



The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Apr / May / Jun 2020

DAFFODILS

In the spring, I will bring
daffodils to you with a
prayer—
after the cold, snowy
winter is over and gone.

I will sit on the grass and
sing the songs that we
shared,
knowing that your
boundless spirit still lives
on.

I've walked the path of
sorrow;
It's helped me to grow.

Through the tears have come my strength and my
healing.
My heart, once wounded and broken,
Is mended and filled with deep love for everyone in
all that I do.

And every warm, sunny spring,
I will bring yellow daffodils—and cherish the
memories of you.

Sharon Cordaro
TCF Inland Empire, CA

A PENNY

I found a penny today
Just lying on the ground,
That's not just a penny
This little coin I've found.

Found pennies come from heaven
That's what my grandpa told me,
He said angels toss them down
Oh, how I loved that story.



He said when an angel misses you
They toss a penny down

Sometimes just to cheer you up
To make a smile out of your frown.

So don't pass by that penny
When you're feeling blue,
That's a penny from heaven
That an angel's tossed to you.

~ Author unknown
We Need Not Walk Alone
Summer 2004

"If only they knew that when I speak of him, I am not being morbid. I am not denying his death. I am proclaiming his life. I am learning to live with his absence. For twenty-six years he was a part of my life, born, nurtured, molded and loved—this cannot be put aside to please those who are uncomfortable with my grief." —Jan McNess

Monthly Meetings

Thursday, April 2

Thursday, May 7

Thursday, June 4

6:30 PM

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

1901 Lexington Ave.

Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

MOTHERS AND FATHERS

A mother's love for children is a very special thing,
Filled with all the many days that motherhood can bring.

Days when children misbehave and try your patience so,
Days when they are sweet and kind and let their loving feelings show.

A father's love for children is very strong and pure.
There's no problem that a child may have which a father cannot cure.

A parent's love for children is a never-ending thing.
It lasts from day to day and year to year, through summer, winter, fall, and spring.

That special love continues still when someone's child has died,
For the feelings that a parent has are impossible to hide.

Jean Hotopp
TCF Fox Valley, IL

FATHER'S DAY

As the day approaches, I wonder how I will react.
Am I still a father?

I will sit quietly, never allowing friends and family to see how I feel. I miss my son, but I can't allow myself to "break." I must remain strong and always be the "rock." I wish I could just let someone know how much I miss my little angel.

How much I cry and how much I miss hearing, "Dad, I love you." I am a father, but I wonder, "will I just pretend, as usual, that it doesn't bother me?"

Remember me, for I hurt, too, on this special day.

TCF Tampa, FL



MOTHER'S DAY

Since Mother's Day is approaching there is a lot of talk about, MOTHER'S Day. This is a hard time for bereaved parents. So many ask the question if your only child died, are you still a mother? YES! You are a mother and a very special one. You will always be the mother of your child. You may no longer enjoy their laughter or the dirty finger prints on the walls, but that mother's love is still there and will always be deep in your heart and soul. Because we loved our children the pain we have now is the price we pay. As bereaved parents we can share our children's love with others. The love our children gave us will live in our hearts forever. So, yes indeed you are a mother.

Linda Delk
TCF Tampa, FL

THE PROMISE OF SPRING

When February comes, there is finally an end in sight to the long winter. Sometimes melting snow reveals green tips of an early crocus or even the exquisite blossom itself, a soft flower of hope invading a harsh landscape of graying snow and biting wind and ominous sky, a small promise of new life to come.

My heart, grieving for my son who died, was like that image of winter. For somehow, even during the darkest coldest moments, an unexpected sign of hope would intrude. And as the hours and months dragged on, my heart finally learned once again to be open to the promise of new life. Painful memories melted into loving ones. Life that seemed forever dormant once again sprang forth from my heart.

In living hopefully and lovingly, the season of the heart can change. The loving memories of your child, like the flower in the snow, can be the beginning of the end of winter.

Maryann Kramer
TCF Arlington Heights, IL

YOU WILL

You will live
Although you feel like you are dying.

You will laugh once again
Although you feel that emotion is lost
forever.

You will think clearly again
Although you feel very confused most
of the time.

You will celebrate your child's life
Although now you are enveloped in the whys and if
onlys of your child's death.

You will somehow make your way through this
rough work called grieving
Although today you feel you are slipping backwards.

You will find love, understanding and caring with
The Compassionate Friends
Although today you are lonely, isolated and
withdrawn.

Choose the "You Will."
I did, and it is helping with that large hole in my
heart.

Carol Joyce
TCF, Fort Lauderdale, FL

THE SOLITUDE OF GRIEF

There are wounds one can't assuage
For the cut is deep and bleeding
Some wounds show no outward trace
For it's the heart that's sore and needing

How does one cope with a broken heart
A heart that's cold and lonely
From where the strength to carry on
From a grief that's shared ... but yours only

Still in dreams we see them yet
So young, so fair, so alive
I don't know how we cope with death
But somehow ~ somehow we do survive



Always a part of this heart of mine
Now tossed like a windblown leaf

And I imprisoned in a world not mine
In the solitude of grief

Harvey Hockstien
In loving memory of daughter, Marilyn

LITTLE BY LITTLE

I once thought that my only link to you was my grief.
I couldn't let go.
I knew if I did
I would lose us both.

But one day when
I couldn't take the pain anymore,
I decided to try.
So, slowly and carefully
I let go of my deathline to you, and I was surprised to
find myself being held by God.

Little by little, step by step,
I learned that I didn't need to hang on to the death to
remember the life.
What a joyous discovery!

Kittie Brown McGowin
TCF Montgomery, AL

Chapter co-leaders

Marilyn & French Smith
Luann & James Butler

Steering Committee

Henry Cole, Facilitator
Johnny James, Treasurer
Dianne & Frank Bruscato, Library
Maggy & John Dobbs, Outreach
Ann Cole, Outreach
Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter

THE GATE TO TOMORROW

There is a gate that each of us has unknowingly passed through. This gate opens only one way.....once we have passed through this gate we cannot return to the other side. Each of us stepped through the gate at a different time and in a different way. This gate opens to the world of parents whose children have died; it is their gate to every tomorrow.

There is no other place that compares with life in this world beyond the gate; there is no sorrow like the sorrow inside the gate. The numbing pain and perpetual agony we experience when first stepping through this gate are so overwhelming that we often don't immediately realize that there will be no return. But we will never return to life before the gate.

The new world inside the gate is populated with friends who are strangers and strangers who are friends.

Our perspective on life has changed forever. Few of our friends from life before the gate will linger with us now; these people are now the strangers. Our pain is all encompassing; they have lives to live, things to do, plans to make, happiness to capture. We are no longer part of their picture. Rare is the friend who stands by us inside the gate.....stands by us until one of us dies and leaves the world inside the gate.

The strangers who are now friends live inside the gate with us. Some have just come through the gate; others have been here a long, long time. But these strangers who are now friends share our experience; they understand our need to talk about our children, each life and each death. They applaud our tiny advances toward acceptance and serenity and peace. Although we can never go back to life before the gate, we now have our compassionate friends.....once strangers but now kindred souls who share our lives and our world.

Life will not be the same again, yet life can be good again. Inside the gate we will each find ourselves with the help of our compassionate friends. They listen carefully to stories about our child. They know our child's name better than they know our name. And that's how we want it to be....remember our children.

Remember with us.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
TCF Katy, TX
In memory of Todd Mennen

GRIEF

When a storm of grief grows in the heart; reach back to yesterday to catch onto your memories.
The storm will calm and, for a brief moment, the lost feeling of happiness will shine through and through.

Lori Pollard
TCF Montgomery, AL



Everyone is encouraged to contribute to the newsletter to keep our chapter going strong. Please contact Julie Petty with your ideas.



Also, remember you can bring your child's favorite snack for refreshments to our monthly meeting or do a flower arrangement for the table. Please contact Marilyn Smith one month prior to the meeting.

Our Children Always Loved and Remembered



A special table is set up at our meetings to honor children whose special days are in that month. We invite you to bring a picture or memento of your child to share during that significant month.

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Jason Garrett	04/02/67	Sandra Garrett
Chris Pauley	04/02/77	Sharon & Gary Pauley
Chris Culpepper	04/04/69	Noel Culpepper
April Mizell	04/23/83	Pam Spillers
Shannon Scharf	04/06/62	Robert S. Green
Robby Jenkins	04/10/88	Beverly Jenkins
Thomas Stephens	04/12/95	Susan & Gray Stephens
Chris Travis	04/13/72	Gloria & Kenneth Travis
Austin Thames	04/14/99	Kim Thames
Layton Patton	04/17/02	Terri Miller
Rod Taliaferro	04/17/64	Shirley Taliaferro
Wendi Janway-Jones	04/23/78	Rosalyn & Tom Janway
Ashley Loflin	04/23/73	Katye Loflin
Ethan Massey	04/25/01	Michelle Massey

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Holly M. Robertson	04/01/17	Nancy & Joe Mulhearn
Chris Pauley	04/05/95	Sharon & Gary Pauley
Michael Stephens	04/05/68	Maggie & John Stephens
Krista Corrent	04/08/00	Anna Ruth Hill
Pamela Ford	04/10/04	Leona Upton
Martha Mickel	04/13/84	Ruth Mickel
Pamela Wimbish	04/14/16	Pam Wimbish
Danny Morgan	04/18/16	Jeanie Morgan
Michael Johns	04/19/06	Nell Book
Courtney Cole	04/22/12	Ann & Henry Cole
Mickey Loflin	04/23/73	Katye Loflin
Joe David Williams	04/24/18	Dolph Williams
Anne Barham	04/25/91	Pat Barham

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Bo Best	05/02/84	Charlene Best & Charles West
Tonya Bell	05/05/69	Ann Smith
Kellie Falgout	05/06/82	Patricia Falgout
Justin Petty	05/07/82	Julie & Danny Petty
Melissa Blankenship	05/08/65	Peaches Cathey
Will Bryan	05/08/91	Beverly & David Bryan
Jason Hutts	05/12/81	Carol & Greg Hutts
Mickey Chambers	05/13/62	Merrell & Mike Chambers
McKenzie Hudson	05/13/88	Dayna Hudson
Derrick Sadberry	05/15/65	Belinda Sadberry
Elizabeth Vaughan	05/19/65	Marilyn Stern
Hunter Carr	05/21/91	Juanita Carr
Jill Whitaker	05/21/82	Cynthia Machen
Timothy Smith	05/26/61	Mary & Buddy Smith
Brian Gregory	05/28/73	Frances & Jim Gregory
Kelly O'Neal	05/28/70	Nancy Oliver
Scott Thompson	05/29/78	Tammy Thompson

OUR CHILDREN'S MAY ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Mickey Loflin	05/10/05	Katye Loflin
Ashley Loflin	05/10/06	Katye Loflin
Shontavious Foster	05/12/13	Sarah Foster
Ethan Massey-Rydi	05/13/10	Michelle Massey
Lisa Giovingo	05/15/15	Frances Giovingo
Leigh Ann White	05/15/05	Janet & Ken White
Barry Kirby	05/18/13	Lisa Kirby
Lance Thomas	05/18/08	Connie & Danny Thomas
John Dobbs	05/21/08	Maggy & John Dobbs
Stacey Gentry Morrison	05/22/15	Sandy Kendrick
David Webb	05/22/05	Paula Webb
Justin Petty	05/26/01	Julie & Danny Petty
Kellie Falgout	05/28/02	Patricia Falgout

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Justice Farrar	06/05/98	Martha Anderson
Lauren Lang	06/08/93	Lisa Lang
Caroline Cole	06/11/70	Ann & Henry Cole
Jenna Johnson	06/12/88	Sandy Johnson
Katie Joyce	06/25/08	Kathryn & Jeff Joyce
Blade Gilbreath	06/13/05	Dawn & Brandon Gilbreath
Debbie Pope	06/14/52	Jean Hamilton
Andrew Rinicker	06/16/72	Dale Rinicker
Jackson Kennedy	06/18/00	Jonann Layton
Jeremiah Bynum	06/19/92	Darnita Peeler Williams
Mike Hayes	06/20/63	Margaret & George Hayes
Kelly Chapman	06/23/78	Judy & Bennie Chapman
Walker Dayton	06/23/81	Vickie & Ed Dayton
Katie Joyce	06/25/08	Kathryn & Jeff Joyce
Savannah Thornton	06/25/85	Rhonda & Ronald Thornton
CW2 Bryan Henderson	06/29/85	Kim Bryan Henderson

OUR CHILDREN'S JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Melissa Blankenship	06/13/04	Peaches Cathey
Kody Spann	06/14/07	Cindy Spann
Terry Watson	06/21/13	Henrietta/Paul Watson
Brandi Pearson	06/22/17	Layne Pearson
William Tousignant	06/27/18	Gregg Tousignant

TO OUR LONG TIME 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 when new parents arrive with a fresh hurt and frightened eyes, I remember how we felt at our first meeting. 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." They were the ones who wanted to really listen when you talked about your child. Can you be an "oldie" for someone else? By helping someone else, you help yourself and share your child with someone who never got to know them. Come out and share with newly bereaved parents to help them heal. Our own healing happens when we are reaching out to others.

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE;
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone.
We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope.
Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for our children unites us.
Your pain becomes my pain just as your hope becomes my hope.
We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.
We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds.
We are young, and we are old.
Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh
and so intensely painful that we feel helpless and see no hope.
Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength;
some of us are struggling to find answers.
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression;
others radiate an inner peace.
But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,
it is pain we will share just as we share with each other our love for our children.
We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together
as we reach out to each other in love
and share the pain as well as the joy,
share the anger as well as the peace,
share the faith as well as the doubts
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

www.tcfnortheastla.org

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Northeast Louisiana Chapter
P.O. Box 6114
Monroe, Louisiana 71211

Return Service Requested