



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



Newsletter

Volume 41 No. 2 February 2020

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POSTAGE

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

LOVE GIFT

**DON and GAYE STANCEL in memory of MARK STANCEL (Birthday 02/25)
LYNDA GRAY in memory of PATTIE LYNN GRAY (Heaven day 02/27)
ED and CAROLYN BUCHANAN in memory of ASHELY BUCHANAN (Heaven day 02/15)
DAISY STRICKLAND & KAY TONEY in memory of RONNIE STRICKLAND (Heaven day 02/29)
SANDRA MOFFETT in memory of DONOVAN RASHARD THOMAS (Heaven day 02/08)**

CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL

SHIRLEY J. SARRIS in memory of FRANK WILLIAM "WILL" JOHNSON (Heaven day 12/04)

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>Meeting for January 14, 2020. Marcia Lefteroff, our TCF chapter leader, welcomed everyone to our meeting and made announcements. Faye and Rex McCord read the special days. These are the birthdays and the heaven dates for our children. We want to say our child's name and to remember them, because they are never forgotten.</p> <p>There were 19 present one was a new parent to the meeting. It's always sad to have someone new come because we know they are sad and in shock and sick with grief over the loss of their child. The new parent's child died of an accidental overdose. There are so many young people trying drugs and many are dying because of drugs.</p> <p>Tonight, was a general sharing time. It gives parents a time to talk about how their handling their getting through the holidays without their child. A time to ask questions of other parents, you may feel the same as they do, but didn't want to ask.</p> <p>The weather was bad tonight so many were not able to come. Thanks to ones that did. The food was delicious.</p> <p>We hope to see everyone next month on February 11th at seven pm.</p>	<p>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> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Meeting</u></p> <p>Meeting: Tuesday, February 11 - 7:00 p.m. Topic: Valentine’s Day Facilitator: Marcia Lefteroff</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please Come!</p> <p>*****</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;"><i>*If the meeting date falls on a holiday—the following Wednesday</i></p> <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> <hr style="border-top: 1px dotted black;"/> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>MS SIDS ALLIANCE INFANT LOSS SUPPORT GROUP</u></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. Cathy Files - 601 955- 1057 Leslie Threadgill – 601-573-1458</p>
<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">As I Sit in Heaven</p> <p>As I sit in Heaven and watch you everyday I try to let you know with signs I never went away I hear you when you’re laughing And watch you as you sleep I even place my arms around you To calm you as you weep I see you wish the days away Begging to have me home So I try to send you signs So you know you’re not alone Don’t feel guilty that you have a life That was denied to me Heaven is truly beautiful Just you wait and see So live your life, Laugh again, enjoy yourself, be free Then I know with every breath you take You’ll be taking on for me...</p> <p><i>Thank you to Virginia Horton for forwarding this poem to us.</i></p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Dear TCF/Jackson</p> <p>There are still some months that we don’t have anything planned, so if anyone would like to facilitate a meeting, please let us know.</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter Folding Saturday, February 22nd @ 4:00 pm at the Church.</p>



WHERE ARE YOU?

*I missed you yesterday
and looked for you
among the artifacts of your life -
your room with pictures,
the clothes that still carried your scent,
your favorite tools and books,
the tapes you loved to hear.*

*The very walls echoed your vitality
and carried faint memories of riotous laughter.
And so I sat there, comforted for a while,
but forced at last to confess
that although beautiful memories lingered
you were not there,
not then and not ever again.*

*If I could not find you yesterday,
where, then, can I look today?
Who can I talk to, implore, beg
to show me the way?
Where are the hidden doorways
to the signs and wonders
others claim to see?*

*My musings bring no answers
so I take a walk to clear my mind.
Ahead, I see children playing,
and their laughter floating on the wind
reminds me of your own carefree approach to life.
Their running mirrors your own abandon
and the way you always found joy in simple things.*

*Can this be the answer
to the riddle of finding you again?
Can it be that I will hear you
in every moment of laughter?
That I will see you
in the actions of a mischievous friend,
that I will feel you in every touch of compassion?*

*I've always heard
that if you seek, you will find.
Perhaps the corollary to that
is that you must seek in the right places.
I've been looking in the scrapbook
of all that used to be
and found only momentary solace.*

*So let me look for you anew
in all the wonders and blessings of life.
I believe you are reflected there
with every expression of happiness and joy,
in every instance of fearless exploration
and with every act of unconditional love.*

©Harold Hopkins, January 2001
In loving memory of Lance Porter Hopkins
July 20, 1975 – November 30, 1999

Communicating with My Child

Eighteen months ago, I dedicated a bench to Philip. It's in a space Philip would like, out in the natural world, with abundant wildlife and wonderful views across hills and sea.

I go there often to spend time alone with my beloved son. I sit on the bench, look at the vistas, and remember our family as it used to be. I talk to Philip. I make him promises; I ask for his guidance. I muse on what his life would be like now. I tell him how deeply I love him, how missing him gets harder with each passing year. I tell him about his brothers, about his sister-in-law and his little nephew, both of whom he never met. I tell him how important he is to us. I tell him that we will never forget him, that though our lives are five years past his death, we still think of him all the time and want him with us. I tell him that I am having a terribly hard time accepting that he has died, and that I am doing the best I can.

I have no idea if I am communicating with a Philip who has survived death or with myself, who hopes he has. Sometimes I think I feel an impatient nudge, a sort of, "Get on with it, Mom, it's not what you think" message. Sometimes I feel his arms around me in compassionate understanding. Sometimes I don't feel any response at all.

I am grateful for these private times with my child. Whether he lives on in some other sphere—and how I hope he does!—or whether he resides only in our deepest hearts, there is an honoring of him in these conversations, a recognition of his existence and its importance, that matters very much to me.

I believe that we all need to find our individual ways of keeping the channels to our children open. My conversations with Philip may seem odd to some people, but they are right for me. I encourage you to honor your own private ways of communicating with your beautiful child, whatever they are. If you are searching for the channel that will work for you, consider what some other bereaved parents have found helpful: poetry, painting, journal writing, hiking in the natural world, daydreaming, music, meditation, lighting candles, wearing a deceased child's clothing, sitting in his/her room, playing a sport she/he loved, among many, many others. May the time spent in private dialogue with your child bring you peace-filled moments, a renewed sense of connection, and strength to continue the difficult journey we are all on.

Kitty Reeve
TCF Marin County and San Francisco Chapters, CA
In Memory of my son, Philip



Valentine Message

I send this message to my child
Who no longer walks this plane,
A message filled with love
Yet also filled with pain.

My heart continues to skip a beat
When I ponder your early death
As I think of times we'll never share
I must stop to catch my breath.

Valentine's Day is for those who love
And for those who receive love, too
For a parent the perfect love in life
Is the love I've given you.

I'm thinking of you this day, my child,
With a sadness that is unspoken
As I mark another Valentine's Day
With a heart that is forever broken.

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



Tissues, Tears & Treasures

A circle of chairs and boxes of tissues,
A roomful of tears and emotional issues.
Frightening at first, I did not want to enter
Into this strange group and be in the center.

What I soon learned, as we sat side by side,
We were bound by the love of our children who died.
Each shattered heart,
desperately seeking a moment of peace,
from the pain and weeping.

So many things different, and yet all the same,
Hearts lost in a fog of loss and pain.
Those who have journeyed, much further than me,
Reached out in comfort, listened quietly.
Each shattered heart spoke, and the tissues were
passed,
We never avoid speaking of the past.

This circle of friends, have found a bond,
And here I'm still known
As "Tony's Mom."
Slowly, I've found
I can reach out to others
Who are newly bereaved, fathers and mothers.
Strength I have found in this
Circle of chairs,
To grieve and to heal
And to show that we care.

Diane Barta TCF/Portland, OR
In Memory of my son, Tony

Huggin' The Wind

*It seems like yesterday
But maybe it was long ago
Our children were so special
They dwelt within our souls*

*Those days were so bright, with happiness and zeal
The great times that we had
With the wonders of their lives, all so real
So beautiful, with great expectations so out of control
Nothing more could we have ever wanted
As our lives were healthy and whole*

*We remember what happened that fateful day
How our world came tumbling down
How the sadness came into our lives to stay
Oh why, did they have to go away!*

*Huggin' the Wind
We're just people, Huggin' the Wind
We were all young and old but still just
Huggin' the Wind*

*As the days and weeks roll past
And we know we must go on
We just cover our feelings with a mask
And find our lonely selves, a mere creature
Turned into stone*

*We desperately try each day, to find our life,
And we feel helpless, to find a way to begin
But yes, we must find our own way
Or just keep on Huggin' the Wind*

*When we remember back, to the days that we call
"Before"
Our minds flirt with good times
And the energy of a child
That we knew and loved to the core*

*With agony, we awaken!
And become overwhelmed in this realm we call,
"After"
And fall back into the silent darkness
Without laughter*

*Then we just reach out
And find ourselves Huggin' the Wind
Huggin' the Wind
We're just runnin' and Huggin' the Wind*

Donald Moyers
TCF Galveston County, TX



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
02/03	Dean Allen McGhee	Chick/Nancy McGhee	Auto accident
02/07	Aaron Gerald Varner	Bill Varner	Cancer
02/09	Shelley Renee Baggett	Jo/ Meredith Baggett	Batten’s disease
02/09	Cory Zingery	Ken/Trisha Zingery	Viral Pneumonia
02/09	Sophia McGuffee	Emily/Blake McGuffee	Premature
02/11	Cornelius L. Rice	Willie “Bill” Rice	
02/12	Julie Jabour Abraham	Freddy Abraham	Gangrene
02/14	Michael Ellis Blount	Ellis/Lynda Blount	Leukemia
02/19	Andrew C. “Andy” Franklin	Mr./Mrs. Homer C. Franklin	Jeep accident
02/20	Preston Lind	Jennifer Lind	Suicide
02/20	Michael Scott Eldridge	Debbie Eldridge	
02/21	Kimberly Breanna Copelan	Stacy Coplan	Auto accident
02/21	Larry Lefteroff	Corrine Hudson	Heart Attack
02/22	Zy Keenan Rae	Lee Speed	Motorcycle wreck
02/23	John Horton, Jr.	Mary Horton	
02/24	Brandi Denise Hill	Jo Bagley	Accidental overdose
02/25	Mark R. Stancel	Don/Gaye Stancel	Brain tumor
02/26	Frances Anne Fortner	Tom/ Laurilyn Fortner	Auto accident
02/27	Joshua Chase Taylor	Tina Taylor	Suicide
02/27	Zachery Powell	Jackie S. Stanford	Overdose
02/28	Rebekah Kirubai Abraham	Ashley Elizabeth Abraham	Liver
02/29	Alex Caraway	Jes Jerrett Carraway	Car accident

A Simple Thing

“You don’t know how much I miss having someone to throw the football with...” Isn’t it odd how the simple things we say to one another can trigger deep, deep sadness, how our whole world can seem to come to a complete stop, when we have lost someone very important to our lives? Or is it? Actually it is a natural response. It has been six and one-half years since our son died, and we have spent that time studying and actively working through our grief. We knew instinctively from the beginning that we must face it squarely. We discussed that day he died how we must deal as best we could with each problem, each emotion, when they arose, no matter how strange it may be or how difficult.

Right away we purchased all the books we could find on grief. Our desire to learn about these strange feelings we were having was strong, our appetites insatiable. And we have come far in these years and in our dedication to know what was happening to us and why. We have only recently discussed that we felt that we are no longer actively grieving for our son. We feel we have recovered from grief. Intellectually we know there will be periods of sadness sparked by memories. Our studies have taught us this. We feel we can not only deal with this but welcome it as a reminder of him and his value to us. For his death represents so much more than merely a person leaving our lives. The shock waves of loss will probably go on forever when we have moments of need of him. Perhaps the simple things caused us to miss him the most—like preparing for homecoming at our university and having no one to toss a football with...

I often think of throwing the ball away—it often needs air even though it it’s only handled occasionally by my husband—but I know it would be a fruitless act because there are so many other reminders—musical instruments lying mute, the brown fedora collecting dust. We have learned to laugh again. To participate in life again. But today, oh today! How sad I felt. How quickly the tears came when my husband said, so sincerely, so quietly, you don’t know how much I miss having someone to throw the football around with...” I felt my heart break again.

Tomorrow we will teach the dog to catch a Frisbee, but it will never be the same. It won’t ever be the same again.

*Fay Harden
TCF Tuscaloosa, AL*



OUR CHILDREN—LOVED, MISSED & REMEMBERED

Heaven Date	Child's name	Parent's name(s)	Cause
02/01	Cynthia M. Broome	Paul Broome	Homicide
02/01	Nathan Allen Grice	Sandra Grice	Suicide
02/03	John Horton, Jr.	Mary Horton	
02/05	Justin Thomas Beard	Mary Pierce	
02/07	Cheyenne Elizabeth Greer	Samantha Yowell	Pneumonia
02/07	Dallas Davis	Beth /Savannah Davis	Suicide
02/07	Dallas Davis	Kristi White	Suicide
02/08	Christopher Guzman	Barbara Sanders	Accidental drug overdose
02/08	Michael Howerton	Janet Howerton	Cancer
02/08	Donovan Rashad Thomas	Sandra Moffett	Auto Accident
02/08	Gregory Stewart	Wendall/Lynn Stewart	Cancer
02/09	Keith Richardson	Donna Dubosh	Suicide
02/10	Shelley Renee Baggett	Jo/Meredith Baggett	Batten's disease
02/11	Sophia McGuffee	Emily/Blake McGuffee	Premature
02/14	Hunter McDaniel	Leianna Ishler	Accidental overdose
02/14	Redd Jason	Cirie Keen	Auto accident
02/15	Ashley Curt Buchanan	Ed/Carolyn Buchanan	Suicide
02/18	Brandi Denise Hill	Jo Bagley	Accidental
02/19	Kathy "Krystine" Harris	Ms Kathy Whitehead	Homicide
02/19	Lee Bailey Wigglesworth	Jerry/Cindy Wigglesworth	Drug Overdose
02/20	Stephen Michael Goode	Roy /Debbie Goode	Kidnapped /murdered
02/22	Matthew Greer	Dave/Charlotte Greer	
02/22	Keith Searcy	Brenda Knight/Dale Sims	Fall at home
02/23	Aaron Brown	Juanita Brown	Automobile accident
02/25	Krishna "Krissy" M. Prestwood	Chuck/Marlise Prestwood	Meningitis
02/29	Ronnie Strickland	Kaye Toney/Daisy Strickland	Steven Johnson

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