



# 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](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

Chapter Website: [www.tcf-cle.net](http://www.tcf-cle.net)



Chapter Closed Facebook Group

## November, 2017

### WHAT IS COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS?

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

#### Phone Contacts:

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### 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

**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.

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.



## November Monthly Meeting

**November 9th at 7:00pm:** The discussion topic will be "Preparing for the holidays". As always you can raise any concerns or issues you feel the group might be able to help with. Judy and Bill Luff 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.



## *November Birth Dates*

3 - James Christopher Hartman	18 - Antonio Deshon Briones
5 - Dina Marie Parisi	19 - Tiffany Lyn Clawson
8 - Thomas Patrick Harsany	19 - Bruce Albert Schmidt
11 - Michael James Wohl	19 - Amy (Cudney) Sobolewski
12 - Anthony James Dawson	20 - Jason Tompkins
12 - Scott Winfield Hawke	26 - Christopher E. Andes
14 - Todd David Buchko	29 - Michaelann Elizabeth Arnold
15 - Brian David Moll	30 - Mary Kay (Moore) Lehman
17 - Gabrielle Nicole Walczak	30 - Kadeem Von Hogan

## *November Angelversary Dates*

Christopher E. Andes (Age 25)	Lauren Venzel Kutchenriter (Age 27)
Arik Bocian (Age 5)	Donald A. Litvin, Jr. (Age 13)
Todd David Buchko (Age 1 day)	Kerrienne Loas (Age 20)
Benjamin David (Age 31 days)	Steven Michael Luff (Age 19)
David Thomas Erich (Age 29)	Tracy Ann Schuenemann (Age 27)
Tom Friebe (Age 17)	Justin Robert Swanger (Age 22)
James Christopher Hartman (Age 31)	Ashley Nicole Szewczyk (Age 39)
Brian Tyler Jenkins (Age 12)	Daniel F. Wells Jr. (Age 26)
Andrew C. King (Age 21)	

# Remembering Our Children



Our October meeting was the first for these bereaved parents. 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.

## First Meeting

Duane Hein, remembering his beloved son Christian Creed Hein (Age 3)

Ron Obloy, remembering his beloved son Eric Justin Obloy (Age 26)

Rita and Ed O'Connor, remembering their beloved daughter Kimberly Ann Tucker (Age 45)

Jamie Stehlin, remembering her beloved son Nick Rothenbuhler (Age 20)

## 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).

~ Don and Joanne Litvin ~ In loving memory of Donald A. Litvin, Jr. (Age 13)

~ Judy and Bill Luff ~ In loving memory of Steven Michael Luff (Age 19)

~ Jan and Don Moll ~ In loving memory of Brian David Moll (Age 21)

~ Patricia Pappas ~ In loving memory of Terry M. Pappas (Age 31) and Tom Pappas (Age 81)

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

~ Rita and Dave Schuenemann ~ In loving memory of Tracy Ann Schuenemann (Age 27)

**Life's unfairness is not irrevocable;  
we can help balance the scales for others, if not always for ourselves.**

*~ Hubert H. Humphrey*

# *Newsletter Dedications*



**Donald A. Litvin, Jr. (Age 13)**

**Forever young**  
*Love, Mom and Dad*



**Steven Michael Luff (Age 19)**

**Steve,**  
**Time goes fast — Time goes  
slow. But time doesn't  
change our love for you.  
We are so blessed to have  
you as our son and brother  
and will love you now and  
forever.**

*Mom, Dad,  
Scott and Lisa*

# Newsletter Dedications



Ivan Marko Penavic (Age 18)

**Our dearest and oldest son,**

**We love you and miss you more than ever.**

*Mom, Dad, Michael, Grandma and Aunt Helen*

## My Angel

Deep in the woods a meadow lies  
this is the place where sorrow hides

In this clearing there is a pool  
filled with tears I've cried for you

And from this pool springs forth a stream  
that leads me to the land of dreams

This is the place I long to be  
The place where you can be with me

Thou I know this cannot be  
I also know you'll wait for me

And one day when my time has come  
I'll find you smiling in the sun

And together joyfully we'll run  
through meadows made of memories,  
of love, of hope, and happy things

Until then I shall carry on  
With you as my angel to lean upon

*Tracy Smith*

*In Memory of my niece Madison Lynne Smith*

# TCF National News



## THE 21ST TCF WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING

The 21st Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting will be held this year on Sunday, December 10, 2017. This is a very special and moving event, when bereaved families join together from around the world in memory of all children gone too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 21st annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

## 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 our treasurer:

George Mickol, 2914 Dellwood Drive, Parma, OH 44134

# Our Chapter News



## Worldwide Candle Lighting Celebration

*Our annual celebration will be held December 10th at the Old Town Hall, 18825 Royalton Road, Strongsville.* We will have a potluck dinner beginning promptly at 6:30pm with the welcome and music/readings. At 7pm, we will each light a candle in memory of all children before sharing dinner together.

Our chapter will provide ham, rolls & butter and beverages. Each family please arrive between 6:00-6:20pm and provide a side dish, salad or dessert (including serving spoon) to serve 10-12 people. After dinner, we will extinguish our candles and have a final reading/music.

There will be a table to display your child's picture which should be no larger than 8x10. Again this year a slideshow of our children will be shown during the meal. If your child's picture *has not* been included in a previous slideshow, please bring a picture to the October or November meeting or email one to Don Litvin at [lit@roadrunner.com](mailto:lit@roadrunner.com) *no later than Friday, December 1st.*

**VERY IMPORTANT: You MUST RSVP to Pauline Dey (440-526-2087 or [rpdey1@cox.net](mailto:rpdey1@cox.net)) by Monday, December 4th. The City of Strongsville enforces a very strict maximum occupancy of 65 for this facility. We will be unable to accommodate more than 65 persons. (The last two years our attendance was 63-65.)**



**Directions to Old Town Hall:** The building is located on the south side of Royalton Road (Rt. 82) just east of Pearl Road. It is directly across from the Town Square, in the center of Strongsville.. Parking is on both the east and west sides of the building. Please use the east building entrance. Our Candle Lighting Celebration and potluck dinner will be held on the first floor. The building is fully accessible ... there are no stairs.

## I Never Believed...

I never believed I would see another season change with gladness. I never believed I would see the world again without the haze of tears. I never expected to actually laugh again. I never felt my smile would return and feel natural on my face. I never hoped for another day when I would not want to die. I never envisioned a world that could again be bright and full of promise. I believed that all that had passed from me the day he died and went away, never to return. But I was wrong, and I know that in the fullness of your grieving, you too will come to understand that life goes on...that it can still have meaning...that even joy can touch your life once more.

*Don Hackett  
TCF Hingham, MA*

## Aftershocks

The news of Tom's passing was life shattering, a major shift in the landscape of my world. In the first moment, it felt as though a bolt of lightning seared through me, adrenaline making my entire body tingle and shake. My mind raced. My body permanently changed that night, becoming physically older and weaker.

On the phone, I remember screaming, "You are wrong; he's just asleep" over and over again. Time slowed down as we drove to his location; we could not get there fast enough. But that did not matter. We could not have changed anything. Then, when I saw it was true, a wailing sound I had never heard came out of me, lasting for hours. In fact, there was a chorus of pain as those of us closest to him processed what had happened. As my adrenaline wore off, my stomach tightened, and I became nauseous. I sat on the door stoop for hours as the scene was processed, alone in my thoughts and pain, together with those who shared the same emotions.

The first two weeks are a blur. Many people came and went, bringing food, flowers and words of love. I remember how much I appreciated them caring for us. I also remember doing laundry and thinking my world has stopped, but there are still clothes and dishes to wash. I cried all day, every day for a long time. The sobs would not stop. I remember planning and attending the service, and knowing I was finding my strength in those around me who were lifting me up through support, service, and prayer, but my world continually quaked during that time.

What I remember about earthquake aftershocks is they are expected, but unpredictable in timing and strength. This is certainly true of my grief. I returned to work two weeks later, easing back into the real world. I was able to hold it together in the classroom, but the aftershocks were persistent. Coworkers, students, and friends were generous with hugs, support, and Tom stories and memories, but each brought an emotional jolt which reopened my wounded heart and caused the tears to flow. But knowing he is remembered and I am supported is worth it.

Two months out, people say less about it all, so the aftershocks come from other sources, music, his picture, his room, during counseling, and my memories of him. I do not cry all the time now. Sometimes when the aftershocks hit, they are strong and rumbling and I cry uncontrollably not able to catch my breath. Other times, it is a tear or two meandering down my face, hoping to sneak out so no one notices. I had expected each day to get easier, but that is not the case. Some days I cry just a few times, other days it goes on and on. A day has not yet passed without tears.

I have spoken with many people who have lost a child and they all have told me the same thing. The tears and pain never go away completely; it becomes the "New Normal." But from what they say, it sounds like the aftershocks' strength, duration, and frequency lessen. You become able to remember your child without your entire world shaking you off balance and scrambling for a foothold to survive the tremor. And, they assure me, that your love for your child never lessens, staying entrenched in your heart where it is safe and always protected.

*Kimberly Starr  
TCF Facebook Loss to Suicide Group  
In Memory of my son Tom*

## Remembrance

What do we do when we love someone  
But they have gone away  
When all our days of bright sunlight  
Have turned to shades of gray?

We call upon the memories  
As time allowed and then  
Tuck them safely in our minds  
To visit now and again

What do we say when no comfort comes  
From words of love and hope  
When efforts made seem pointless  
As we fight each day to cope?

We cherish them as best we can  
Each smile, each word, each look  
We write the story they want told  
On the pages of life's book

How do we act when we hear their name  
And we cannot help but cry  
This isn't fair, they were barely here  
It's not time to say goodbye!

For most important is the vow  
We honor when they're gone  
Of sharing all they've given us  
From that moment on

We promise them that they have made  
A place within our hearts  
Where they will live forever  
Though we are far apart

*Donna Gerrior  
TCF Pasco County, FL  
In Memory of Rob*

## 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](mailto: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)