and Bill Campbell, are looking for volunteers who would like to help with this event. You can contact Joan and Bill at 972-935-0673 to let them know of your interest in participating. They are planning a great two-day conference and welcome help from all Texas chapters. This is a great opportunity to help others who are grieving and grow through your own grief as well! You can check the national Compassionate Friends website [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) for conference event planning details.

**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](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) for dates and times.

## TCF of Tyler Memorial Quilt

If you would like to have your child's photo included on a TCF memorial quilt, please mail a \$25 donation to P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711. For more information contact us at (903) 258-2547, or email us at [info@TylerTCF.org](mailto:info@TylerTCF.org). Thanks to Teresa and David Terrell for donating their talent and time on these beautiful quilts which are displayed in our meeting room and special events.





*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



Erica Smith



Graham Gill



Zackery Browne



Heath Hopson



Logan Alexander



Renee Seale



Dex Bailey McLean



Daniel Anderson



Christopher John Fisher



Adam Knott



Amber Drake



Stephanie Settle



Salvador Estrada



Phillip Kuhn



Jessica Noelle Kirkpatrick



Jeremy Simpson Brown



Tamy Land



Tiffany Johnston



Ryszard Spakovsky



Alexander Fleming



Tiffany LeAnn Tanner



Brandon Weatherly



James Rowland Allen



Sarah Harvey



Shannon Scheffler



Ashley McCaa



Taylor Davis



Cory Blackmon



Stephen Townsend



Lindsey LeMon



Dawn Marie Wilson



Burke Warren Lewis



David LaTrell Milton



A.J. Frazier



Lauren Campbell

*Continued on next page.*



*We need not walk alone.*

"We have a new sense of priorities. We don't 'sweat the small stuff.' We know what matters because we know what is irreplaceable. And we know how deeply other people hurt because we, too, have been there. We 'know how they feel.'"  
—Richard Edler

### December Birthdays Cont.



Gregory Thomas Davis Jr.



Tim Fry



Carmen Leanna Jenkins



Alec Heath Thigpen



Sarah Wheeler



Justin Turbeville



Jennifer Massey



Kaleb Johnsen

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

### December Anniversaries



Tosha Nichole Minatrea



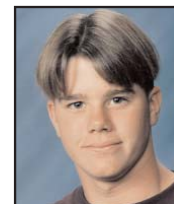
Christopher Loper



Felicia Hobbs



Gena Forest



James Fincke



Angela Frazier



Cheryl Graebner Cook



Jocelyn McCormick



Karen Lowe



Mike Loughmiller



Jessica Noelle Kirkpatrick



Martha Allen



Tamy Land



Ashton Wayne Yates



Alfred Donnell Guthrie, III



Kristi Otteson



Tim Fry



Carmen Leanna Jenkins



Lee Sammons



Theresa Kay Talley



Kelly Ann Campbell



Margie Starkey



Jeremy England



Whitni Danielle Ray





*We need not walk alone.*

"She put her arm on my shoulder. 'Just do what feels right to you,' she said, 'Listen to your heart. And we'll be here to listen, too.' Sometimes the best advice is none at all." —*Mary Clark*

### December Anniversaries Cont.



**Matt Thomas Crooks**



**Joey Green**



**Jeremy Simpson Brown**



**Jake Higgins**



**Lindsey Goen**



**James Snyman**



**Gauge Austin Thomas**



**Scarlet Lynne Smith**



**Jason Lee Eubank**



**John Miller**



**Cashley Jackson**



**Joshua Wilson**



**Jordan Mims**



**Suzanne Glover**

**Compassionate Friends National Conference will be in Dallas at the Hyatt Regency in 2015. Many volunteers will be needed! This is a great opportunity for us!**

Recently, a couple in our church lost a 19-year-old daughter to an accident where a drunk driver crossed the median and hit Sarah's car. Sarah died instantly. When I visited the couple in their home, I felt their heavy heartache. I knew what they were going through for the early days of Daniel's death manifested themselves. I saw the potted plants and flowers from florists and remembered our house after Daniel died. Dozens of vases of flowers sent by family and friends crowded the dusty dining room table. Meals brought over by friends were wedged into the refrigerator. And my heart was breaking, more and more each moment. For what I really wanted to appear at my front door was not a potted plant or a casserole, but my son. How would I live now?

*Alice J. Wisler ~ Daniel's House Publications*

**Thanks to these families for supporting TCF of Tyler with their love gifts.**

**In loving memory of Brian St. Clair by Janet St. Clair**



**In loving memory of Missy Rogers by Dan & Cece Brotton**



**In loving memory of Donna Morales by Misty Minter**



**In loving memory of Jake Schoonover by Joyce Jones**



**In loving memory of Justin Goodman by Kelly Goodman**





*We need not walk alone.*

“When I come to the end of my journey and I travel my last weary mile, just forget, if you can, that I ever frowned, and remember only the smile.”  
—Author unknown

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## 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*

**Christopher Loper**

**Love and miss you  
still, Cripper.**

**Mom, Johnathan  
& Heather**



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





*We need not walk alone.*

"The candles are held proudly aloft in a show of fortitude and solidarity, with the belief that our children look down and see our lights of love and hope lifted heavenward, signifying that though gone is the life, never is their light."  
—Cathy Seehuetter

**Justin McIntyre**

**In loving memory  
of Justin.**

**Dorothy Hammock**



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Dorothy Hammock.  
Call (903) 258-2547 to sponsor a monthly newsletter.

**Burke Lewis**

**In loving memory  
of Burke.**

**Martha Lewis**



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





*We need not walk alone.*

“Hope begins in the dark, the stubborn hope that if you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work—you don’t give up.” —Anne Lamott

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## The Gift of the TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting

May 11, 1995, 45 years after I had taken my first breath of life, would now sadly and incomprehensibly mark my precious daughter’s last. On a blisteringly hot day, six of our family vacationed in Orlando on a freeway many hundreds of miles from our home in Minnesota. An alcohol-impaired driver fell asleep at the wheel crashing into the side of the car where Nina was seated thereby ending the promising life of my vibrantly beautiful 15-year-old daughter, killing her instantly. A week that began in joyful family togetherness ended in unspeakable tragedy.

Brokenhearted, we returned home to begin the daunting task of learning to live without Nina. We catatonically walked through the mind-numbing chore of making arrangements for our daughter’s funeral, our house filled with people aiding us however they could. But soon after the service, the silence in our home was deafening. My son wondered aloud where everyone had gone. Though hard to conceive that the sun still rose and set every day; that people continued to work, breathe, laugh and love, I undoubtedly knew the answer to his question; they had returned to the normalcy of their untainted existence while our lives felt irreparably shattered.

While others had gone back to the “real world”, even in the midst of my cavernous grief I knew I had to preserve Nina’s memory; I needed to find others who also desired their loved ones not be forgotten, realizing that it had to be another bereaved parent. I also needed reassurance there was hope that the raw pain of my loss would not continue forever, and that I was not alone on this most difficult of journeys. Thankfully, the funeral director in our city led me to The Compassionate Friends (TCF), a self-help group for bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents. There I found the support and understanding that I so desperately craved, along with many distinctive, creative ways from seasoned grievers to ensure that Nina would be forever remembered.

This became particularly important as I neared the first Christmas without Nina. They showed me I could bring her into the holiday season she loved so much by attending our chapter’s annual holiday candle lighting. A few short years later, I became involved in chapter leadership. During that time, the TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting (WCL) came into existence and culminated into what is believed to be the world’s largest candle lighting. Held the second Sunday of December at 7:00 p.m. in each time zone around the world candles are lit for one hour. As the candles burn down in one time zone, they are lit in the next, creating a virtual 24-hour wave of light around the globe.

The past few years I have been the MC for our chapter’s program in conjunction with the WCL. From my vantage point, I clearly see each tear-stained face. Though the room is dimly lit in the beginning, as each flame is lit for a child gone too soon, the room gradually becomes bathed in a warm and peaceful glow. The candles are held proudly aloft in a show of fortitude and solidarity, with the belief that our children look down and see our lights of love and hope lifted heavenward, signifying that though gone is the life, never is their light.

The TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting is the gift I give myself (and Nina) each holiday season, and many family members and friends gift me with their presence at the chapter event or light a candle at 7 p.m. in remembrance of Nina. For all of us whose precious children have died it is a beautiful and special way to ensure forevermore “...that their light may always shine.”

*With gentle thoughts over the holiday season, and always...*  
Cathy L. Seehuetter, ~ TCF, St. Paul Chapter

**“You can’t start healing until you’ve allowed yourself to feel the hurt of the loss of someone you loved better than yourself. So, if you have reached that place in your grief, see it as a positive, for it means you have forsaken unproductive things and have made a giant step forward in your journey to a place where your pain eases and you learn to live with your loss more comfortably.”**  
—Mary Cleckley





## 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 14, 2014 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](http://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](http://www.TylerTCF.org) • 903-258-2547

# The Compassionate Friends of Tyler

P.O. Box 9714  
Tyler, TX 75711

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

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

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Death Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cause of Death: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check any of following that apply.

Please continue sending the newsletter.

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

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

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

I am enclosing a memorial to support The Compassionate Friends in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to TCF

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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



[www.TylerTCF.org](http://www.TylerTCF.org)

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

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1604 Grande Blvd., Tyler, TX 75703  
(903) 561-5591 • [www.skillerns.com](http://www.skillerns.com)

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