



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



Newsletter

Volume 39 No. 7 July 2017

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POSTAGE

**PAUL BROOME in memory of CYNTHIA BROOME
ED and CAROLYN BUCHANAN in memory of ASHLEY BUCHANAN
JERRY and CINDY WIGGLESWORTH in memory of LEE WIGGLESWORTH**

CHILDRENS MEMORAIL

**CHUCK PRESTWOOD in memory of ANNIE LEE PRESTWOOD HAM
BEN SHEARER (family) in memory of BEN H. SHEARER JR.**

SECURITY SERVICE

WILEY and BETH GREER in memory of BENJAMIN QUIN (BEN) GREER

LOVE GIFT

**JAMES E. and ANITA W. BENNETT in memory of BRANDON BENNETT birthday 07/22
ED and CAROLYN BUCHANAN in memory of ASHLEY BUHANAN birthday 06/25
GREG LITTLE in memory of DREW LITTLE birthday 05/1**

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

What Should I Expect?

When a grieving family member first attends a TCF meeting, they may be so full of emotional pain that they can only sit and listen. To talk might require more emotional composure and energy than they currently possess. Others, fresh in their grief and quite possibly still residing in shock, might choose to talk non-stop; others may choose to hide their tears and actually find ways to joke about life. All of those ways are considered normal and acceptable. But, either way, talking or listening, laughing or crying, dialogue with other families who know and understand what you are going through will eventually be of extraordinary benefit.

Sometimes parents attend a couple meetings of The Compassionate Friends hoping for a ninety-minute miracle. Then when the pain remains, or actually becomes more intense as it surfaces, they decide not to attend any more meetings, where painful memories might evoke tears. Sometimes the newly bereaved just don't have enough physical energy to attend a meeting. They struggle just to make it through the day. Others assume the mistaken belief that if you just don't dwell on it, it will get better with time. These parents may try to force the grief down deep inside, and some people carry the unexpressed pain inside for years, where it continues to simmer and fester until it manifests in serious physical consequences.

Unresolved grief does not go away. It can be eased or masked for a time with drugs, and often a parent turns to tranquilizers, anti-depressants, or other medicinal chemicals with unknown risk, seeking permanent relief from the emotional devastation. But true healing occurs through a long process involving time, love and understanding of others, and by acknowledging, discussing and ultimately learning to accept all the feelings and experiences which surrounded your loss.

It takes inordinate courage to confront the Demon of Death and the loss of a child. It also requires a certain amount of love and care for your fellow human beings to continue to share with other newly bereaved. But ultimately, when we decide to walk this walk with The Compassionate Friends, the love and support we offer to one another—as together we travel the road to healing—brings comfort, strength, understanding and finally, a newfound sense of purpose in our life. We are not alone, and by truly caring for one another we can help each other go way beyond “just surviving,” or “getting over it.” We are truly sorry for your loss and we extend ourselves to you with compassion and love.

Sharon Steffke © June, 1998
TCF Downriver One Heart Chapter, MI



THAT FIRST SUMMER VACATION

Summer time is here and with it you may be planning a vacation. If you have recently suffered the death of your child, that first vacation can be very difficult. I would like to share with you our experience the first time we took a vacation after our son, Paul, died. I have included some suggestions to help you through your first vacation and to help you plan around your grief.

If any of you are planning a vacation, here are some suggestions that may help.

Be gentle with yourself. Don't expect too much on your first vacation. Remember as bereaved parents, the first time we do anything without our kids is tough whether it be going to the movies, shopping or on a vacation.

Plan to do some grief work because you will, planned or not. Give yourself time enough on the trip if you have a bad day so that you can just do what you feel like doing. Know that your child will be on your mind day and night just as he or she is at home. Our grief goes with us.

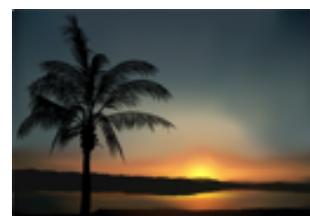
Plan to do something your child would have loved to do, but did not get a chance to. Plan this in his or her memory. If you plan to visit relatives for the first time since your child's death, remember they mean well even if they seem insensitive with their remarks. They have not lost a child and can't see through your eyes.

If you have other children, remember them. They are also having a hard time coping on this vacation. Plan some activities that will be especially for them.

Be especially careful to communicate with your spouse. Plan a vacation that is suitable for both of your needs. Remember you are both grieving for the same child, but we all grieve differently and in our own way.

If you have been maintaining your child's grave site and feel guilty about leaving it unattended, let a family member or friend see to it while you are away. You need not feel guilty and it could fill a need for one of your family.

– *Dianna Hammock, Central Coast, CA*
Posted June 5th, 2017 in Compassionate Friends E-letter



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
07/03	Charles Randolph Weatherly	Ruth Ellen Germany	Homocide
07/07	Jimmy Shamburger	Vicki Shamburger	Suicide
07/08	Cynthia M. Broome	Paul A. Broome	Homicide
07/10	David T. Gentry (Brother)	Dr. Glenn/Betty Gentry	Stroke
07/14	Joseph Latham	Sam/Rita Latham	Cancer
07/16	Fredrika-Mellissa Hanna	Jean H. Ainsworth	Cardiac arrest
07/17	Sherri Lynn Smith	Odie/Patsy Smith	Thrown from truck
07/22	Brandon Bailey Bennett	James/Anita Bennett	Suicide
07/26	Stephen Todd Watts	Corinne Watts	Motorcycle accident
07/27	Jessica Leigh Ann Windmiller	Robert/Donna Windmiller	Automobile accident
07/29	Jason Douglas Beard	Mary Pierce	
07/29	Justin Thomas Beard	Mary Pierce	
07/31	Brantley Clark	Jeanette Browder	SIDS

The Piano Sits Silent

I etch her name in the dust.
 Run my hands over the keyboard,
 too long untouched
 by the pianist;
 The one no longer
 physically here,
 who played the songs,
 badly at times,
 yet unstoppable in
 her need to make music.
 As if it was her mission
 to get it right.
 As if she knew there was little time
 to master the melody.
 So she played and played.
 Melancholy tunes
 that spoke of lives gone too soon.
 I would call to her,
 "You're playing too loud,
 I can't hear myself think."
 If I could just take back those words,
 for I long to hear my
 beloved child play the music,
 that once rang through these halls.
 Those uneven strains would be
 the sweetest music to my ears.
 I touch the ivories and hear
 the foreign sound of this long
 silent instrument.
 And remember my precious child,
 remember the joy
 her efforts brought her...
 Remembering, remembering....
 Though my tears fall gently,
 my heart smiles as I
 recall the sweet sounds of her life.
 And even as the piano sits silent,
 My memories resound
 and I recall the love, always the love.

*Cathy L. Seehuetter
 TCF St. Paul, MN*

OUR CHILDREN—LOVED, MISSED & REMEMBERED

Heaven Date	Child's name	Parent's name(s)	Cause
07/01	Jonathan Lazich	Gary/Cindy Lazich	Drowning
07/02	Gina Hawthorne Sumrall	Ed/Susie Hawthorne	Car accident
07/04	George "Eddie" Chapman, Jr.	George/Emma Chapman	Auto accident
07/06	Mike Fox, Jr.	Mr. Mike Fox, Sr.	Drugs
07/09	Lance Darryl Wroten	Bruce Wroten	Auto accident
07/10	Michael Ward	Melody Vaughn	Cancer
07/11	Albert Alan Ball, Jr.	Pamela K. Williams	Suicide
07/15	Stephen Todd Watts	Corinne Watts	Motorcycle accident
07/15	Chad Aaron Pigg	Rick/Mary C. Pickens	Accidental gunshot
07/21	Bryan "Keith" Barr	Deborah Barr Holden	Cardiac arrest
07/23	Dillon Ross	Fredrick/Debbie Burkes	Auto accident
07/24	Audie Tyson	Bob/Carolyn Stewart	Suicide
07/27	Charels Tyler Lind	Marty Lind	Auto Accident
07/29	Lucius Andrew Tyson, III	Judy S. Tyson	Heart condition
07/30	Destiny McDonald	Pamela Hall	
07/30	Morgan Aaron Rodgers	Dennis/Darline Rodgers	Accidental shooting
07/31	Angela Nicole Smith	Brenda/Bobby Smith	Auto accident

PAIN

I am not a young man, and I thought I knew the meaning of pain. I have experienced pain from a toothache, arthritis, and even the loss of relatives and friends. But nothing in my fifty-four years prepared me for the pain I experienced when we lost our son. I had no clue to real pain.

I think only a bereaved parent knows the true meaning. Not to belittle the loss of a parent or spouse, but those who have lost both tell me that it is not the same. My mother said to me at my brother's funeral, "Now I know how you feel." Even though she had lost a grandson, it was not the same. It has been almost five years now, and there hasn't been a day go by that I don't see his picture or think of him and feel that pain. Pain for what we lost...and for what he lost. That pain is not as intense now. I have learned to tolerate it and still lead a normal life. The Compassionate Friends helped me to realize that I was not alone and that there were many others who felt that same pain. They helped me learn how to deal with it. Now it is my turn to try to help someone else.

Harold F. Underwood/TCF Southern Maryland

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