



Volume 14, Issue 2

Tyler, Texas

February 2013

## **Monthly Group Meeting**

Tyler Area Meeting Monday, Feb. 18, 6:30 p.m. 1901 Rickety Lane, Tyler Jacksonville Meeting

Tuesday, Feb. 5, 6:30 p.m. Sam Smith's office, 1401 E. Rusk **Lufkin/Nacogdoches Area Meeting** 

> Thursday, Feb. 21, 6:30 p.m. Southside Baptist Church 1615 Tulane Drive in Lufkin

## 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 ......

Lauri Maner, Bill Otteson Newsletter/Web Site ......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 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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## **Dear Compassionate Friends,**

I wrote this letter for my co-workers and posted it in the office where everyone would see it because I found that although everybody had been extremely kind and generous during Laurie's last brief illness, some of them didn't seem to know how to deal with me or what to say after she died. The idea for the letter and some of its contents are from a book on grief work by Bob Deits, <u>Life After Loss: A Personal Guide Dealing With Death</u>, <u>Divorce</u>, <u>Job Change and Relocation</u>.

Marcia Davis, TCF Contra Costa County, CA

Dear friends and co-workers:

I want to thank all of you for your kindness and support during the last few months. I have experienced a loss that is devastating to me. It will take time, perhaps years, for me to work through the grief I am having because of the loss of my daughter, Laurie.

Although Laurie was our oldest child, she was the child of my third pregnancy, so she was very much wanted by the time I gave birth to her. She was also the child who was most like me, both in appearance and personality. Perhaps because of this, I actually feel I have lost a part of myself. I would gladly have given my life in exchange for hers, had I had that option.

I will cry more than usual for some time. My tears are not a sign of weakness or a lack of hope or faith. They are symbols of the depth of my loss and, I am told, a sign that I am recovering.

I find that I become angry without there seeming to be a reason for it. My emotions are all heightened by the stress of grief. Please be forgiving if I seem irrational or unfriendly at times. I need your understanding and your friendship more than anything else. If you don't know what to say, just touch me or give me a hug to let me know you care.

Do not be afraid to mention Laurie's name, She is gone from this life but she will never be gone from my memory or my heart. And please don't hesitate to call me; it is reassuring to hear from supportive friends.

If you, by chance, have had an experience of loss that seems anything like mine, please share it with me. You will not make me feel worse. And if I get emotional or tear up, you are not making me cry, I am crying inside all the time anyway! This loss is the worst thing that could happen to me. But, I will get through it somehow and I will live again. I will not always feel as I do now, I will laugh again.

Your concern is a gift I will always treasure.

Sincerely, Marcia

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.



"The tragedy we have experienced somehow enables us to establish new and more meaningful priorities, to love and to value those who are close with a renewed sense of appreciation and awareness. If any meaning is ever again to exist in our lives, it will develop as a result of newly found sensitivity, love and compassion for others." —Chris Moon

## 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
http://www.compassionatefriends.org

Children Are A Gift Foundation http://www.childrenareagift.com

**GriefShare** 

http://www.griefshare.org

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

Smith County Victim Services Division http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs/counties/smith.html

The Hospice of East Texas http://www.hospiceofeasttexas.org



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Robert & Trisha Taylor.

In loving memory of
Alex Conway
2-29-92 ~ 4-28-10
Daughter of
Robert & Trisha Taylor
With love, Mom & Ponch



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Don & Leslie Dixon.

In loving memory of
Austin Dixon
10-20-88 ~ 2-19-07
Son of
Don & Leslie Dixon



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

"As we advance in life it becomes more and more difficult, but in fighting the difficulties the inmost strength of the heart is developed." —Vincent Van Gogh

## **Love Gifts**



Joseph & Freei King in memory of Terry Brown Regina Davis in memory of Ashlee Davis & J.D. Adams Roger & Linda Porter in memory of Seth

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
Martha Lewis in memory of Burke
Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper
in memory of Christopher
Carol & Shane Johnson & Touched By Suicide
in memory of Jared Sheets















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
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.

**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.

**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

## **Announcements**

# NOTICE: WE HAVE A NEW MEETING LOCATION for TCF of Tyler: The meeting in

Tyler is held on the third Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m., and starting in February, will be at our NEW location, 1901 Rickety Lane in Tyler. For more information, please call 903-258-2547.

**Annual Butterfly Release:** We hope you'll join us for our next Butterfly Release, May 18, 2013, at the First Baptist Church, Tyler south campus. Contact us if you'd like to help with this event.

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/Nacogdoches Area TCF Meeting: The meeting for the Lufkin and Nacogdoches area is held on the third Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at the Southside Baptist Church, 1615 Tulane Dr. in Lufkin across from the LiveWell Fitness. Contact Bill Ottesen at 936-634-6422 or Lauri Maner at 936-854-2002. You may also email them at CompassionateFriends4lufkinnac@yahoo.com.

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, 1901 Rickety Lane 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.touched-bysuicideeasttexas.org.

**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 Melissa at melissa.granberry@madd.org.

## **Annual Butterfly Release**

Our Butterfly Release will be held May 18, 2013 at the First Baptist Church, Tyler south cam-



pus. If you would like to help with this beautiful and peaceful event this year, please contact us online (tylertcf.org) or call 903-258-2547.

"We can endure much more than we think we can; all human experience testifies to that. All we need to do is learn not to be afraid of pain. Grit your teeth and let it hurt. Don't deny it, don't be overwhelmed by it. It will not last forever. One day, the pain will be gone and you will still be there." -Harold Kushner

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## February Birthdays



Justin Clakley 2-25-83 ~ 5-15-03 Son of Teri Clakley



Michelle "Missy" Green 2-09-69 ~ 1-30-93 Daughter of Elena Ğlasscock



Craig Howell 2-25-77 ~ 2-11-12 Son of Pat Howell



Jayson La'Drake Austin 2-9-00 ~ 2-2-02 Son of Jauron Jacobs



**Dylan Corey** 2-21-97 ~ 1-24-01 Son of Christy Corey



Colleen Herriage 2-23-67 ~ 5-14-83 Daughter of Ruth Herriage



**Caleb Scott Jones** 2-27-86 ~ 7-24-03 Son of Lee Ann Colwell



**Shane McDade** 2-17-85 ~ 4-12-03 Son of Gina McDade Culligan



Jason Brown 2-7-69 ~ 1-7-03 Son of Pam Pickett



2-2-90 ~ 10-10-11 Son of Chip & Rachel Bullock



Christopher Bullock Walter Dale "Skipper" Winningham 2-23-68 ~ 7-02-85 Son of Lucy Winningham



**Kody Maner** 2-10-87 ~ 4-16-06 Son of Lauri Maner



Sean Smith 2-2-87 ~ 10-27-01 Son of Randy & Judy Smith



Mary Jennifer Stone 2-22-81 ~ 9-21-96 Daughter of Dick & Denise Stone



**Alexandria Conway** 2-29-92 ~ 4-28-10 Daughter of Robert & Trisha Taylor



Justin Goodman 2-11-84 ~ 11-19-11 Son of Kelly Goodman



Chasen Sean Shirley 2-13-82 ~ 7-3-06 Son of Debbie Shirley



Cynthia Harper 2-27-54 ~ 11-16-04 Daughter of Jackie & Roland Young



John Andy Terrell 2-11-72 ~ 11-25-03 Son of David & Teresa Terrell



**Cheryl Heerdt** 2-22-71 ~ 2-22-81 Granddaughter of Larry Batte



**Robert Ryan White** 2-26-85 ~ 10-1-03 Son of Bethany White



Ty Foster Mabry 2-17-97 ~ 11-25-11 Son of Casey & Shad Mabry



Jeremiah Barker 2-11-78 ~ 6-17-91 Son of Betty Fiederlein



T.J. Anderson 2-8-77 ~ 10-5-09 Son of Ron & Mona Anderson



**Ijuan Deshaun Simms** 2-20-79 ~ 11-7-01 Son of Sharon Simms



**Candice Lingle** 2-21-91 ~ 11-8-93 Daughter of Mary Lingle



Karen Lowe 2-13-59 ~ 12-5-09 Daughter of Muriel Rogers



2-20-86 ~ 4-17-12 Daughter of Kirby & Lisa Smith



Scarlet Lynne Smith James Arthur Jenkins 2-16-79 ~ 8-19-05 Son of Becky & Eddie Jenkins



Roger Lee Rush 2-14-02 ~ 2-14-02 Son of C.R. & Judy Rush

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## We need not walk alone.

## February Birthdays Cont.



David Matthew (Matt) Morris 2-9-77 ~ 3-24-10 Nephew of Marla **Plocheck** 

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

**Cheryl Heerdt** 2-22-71 ~ 2-22-81 Granddaughter of Larry Batte

## **February Anniversaries**



**Darell Bolton** 7-21-61 ~ 2-22-03 Brother of Kathey Bolton-Polk



Lori Campbell 8-27-78 ~ 2-28-00 Daughter of Pam Johnson



**Richard Heerdt** 10-31-76 ~ 2-22-81 Grandson of Larry Batte



Jackie Heerdt 6-30-46 ~ 2-22-81 Daughter of Larry Batte



Josh Chambers

7-20-73 ~ 2-18-07

Son of Joan Curtis

Ryszard Spakovsky 12-2-80 ~ 2-20-98 Sherrell & Greg Smith (Foreign Exchange Parents)



**Austin Dixon** 

10-20-88 ~ 2-19-07

Son of Don & Leslie Dixon

**Tiffany Johnston** 12-29-81 ~ 2-20-98 Daughter of Sherrell & Greg Smith



**Andrea Young** 3-15-56 ~ 2-1-97 Daughter of Roland & Jackie Young



**Austin Arvizo** 5-14-01 ~ 2-9-06 Son of Vincent & Paula Arvizo



**Brandon Krpec** 3-27-79 ~ 2-11-08 Son of Larry & Debby Krpec



**Michael Schmidt** 3-11-83 ~ 2-10-03 Son of Patricia Jeffery



James Brady Langston 10-13-96 ~ 2-15-01 Son of Jamie Langston Dacus



**Chance Aaron Chandler** 9-21-05 ~ 2-15-10 Son of Christina Chandler



Roger Lee Rush 2-14-02 ~ 2-14-02 Son of C.R. & Judy Rush



**Carly Smith** 7-14-88 ~ 2-1-11 Daughter of Beth Page



John Wallace 7-1-80 ~ 2-2-99 Son of Barbara Wallace



**Adam Thomas Pritchard** 9-21-82 ~ 2-21-04 Son of Thomas & Ginger Pritchard



Jayson La'Drake Austin 2-9-00 ~ 2-2-02 Son of Jauron Jacobs



**Karrie Voyles** 4-15-96 ~ 2-20-11 Daughter of Anthony & Delayne Voyles



Craig Howell 2-25-77 ~ 2-11-12 Son of Pat Howell

"Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve." —Earl Grollman

## The Valentines of Yesterday

In my lifetime I have received many Valentines. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, school friends, boyfriends, good friends, acquaintances and my husband have showered me over the years with lovely Valentines which I have so appreciated.

The tradition of declaring friendship and love on Valentine's Day is a very fond memory. However, the sweetest Valentines I have ever received are from my son. From the first days in nursery school when my son made a hand plaque and a drawing on construction paper to the final Valentine in 2002, I have cherished these gifts of love from my only child. I have kept every Valentine my son ever made for me or bought for me. I have every Valentine gift he ever gave me. These are the treasures that remind me how special a parent's love truly is.

There is no love to compare with the unconditional love we give our children. I think my son knew that nobody in the world would love him as much as his mother did. Yet, he also knew that he would love his children in just this same way. This unconditional parent's love that we give our children is the most precious love in life. It is always our hope that they, too, will find the joy of this love with their children.

When our child dies, we cling to our unconditional love as we feel the anguish of a final separation on this earthly plane and a tsunami of betrayal as the devastation of this incomprehensible loss sweeps over us. The pain is real. It is physical, emotional, psychological and forever embedded on our psyche. Yet, without that unconditional love, there would be no pain. Who among us would trade the most infinitely rewarding love and the subsequent pain of loss for a life of lukewarm relationships?

And so, as Valentine's Day once again comes into my life, I will look back at this love, at the good times, the wonderful hand-made childhood Valentine cards and gifts and the carefully selected cards of adulthood that my son gave to me. His words, his love, his appreciation for all that we had shared as mother and child will be reflected in these treasures. There will be tears, certainly, but these are tempered with the many wonderful, sweet memories of my son and his life. It is these sweet memories which sustain me, give me hope, and bring me gratitude for all that was given to me.

My son is forever in my heart. He is with me every day and every night, and especially, he is with me on Valentine's Day.

Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF Katy, TX

## **Imagine**

Imagine for a moment a mobile; all the shapes are of different weights and design. But they hang together harmoniously; each catching the sunlight and creating a melodious rhythm in the wind. Now snip one of the pieces; there is chaos, each of the remaining pieces smash into one another, and what was a melodious sound is now a clanging almost wailing in the wind. When a child is snatched by death from a family the results are the same, multiplied innumerable times.

Stephan Barrett

## The Bumpy Road

The other day I sat alone and realized my heart was not as heavy. Oh, there are still times when I miss my child desperately, but I seem to rebound sooner now.

Then the phone rang—another mother called to lean on me. She must have known that I was ready. I listened, she shared and oh how I felt for her. When we said good-bye, I sat again but not as alone this time. New strength and pride came in knowing I had lent a helping hand.

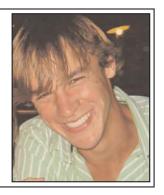
My child's death has taught me so much new, a lot I wished I had never known. But since I do now know what others face, perhaps the bumpy road I've traveled can be made a little smoother for another.

A Bereaved Mother

"Just for today, I will allow myself to be happy, for I know that I am not deserting him by living on. Just for today, I will accept that I did not die when my child did. My life did go on and I am the only one who can make that life worthwhile once more." —Vicki Tushingham

# This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by these generous family members in 2012 who made a monthy contribution.

In loving memory of Chris O'Leary 6-25-88 ~ 10-26-08 Son of Merri Walsh



In loving memory of
Burke Lewis
12-20-75 ~ 11-14-09
Son of
Martha Lewis



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



In loving memory of
Jared Sheets
5-14-87 ~ 9-27-05
Son of
Carol & Shane Johnson



In loving memory of
Terry Wayne Brown
7-13-69 ~ 5-27-03
Son of
Claudette Brown



In loving memory of
Chad Cavazos
9-24-86 ~ 4-20-01
Son of
Dale & Phyllis Cavazos



In loving memory of
Stacey Smith
9-8-72 ~ 10-4-88
Daughter of
Sam Smith



In loving memory of
Andy Terrell
2-11-72 ~ 11-25-03
Son of
David & Teresa Terrell



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

"Happiness is a butterfly, which, when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you."

—Nathaniel Hawthorne

## **Searching for Oneself**

By Joyce Rupp

Good Shepherd, who finds the lost one, the "me" I know has disappeared.

Will I ever recover the person I have been?

Will I ever find and feel good about myself again?

Will I discover who I am and who I am becoming?

Protect me in this great vulnerability.

Assure me that I will come home to myself,

Even though "my self" may be different.

Silence my impatience. Calm my worry.

Restore my joy. Solace my distress.

Help me to befriend my new self

With tender hope and welcoming love.

Submitted by Lisa Schoonover, TCF Tyler, in memory of Jake

# All My Love – For Mom, Dad and My Sisters

I'm so sad to be leaving, and I know you're sad too.

As I let go let me give one last gift to help you.

Dry your tears help your hearts heal, if not all, at least some. This small gift, a returning favor for all that you've done.

Close your eyes for a moment, see my smile, feel my hugs. Hear me whisper my secret, how you've filled me with love.

Keep this moment, as I will, forever locked in our hearts; to bring out when sadness and tears want to start.

This small gift, much more precious than all the others you gave, is a return for your love with which I was made.

All the tears that have fallen, from family and friends, I've collected and mixed with my own.

To this I have added all my love, my laughter, my smiles, and made up a medicine to ease heartache awhile.

So when time brings on sadness, close your eyes see me there. Feel my gift in your heart, and know I'm still here.

I was made of your love, and in your love I remain.

Daniel Fraga

## Promise of a Rose

When winter comes into our lives with its uncertain sound, to strip us of our warmth and joy, our petals on the ground, we may be tempted to give up, to fold beneath life's storm. We may be tempted to forsake the hope which keeps us warm.

But, we must learn to stand up tall, to always face the sun, and patiently wait for the day when winter's work is done.

For winter winds will cease to howl; the snows will melt away. Then we shall see the beauty of another summer's day.

We will have renewed our strength when summer's wind first blows, for God will whisper one again the promise of a rose.

Glenda Fulton Davis

## My Grief is Like a River

My grief is like a river, I have to let it flow, but I myself determine just where the banks will go.

Some days the current takes me in waves of guilt and pain, but there are always quiet pools where I can rest again.

I crash on rocks of anger, my faith seems faint indeed, but there are other swimmers who know that what I need.

There are loving hands to hold me when the waters are too swift, and someone kind to listen when I just seem to drift.

Grief's river is a process of relinquishing the past; swimming in hope's channels, I'll reach the shore at last.

Cynthia G Kelly

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

## 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:	me: Relationship:			
Birth Date:	Death Date:	Cause	of Death:	
Address:				
City:		State:	Zip:	
Home Telephone:				
E-mail:				
Please check any of follow	ing that apply.			
☐ Please continue sending	the newsletter.			
☐ No thank you, I'd prefer	to stop receiving the newsletter. (N	lewsletters are posted mo	onthly on our Web site.)	
☐ Please include my child	's name and picture in the slide pres	entation at the Candle Li	ghting Ceremony.	
☐ Please include my child	's picture and information on the TC	CF Tyler Web site. (www	.TylerTCF.org)	
☐ I am enclosing a memor	ial to support The Compassionate F	riends in the amount of_		
□ In mamory of			Please make check payable to TCF	
-	TCF Newsletter   Butterfly Relea			
The continuation of this ch	•	If you have not taken the	opportunity to give a donation in mem-	
Lighting Ceremony or any	1	e withdrawn at any time	by written request. This information is er 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

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

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