



The Compassionate Friends

Southwest Suburbs/Cleveland Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

We Need Not Walk Alone, We Are The Compassionate Friends

P.O. Box 3696 Oak Brook, IL 60522 1-877-969-0010

National Website: www.compassionatefriends.org

Chapter Website: www.tcf-cle.net



Chapter Closed Facebook Group

April, 2019

WHAT IS COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS?

Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents.

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MISSION STATEMENT: When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them 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, creeds, and relationships. 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 they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our

faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while 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 the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to 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.



April Monthly Meeting

April 10th at 7:00pm: The discussion theme will be "How has your grief evolved." As always you can raise any concerns or issues you feel the group might be able to help with. Clayton Samels will facilitate.

MEETING LOCATION: *Bethany Lutheran Church, 6041 Ridge Road, Parma 44129*

Remembering Our Children

Please take a moment to remember these children and those who love them on their birth dates and anniversaries. Although they were only here for a short time, the impact they made on their loved ones remains forever.



April Birth Dates

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 3 - Kevin John Napolz | 22 - Jeffrey Lamont "Man-Man" Harris |
| 7 - Jacob Benjamin Pritchard | 22 - Megan Leigh Homyak |
| 7 - Dominic Zunis | 22 - Mark Anthony Weber |
| 8 - Matthew Hickernell | 24 - Jillian Deborah Martovitz |
| 8 - Scott Lee Pearson | 24 - Phillip Masterson |
| 9 - Michael Quinn | 24 - Paul Eugene Olexo |
| 12 - Bruce Kodrich | 24 - Ashley Nicole Szewczyk |
| 13 - Christopher Kuzma | 25 - Nathan Bell |
| 14 - Alex B. Sismour | 25 - Donna Lynn Tischler |
| 16 - Brittany Holtzman | 27 - Zachary Thomas Gott |
| 17 - Ryan Kenneth Perkins | 27 - Carl Raymond Grants |
| 17 - Lauren Jane Rehker | 27 - Adam Timothy Grodzik |
| 18 - Bob Murphy | 28 - Stephen Kanz |
| 19 - Brenda Cole | 28 - Ruth Elanor Pickett |
| 19 - Mark Adam Kapusta | 30 - Sarah Alice Walzer |
| 19 - Gregory Charles Christopher Musichuk | |

First Meeting

Ann Rinaldi, remembering her beloved son Adam Joseph Semenas (Age 35)

Patty Gumina, remembering her beloved nephew Adam Joseph Semenas (Age 35)



Our March meeting was the first for this bereaved mother and aunt. It is very difficult to attend a first meeting and we applaud them for having the courage to come. We hope we were of help, and that they will return and work through their grief journeys with us.

Remembering Our Children

April Angelversary Dates

Matthew David Clark (Age 35)	James Louis Morabito (Age 22)
Jay (John) Defevere (Age 45)	Michael Edward Moran (Age 26)
Dina Michelle Dlugoz (Age 18)	Paul Eugene Olexo (Age 17)
John Anderson Greer (Age 7 months)	Ivan Marko Penavic (Age 18)
Thomas D. Hayn (Age 21)	Ruth Elanor Pickett (Age 23)
Andrew P. Hudgins (Age 32)	Hunter Lane Poore (Age 19)
Monique Nicole Jones (Age 26)	Robert Clayton Samels (Age 24)
Joey Keeler (Age 1)	Kaitlyn Mary Schauer (Age 18)
Kimberly Ann Keenan (Age 20)	Jason Tompkins (Age 32)
John Lazor (Age 3)	Jackie vanDaalwyk (Age 30)
Taylor Makela (Age 2 months)	Jessica Mary Van Dyke (Age 8)
Christopher Brandon Mercurio (Age 1)	Rhonda Zusack (Age 18)

Love Gifts

Love gifts are donations that are made to our chapter to support the continuation of the chapter as well as the newsletter. We would like to thank these people who donated to our Chapter in memory of their loved one(s).

~ Darthena Culpepper ~ In loving memory of Jeffrey Lamont "Man-Man" Harris (Age 20)

~ Bonnie Mickol ~ In loving memory of Scott Mickol (Age 16) and George Mickol (Age 80)

~ Donna Penavic ~ In loving memory of Ivan Marko Penavic (Age 18)

~ Clayton Samels ~ In loving memory of Robert Clayton Samels (Age 24)

~ Doreen and Brian Sismour ~ In loving memory of Alex B. Sismour (Age 14)

It has been said that time heals all wounds. I do not agree. The wounds remain. In time the mind, protecting its sanity, covers them with scar tissue and the pain lessens, but it's never gone. ~ Rose Kennedy

Newsletter Dedications



**All the greatest gifts in life however big or small
to have you as my only son
was the greatest gift of all.**

Love, Mommy and your four Sisters

**Jeffrey Lamont "Man-Man" Harris
(Age 20)**



**Our dearest and oldest son,
We love you and miss you more than ever.
*Mom, Dad, Michael, Grandma and Aunt Helen***

Ivan Marko Penavic (Age 18)

Newsletter Dedications



Robert Clayton Samels (Age 24)

My life goes on in endless song:
 Above earth's lamentation,
 I catch the sweet, tho' far-off hymn
 That hails a new creation.
 Through all the tumult and the strife
 I hear the music ringing;
 It finds an echo in my soul--
 How can I keep from singing?



Alex B. Sismour (Age 14)

Alex,

It is hard to believe that 7 1/2 years have passed since we last saw your handsome face. You have now been gone for half of your lifetime. We still miss your beautiful smile and infectious laughter, but you will live on forever in our hearts.

Happy 22nd Birthday in heaven.

*Love Always,
 Mom, Dad and Andrew*

TCF National News

42ND TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE JULY 19 - JULY 21, 2019

42ND TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE



RINGS OUT IN
PHILADELPHIA

JULY 19-21, 2019

The Compassionate Friends National Conference is a weekend spent surrounded by other bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. It is a place where hope grows and friendships are made with others who truly understand. With inspirational keynote speakers, abundant workshops for everyone's wants and needs, and a remembrance candle lighting program culminating with the annual Walk to Remember, this time of healing and hope is the gift we give ourselves. Join us as together we remember and share the everlasting love we have for our precious children, siblings and grandchildren.

The 42nd TCF National Conference will be held in Philadelphia, on July 19-21, 2019 at the Philadelphia 201 Hotel. "Hope Rings in Philadelphia" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great National Conference experience. We'll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#) and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

Choose to attend from nearly one hundred different workshops and sharing sessions, given by professionals and also individuals just like you.

- Take advantage of "Healing Haven" to receive free personal services such as a massage.
- Craft items to commemorate the love for your family member in the "Crafty Corner".
- Step away for a quiet moment of pause in the "Reflection Room".

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Pre-registration Rates

Adult – \$125.00

Senior (65+) – \$115.00

Active Military – \$75.00

Full-time College Students

(with ID) – \$60.00

Child – \$60.00

[REGISTER NOW](#)

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Philadelphia 201 Hotel

201 N. 17th St.

Philadelphia, PA 19103

[MAKE A RESERVATION](#)

Or call 215.448.2963 ext. 6415 to reserve a room and use group code TH1326. Room rate is \$145 for guest room with Queen/King or 2

Our Chapter News

In Loving Memory of George Mickol, Our Compassionate Friend

The following members have made gifts to our chapter in loving memory of George Mickol, chapter member for more than 35 years. George and Bonnie served as our chapter leaders for many years. George was a true Compassionate Friend, and will be deeply missed by many.

Pauline and Ralph Dey

Mike and Joyce McCann/Humel

Glenn Dugas

Rita and Dave Schuenemann

Marilyn Duman

Fred and Mary Tschanz

Karen and Jim Kipfstuhl

Len and Sandy Vargo

Judy and Bill Luff

Buck Zusack

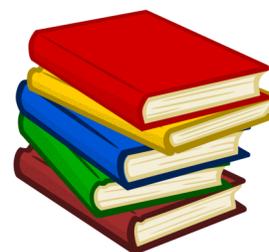
Candlelight Remembrance Service (save the date)

Our annual Candlelight Remembrance Service will be held at Bethany Lutheran Church on Sunday, June 23rd. The service consists of lighting candles in memory of our children, with appropriate readings and music, a balloon release and refreshments. Please plan to attend this very special event in remembrance of our children. *More information will appear in the May newsletter.*



Library Notes – by Clayton Samels

Our library has a nice new copy of Chicken Soup for the Soul – Grieving and Recovery, by Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, and Amy Newmark, a collection of 101 inspirational and comforting stories about coping with loss, regaining your strength, appreciating life, and finding new joy. Sounds like my cup of tea, I mean, my bowl of soup! Organized into ten sections of about ten stories each, it offers some nourishment for the spirit, and who couldn't use a little bit of that, especially on a chilly, rainy day at the very beginning of spring? Yeah, there are lots of Chicken Soup books, but this particular one should be on your shelf, at least for a while.



My reading list has a few other books on it. One I just got on my Libby app, after waiting weeks and weeks to get it, is one called The Friend, by Sigrid Nunez. It is "A moving story of love, friendship, grief, healing, and the magical bond between a woman and her dog. When a woman unexpectedly loses her lifelong best friend and mentor, she finds herself burdened with the unwanted dog he has left behind." Ok, my ebook copy is due back in fifteen days, so I guess I had better start on it this weekend, but if it keeps on raining, that won't be a problem.

What Is A Love Gift ?

A love gift is a gift of money to The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in honor of a child who has died, but it can also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help in the work of our chapter. All local TCF chapters are totally dependent on funds from our families. We DO NOT receive funds from our National Office. Everything we need to operate our local chapter is paid directly from our local resources and our local family contributions. All monetary love gifts are tax deductible.

Thank you to all who contribute and support our chapter. Some people contribute in memory of other's children ... this is a wonderful way for others to say, "I am remembering your child." Other "Gifts of Love" are evident by all the compassionate and giving volunteers we have within our organization.

Love gifts should be made payable to The Compassionate Friends and mailed to:

Bonnie Mickol, 2914 Dellwood Drive, Parma, OH 44134

Newsletter Dedications

A newsletter dedication is a wonderful way to remember your child, and to help defray the costs to produce the newsletter. The cost is \$30 (tax deductible). If you would like to include a dedication, please fill out the form below and either bring it to a monthly meeting or mail it with your check (made payable to The Compassionate Friends) to Bill Luff, 133 Fourth Avenue, Berea, OH 44017. If you have a picture to include or a small tribute, please e-mail it to Bill Luff at:

jbl3665@sbcglobal.net



Donor: _____
(Your Name)

Donor Address: _____
(Street) (City, State, Zip) (Phone #)

In Memory of: _____
(Child's Name)

I would like dedication to appear in newsletter for month of: _____
(1st Choice) (2nd Choice)

My "Chris" Birds

It's the twigs below the birdhouse
 Lets me know your birthday's near
 This back yard once sat empty
 Not a bird in sight all year

We placed the houses in our yard
 To give the birds a home
 But never did we see one
 Til the day that you went home

We looked outside on that day
 We laid you in the ground
 On that dark day in September
 The starlings swarmed around

We had never seen so many
 Certainly not in our back yard
 But there they were aplenty
 On that day that was so hard

They came again in the Spring
 Round your birthday, the end of March
 The starlings flew around again
 Bringing twigs, a home to start

So March and in September
 Are special months indeed
 The starlings come to see us
 They recognize our need

Because they came when you left
 They were never here before
 I've named them after you my son
 Your legacy, I'm sure

So, it's these twigs below the birdhouse
 That lets me know that you are near
 My "Chris birds" come a-callin
 Reminding me of you so dear

*Robyn Kingery
 In Memory of my son, Chris Kingery*

***There are things that we don't want to happen but have to accept,
 things we don't want to know but have to learn,
 and people we can't live without but have to let go. ~ author unknown***

Giving a Voice to Grief and Recovery

Open to Hope ® is a non-profit with the mission of helping people find hope after loss. This source of support may be very helpful to you in your grief journey. Here is the link to follow:

www.opentohope.com

The banner at the top of the Home page includes a link to resources for Death of a Child. We hope this is helpful for you.

When Will The Pain End?

When I look back over my grief journey, I marvel at how far I have come and yet at how poignant and permanent the loss of my son will always be for me. How can this dichotomy exist within one person's mind?

The horror of the news of my son's death, the shock that slammed my mind into numbness, the unremembered conversations, the platitudes that followed the memorial service and the first two months of living in a complete fog of disbelief are very vivid in my mind. The horror is too real to forget. The next six months of melancholy, miserable mourning are forever locked in my mind. The pure physical pain, the piercing jolts when I momentarily thought of something beyond my child's death and was mercilessly slammed back into the finality of death's amputation of my son's smile, laughter and physical presence on this earth are etched for eternity in my soul. My mind simply couldn't accept that Todd was gone from this plane. The first anniversary of his death was a horrifying day worsened by a very bleak and foreshadowing conversation with my son's widow. Life would be much different for my husband and me from this point forward. There were no bridges to the past. She made that clear. I was inconsolable from the impact of her wicked words.

But I made it through the first and second years with help from my Compassionate Friends Chapter. I could cry and scream about the injustice of my loss and all that followed, and each parent understood. Eventually I had told my story enough times to enough people that I subconsciously accepted Todd's death and all the changes in my life that followed.

At some point in my second year of grief I began reaching out to others. Helping others, seeing their pain, hearing their tearful words, had become cathartic for me. The more I helped, the more I was helped.

Yes, my son is still with me in my heart and in my memories. The movies of his life play in my mind almost daily. I have made new friends. I have walked away from old acquaintances. I have learned to separate the meaningful from the meaningless. And I have learned that I will always feel the pain of my son's death, yet I must always move forward into hope. Each day brings more hope as I accomplish another piece of my lifelong grief work.

So the dichotomy exists within me. In my heart, mind and soul my child will live forever. The memories of the full measure of each day of his life are there to give me peace and solace. Yet, the brutal pain of my son's death is there, too. Unlike any other love in life, a parent's love is unconditional and transcends all. There is a peace in knowing that. The pain doesn't end. It simply reshapes itself into a quiet, soft ache that gives us a gentle, often tearful, reminder that our child will always be with us. And perhaps that is as it should be.

*Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
TCF, Katy, TX*

Thirty Years

Thirty years ago today
On a cold snowy winter day
You came into my life, my son
And changed my life in many ways

You taught me unconditional love
And what a mom should feel
You taught me compassion in many ways
The kind only the heart reveals

You taught me how to smile
When heartprints ruled my days
You taught me so much laughter
My love was endless in so many ways

I taught you, as you taught me
The years flew by too fast
And then God's Angels called you home
All I had left, was memories of the past.....

Today's your 30th birthday, Andy
And I sit here all alone
Wondering how you're spending yours
While I spend my at home

Thinking of the ones we had,
The double birthdays we once shared
I close my eyes and remember
It makes my eyes begin to tear

I remember when you were one
And I was twenty-seven
If I'd known then, in four years
God was calling you to heaven.....

I'd held you even more tightly,
I'd have kissed you even more
And probably went to school with you
Each day you went out the door

I'd have tucked you in more tightly
I'd have read more stories at night
And had I known what life held
I'd never let you out of my sight

But none of us knows what life holds
Or what our future will be
God gave us five great years
I treasure those precious memories

Happy Birthday Andy
I love you with all my heart
One day again we will share this day
But for now, I'll share you in my heart

I'll love you forever my son.....
on air, land, and sea
and through eternity

*Sharon J. Bryant
In Memory of Andy Dunbar's 30th birthday
Reprinted by permission of author*

The Gift of Someone Who Listens

Those of us who have traveled a while
Along this path called grief
Need to stop and remember that mile,
That first mile of no relief.

It wasn't the person with answers
Who told us of ways to deal.
It wasn't the one who talked and talked
That helped us start to heal.

Think of the friends who quietly sat
And held our hands in theirs.
The ones who let us talk and talk
And hugged away our tears.

We need to always remember
That more than the words we speak,
It's the gift of someone who listens
That most of us desperately seek.

*Nancy Myerholtz
TCF Waterville/Toledo, OH*