



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



Newsletter

Volume 39 No. 8 August 2017

Jackson, MS Chapter: P.O. Box 1396; Jackson, MS 39215-1396; 601-713-4357

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POSTAGE

**PAUL BROOME IN MEMORY OF CYNTHIA BROOME
ED and CAROLYN BUCHANAN IN MEMORY OF ASHLEY BUCHANAN
CHUCK and MARLISE PRESTWOOD IN MEMORY OF KRISSY PRESTWOOD
JERRY and CINDY WIGGLESWORTH IN MEMORY OF LEE WIGGLESWORTH**

LOVE GIFT

SAM and RITA LATHAM IN MEMORY OF JOSEPH LATHAM

SECURITY SERVICE

WILEY and BETH GREER IN MEMORY OF BENJAMIN QUIN (BEN) GREER

The Compassionate Friends THANK YOU for your donations

They are tax deductible and deeply appreciated.

Printing of TCF Monthly Newsletter: Courtesy of BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD OF MS

TCF JACKSON CHAPTER NEWS	TCF MEETINGS
<p style="text-align: center;">JULY MEETING NOTES</p> <p>There were twenty-five people present including several newcomers, and we are so glad they found us, but so sorry for the reason they were there. Our Chapter leader, Marcia Lefteroff, welcomed everyone and made announcements. Special days were read by Marcia and Tina Taylor.</p> <p>After we each introduced ourselves and said our children's names, Marcia turned the meeting over to Dr. Greg Little, who facilitated our meeting on the topic, "Messages from the Grave." This was a very interesting meeting in which Greg spoke about he and our TCF founder, Chuck Prestwood attended a conference together where Greg heard a presentation on this same subject. He told how incredible that meeting was and shared some stories he heard there about how some had an undeniable encounter or messages from loved ones who had passed away. Greg shared about his own son, Drew's death and how he saw a falling star, two nights in a row, soon afterward and also how Drew's brother, Patrick, 4-years-old at the time also saw a falling star and said it was Drew. Greg asked, "Who told you that?" Patrick answered, "God."</p> <p>Greg also shared about near-death experiences he has read about and gave examples. He told about a book by a neurosurgeon, Dr. Alexander, who was struck with a rare illness and in a coma for several days. Brain scans showed Dr. Alexander had no thoughts, no brain activity, but while he was in the coma, he heard a sound of beautiful music and saw a bright light. He was no longer looking at the light, but through it. He entered a new world and realized he was not alone when he saw a beautiful girl. Without using words, she spoke and told him, "You must go back".</p> <p>After his discharge from the hospital, he received a photo of a sister he had never seen. The picture was of the same girl he had seen and talked to while in the coma. Ending his presentation, Greg gave us several research notes from professionals, mostly doctors giving scientific evidence of near-death experiences documenting examples of the return of consciousness from death. These notes are from extensive studies proving near-death experiences are real.</p> <p>Greg invited us to share any experiences, dreams or signs we have received from the other side. This meeting was profound and thought-provoking and will remain in our thoughts for some time. Thanks to those who shared their encounters on this sensitive subject. Also thanks to those who brought the delicious refreshments.</p> <p>.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NOTICE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter time has changed to 4:00 Newsletter Folding: Saturday, August 26th - 4:00 p.m.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">2nd Tuesdays monthly at 7:00 p.m. Fondren Presbyterian Church – Fellowship Hall 3220 Old Canton Road, Jackson, MS</p> <p>Directions: Take West Lakeland Drive exit off I-55 North until it dead ends into Old Canton Road. Turn right, go to 2nd traffic light. Fondren parking lot is on the right.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meeting: Tuesday, August 8th, 2017 - 7:00 P.M. Topic: "Ask It Basket" Facilitator: David Morgan</p> <p>This will be a very special meeting where we will be given a chance to write questions we may have which will be discussed or answered during our meeting. David will travel a long distance to come facilitate this meeting for us, so let's all make a special effort to come show our appreciation and support for David and each other.</p> <p><i>Although our meetings are held in donated church facilities, The Compassionate Friends is not a religious organization, and espouses no religion affiliation or doctrines. Persons of all faiths (or no faith), creeds, color, and race are welcome.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Prenatal Bereavement Support Group</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">*1st Wednesday/ Noon UMC Cong. Ctr. Jackson Medical Mall For more information, call Kelly Hinson @ 601-815-7096</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*If the meeting date falls on a holiday—the following Wednesday</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>For Children Grieving the Death of a Loved One</u></p> <p>The McClean Fletcher Center—12 Northtown Drive, Jackson, MS offers peer support groups for children ages 4-18. This includes the child's family and meets every other week. For more information call: Jennifer at 601-206-5525</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MS SIDS ALLIANCE INFANT LOSS SUPPORT GROUP</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monthly 1st Tuesday – 7:00 p.m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">River Oaks Hospital Lobby Classroom MS SIDS ALLIANCE offers education to the public and professionals on risk reduction of SIDS and bereavement support.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cathy Files - 601 955- 1057 Leslie Threadgill – 601-573-1458</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-----</p> 

TCF JACKSON CHAPTER NEWS

Our Annual Balloon Lift-Off is scheduled for Saturday, September 16th. Details on p. 6.



No Matter Where You Go...

I was watching a ridiculous but entertaining movie for my frame of mind at the time. There was a scene where the lead was playing a loud, rock song in a nightclub, when he suddenly stopped to say someone was crying. A surprised audience and band could not imagine how the lead could have heard the sobs. He called for a spotlight and began talking to a tearful girl who he found was on the run. Buccaroo Banzai said to her, "No matter where you go—there you are."

We, as bereaved parents, are sometimes just like that girl. We have found ourselves in a bad movie, trying desperately to run from the pain and suffering that is our grief. Some of us have tried to run away from our grief by changing jobs, moving or retreating into depression. It isn't surprising that we feel unable to do anything positive. No matter where you go, no matter what you do—there you are—no matter...

Grief is not something you can run away from. It isn't something you can shelve until a more appropriate time. It builds until it bursts out with tears, anger, guilt, blame, depression and loneliness. Let it go. Let it happen. We all deserve to grieve. We need to let grief express itself, every way to truly grieve well.

We as Compassionate Friends, above the roar of living around us, can hear your sobs, and we know your fears and pain. We can extend love and hope. In time, the tumult of feelings, the heartache and desperation will soften. Then, instead of finding grief wherever you go, you will find that you are there—now—and not having such a bad time.

*Eddie Kaplan
TCF West Broward, FL*



"People Like Us"

"People Like Us," will answer "Doing okay"

"People Like Us," what else can we say?

"People Like Us," have experienced the loss of a young child.

"People Like Us," are "The Other People" - "That it Happened to"

"People Like Us," fear it may happen to you.

"People Like Us," endure a life forever changed.

"People Like Us," wonder if we are to be blamed.

"People Like Us," have experienced the pain of fate.

"People Like Us," will never forget that date.

"People Like Us," know the loss is real.

"People Like Us," understand, the way we each feel.

"People Like Us," felt normal until then.

"People Like Us," always wonder what could have been?

"People Like Us," hold on to our sorrow.

"People Like Us," have little concern for tomorrow.

"People Like Us," feel guilty while healing.

"People Like Us," wonder if life, we are stealing.

"People Like Us," our grief, we attempt to contain.

"People like Us," often feel grief, we cannot restrain.

"People Like Us," wish that just one minute had changed.

"People Like Us," would like to see fate rearranged.

"People Like Us," we are different, you know.

"People Like Us," now watch other kids grow.

"People Like Us," we always pray,

"Thank you God! For the days you let my child stay!"

"Please God! With my child, please let me have just one more day!"

*Donald Moyers
TCF Galveston County, TX*

Farewell to Dreams

Once upon a time we lived a fairy tale
 Where all lived happily ever after
 God's sun was bright and the stars at night
 Joined in the joy and laughter

We met each day in a composed way
 And met also each tribulation
 We survived each blow and resultant woe
 And loved without ration

Then one day the dreams went astray
 We bid goodbye to "ever after"
 Eyes filled with tears dissolved the cheers
 And goodbye to joy and laughter

Unhappily tossed, our dreams were lost
 In clouded skies there are no beams
 Ours to remember a glowing ember
 But goodbye to tales and farewell to dreams

*Harvey Hockstein
 TCF Morris Area, NJ
 In Memory of my daughter, Marilyn*



Knowledge

And what of the mystery?

All those unknowable things
 What makes us human
 Where does our energy go
 Carbon, nitrogen, sulfur, hydrogen ...
 All the elements go back
 But what of that animating energy

Is there such a thing as a soul?

It is all right not to know
 One does not need
 To be filled up with myths and illusions
 You can seek knowing
 Yet admit
 Not to have the answers

There is much I do not know.

Some days are harder than others
 Holding as they do
 Joy and sorrow
 Overwhelming sometimes
 Putting one foot in front of other
 Can be hard to comprehend.

*Melissa Anne Schroeter
 TCF Rockland County, NY
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After

After all the pain
 We still can feel the sun.
 Not without pain though,
 Not without recrimination.

After all the sorrow
 The sun still shines.
 Not without sorrow though,
 Not without repercussions.

For nothing is the same
 And everything is different
 After

My eyes open each morning
 But not to you.
 Sun shines,
 Rain falls,
 The earth revolves,
 The moon shines full each month.
 But you're still gone.
 After.

The years go by,
 On and on,
 Milestones pass, but I can't share with you,
 After.

When death happens
 There is an illusion of time stopping
 Just an illusion
 For the living go on
 After all.

*Melissa Anne Schroeter
 TCF Rockland County, NY
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 granted by the author*



A Day

A laugh a day keeps the heart pumping.
 A tear a day keeps the mind clear.
 A smile a day gives joy to others.
 A hug a day gives the hopeless
 hope.
 A thought a day brings loved ones near.
 A memory a day brings you closer to me.
 Laughs, tears, smiles, hugs stitched with thoughts
 and memories--
 They're all in my days without you.

*Pam Burden
 TCF, Augusta, GA*



Summertime

It sounds so easy. A soft, warm word—time to run barefoot, time to leave windows open all night. Summertime. Somehow it seems, doesn't it, that it's especially meant for children. Children on beaches, children on swings, children in large pools, children in tiny tubs.

We who do not have all of our children with us may feel the summertime in two ways. One is to remember shared events and adventures—there were so many. Long rides in a hot car, a nap in the back seat. The famous question, "Are we there yet?" Everything from a heat rash to ice cream cones and sand castles.

For us, another way to feel summertime is the special emptiness brought about by children who are no longer on this earth. They used to trot along on hikes in the hills; they used to gather wood for an evening fire. Now summer brings us again the melancholy awareness of their absence. Have you ever walked on some unfamiliar path, surprised about not having been there with the children? Even when there's nothing to remember, we are reminded of the children's absence.

We have been diminished by death. Some of us may still have living children. Other parents have no children left. They have lost an only child, perhaps. Or all of their children died. And here we are, grateful for the warmth of summer mornings, aware of the ripe beauty of nature, trying to deal with our children's absence with all the grace of which we are capable. Often we do not want to burden others with our grief. Or we may be convinced that others don't wish to share our distress. We have learned, after all, that the world around us is not always able to understand how we feel.

Besides, we were taught to be brave. Many of us will do everything we can to appear "normal" after our loss. But we were also taught to be honest. And when you feel the hurt, when you seem almost to be lost in the shadows of this golden summertime, don't hide your sorrow. The grief of your spirit can perhaps be kept a secret on the outside. Yet, your deepest feelings, unexpressed, can burn into your existence with harmful force.

You can be both brave and honest. You know that it's brave to share grief, be it old grief or new grief. And revealing that sorrow is also honest. Of course, nothing can wipe away much of your pain, but sharing grief is helpful. You will know that after you have expressed the painful sorrow you once kept hidden, and you find yourself, finally, smiling at the memories and the blessings of past summertimes.

Sascha Wagner

I Used to Grow Marigolds

When my son Jordan was a toddler, I came up with a notion that he needed to be able to appreciate where his food came from. So, I removed the sod from a small piece of our backyard – a place that seemed to get the requisite amount of sunshine – and I planted cherry tomatoes. Over the years, this spot grew to include cucumbers, zucchini, and green beans as well as a variety of tomatoes.

I am not a gifted gardener. My grandfather was a farmer and I am sure his city/small town bred granddaughter wouldn't make him proud. I most definitely do not have a green thumb. But I did the best I could. I tried various tomato cages over the years to keep the crop from sprawling all over the soil; I tried "raised beds." And I always planted marigolds around the perimeter.

I can no longer remember **why** I planted marigolds. It wasn't to make the garden look prettier. There was some purpose, some objective. Maybe they were supposed to keep bugs away? Birds? Slugs? No matter. I planted marigolds.

I grew tomatoes until Jordan's final summer. As he got older, his favorite sandwich became a BLT. For weeks at a time in the late summer, I made BLTs for him almost daily. Often **two** BLTs. His special version of BLTs: no mayo, just a bit of butter and no lettuce. On toast.

He last came home from college for term break in February. I asked him before his break what foods he especially wanted me to prepare when he was home. Among others, he suggested BLTs. And I said, "But, Jordan, tomatoes are **terrible** in February!" He said, "You're right, Mom." So, no BLT's. Plenty of other favorites, including the angel food birthday cake with chocolate frosting he preferred. But, no BLTs.

He died in April. I am comforted that I grew tomatoes for him until the last summer of his life; I regret that I did not search for a decent tomato that February when he was at home.

The summer after he died, I had our yard man cover up the garden area with sod. I don't grow marigolds anymore.

After six years, I do finally eat BLTs again. With lettuce. And mayo, not butter.

*Peggi Johnson
TCF Piedmont Chapter, VA
In Memory of my son Jordan*



OUR CHILDREN—LOVED, MISSED & REMEMBERED

“They may be deceased by a few days or years, but we still miss them so much and still shed our tears.”

Birth Date	Child’s name	Parent’s name(s)	Cause
08/01	Madigan Rose Johnson	Thomas/Brigette	
08/03	Katherine Graves Morgan	David Morgan	Auto fire (died w/ mom)
08/03	Kirk Cliburn	Roy/Joy Cliburn	Cancer
08/05	Sean DeBarge	Kathryn Sue Doucet	Auto accident
08/06	Mitch Giles	Aden Giles	Drug Overdose
08/07	Matthew Greer	Dave/Charlotte Greer	
08/09	Jesse Allen Gates	Bob/Joy Gates	
08/09	Glovelis “Pat” Wells	Joan McDaniel	Auto accident
08/13	Stephen Michael Goode	Debbie/Roy Goode	Kidnapped/murdered
08/13	Maura Anne Gray-Lewis	Vic/Gerry Gray-Lewis	Natural Causes
08/16	Tykeria-Nicole Patterson	Vicky Patterson	Premature
08/17	Frederick Dillon Ross	Debbie Burkes	Car accident
08/22	Keandra Jaree McMorris	Kornella S. McMorris	Suicide
08/23	Carl Gustav “Gus” Evers	Jan Evers	Suicide
08/25	Sandy Moak	Jake/Frances Moak	Hypertension
08/26	Lucius Andrew Tyson, III	Judy S. Tyson	Heart Condition
08/26	Kurt McCurdy	Ms. Christina McCurdy	Car accident
08/28	Emmanuel D. Ealy	Mary Horton	
08/28	Melissa Lisa Pigg	Rick/Mary C. Pickens	Cancer
08/29	James Matthew “Mat” Kitchens	Michael/Karen Hall	Auto accident
08/31	Timothy Myers	Peter Myers	

ANNUAL BALLOON LIFT-OFF

Saturday, September 16, 2017 - 6:30 P.M.

Facilitator: Corinne Watts

Refreshments & Balloons Will Be Provided

Location: Site of Children's Memorial

Traveling South: Elton Road exit - turn Right -over the North Frontage Road - Go past the Wahabi Temple Headquarters - Next Left is the Children's Memorial.

Traveling North: Elton Road exit - turn Left - over the interstate - turn Right onto the North Frontage Road - Go past the Wahabi Temple Headquarters. Next Left is Children's Memorial.

***** BRING LAWN CHAIRS *****

For more info: Call Corinne Watts - 601-992-0642

or Marcia Lefteroff - 601-937-1940

If you can't be present, but want your child's name, to be included with a brief message and "lifted off" on a balloon, please fill out the form below:

Forms must be received by Sept. 1st - Send to:

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

Balloon Lift-Off

P. O. Box 1396

Jackson, MS 39215 - 1396

NAME: _____

FROM: _____

(Alternate Date (in case of rain) Sept. 30th - 6:30 p.m.)

OUR CHILDREN—LOVED, MISSED & REMEMBERED

Heaven Date	Child's name	Parent's name(s)	Cause
08/01	Madigan Rose Johnson	Thomas/Brigette Johnson	
08/02	Frank "Will" Johnson	Shirley Johnson Sarris	Auto accident
08/03	Janet Susan Johnston	Aaron/Barbara Johnston	Suicide/Depression
08/03	Larkin Powers Honea	Dickey/Breck Honea	Suicide
08/05	Roger Savell II	Brenda Crumbley	Stroke
08/05	John Wayne McFarland	John/Julia McFarland	Suicide
08/07	Kimberly Ann Kessler	John Kessler	Murder
08/08	Laura Ann Clement	Bill/Hallie Clement	Complications/Chrun's
08/09	Sarah Louise Hollis	Jim/Linda Hollis	Auto accident
08/09	James Matthew "Mat" Kitchens	Michael/Karen Hall	Auto accident
08/10	Parker Rodenbaugh	Rick/Cordie Rodenbaugh	Accidental
08/12	Joseph Latham	Sam/Rita Latham	Cancer
08/14	Jessica Leigh Ann Windmiller	Robert/Donna Windmiller	Automobile accident
08/14	Glovelis "Pat" Wells	Joan McDaniel	Auto accident
08/14	Jesse Arron Griffing	Eddy/Rebecca Griffing	Suicide
08/16	Houston Wells, Jr.	Mrs. Jean Wells	Gunshot wound
08/17	Marilyn Yvonne Bennett-Roberts	Walterine Bennett	
08/17	Scotti Lynn Mooney	Jill Calendar	Auto accident
08/18	Tykeria-Nicole Patterson	Vicky Patterson	Premature
08/18	Deanna Boyd Knight	Wilma Davis	Leukemia
08/19	Marjorie Mae Bowen	Gerald/Norma Jean Kimbel	Accidental drowning
08/20	Abbie Gatewood	Brandie Cambell	Cancer
08/21	Sherri Lynn Smith	Odie/Patsy Smith	Thrown from truck
08/21	Jamel Jackson	Rosie Martin (relation)	Drowning
08/21	Jamel Dequan Jackson	Doris Martin Jackson	Drowning
08/24	James Daniel Bruce	Knight/Patricia Bruce	Accidental gunshot
08/28	Kirk Cliburn	Roy/Joy Cliburn	Cancer
08/28	Steven B. Cutrer	Ricky/Brenda Cutrer	Heart attack
08/29	Jennifer Simmons	Sybil Simmons	
08/30	Benjamin Quin (Ben) Greer	Willey/Beth Greer	Auto accident
08/31	Hope Lashanna Norris	Tammy Banks	Auto accident

Grief makes one hour ten.
William Shakespeare

REPLY FORM—IMPORTANT

It is important for our children to be remembered. Please understand that in order for your child to be on the "special days" list, you must fill out this form, which gives us permission to list this information.

I/We are () bereaved Parents () grandparents () siblings () step-parents () friends () relatives () professional
Please () add () remove () keep me on the mailing list.

Remember my () Child () Sibling () Grandchild on Special Days. Please () have someone call me.

Name _____ Phone _____
 Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 E-mail address _____
 Name of Child _____
 Age when deceased _____ Cause* _____
 Child's Birthday _____ Child's Heaven Date _____

*You need not list cause of death. We ask this only so that parents whose children have died in similar ways may reach one another.

Optional: Your donations are tax deductible and allow us to reach to other bereaved parents.

Enclosed is \$ _____ given in memory of _____

I would like my contribution used to fund: Check one: _____ Postage _____ Children's Memorial _____ Love Gift

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends; P.O. Box 1396; Jackson, Mississippi; 39215-1396