



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



Newsletter

Volume 40 No. 3 March 2019

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
JERRY and CINDY WIGGLESWORTH in memory of LEE WIGGLESWORTH**

LOVE GIFT

**ED and CAROLYN BUCHANAN in memory of ASHLEY BUCHANAN (heaven date Feb.15th)
NORA and SCOTT PINTER in memory of BRAD HOUSTON (heaven date 03/01)**

SECURITY SERVICES

MARCIA LEFTEROFF in memory of KEVIN LERTEROFF

CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL

CHUCK and MARLISE PRESTWOOD in memory of KRISSY PRESTWOOD

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>There were twenty-six persons present with one new parent. Marcia Leteroff our chapter leader welcomed everyone.</p> <p>Cordie Rodenbaugh was scheduled to share with our group tonight but became ill with the flu and was not able to come to the meeting, Cordie was to tell our group about a law ' Parker's Law ' would put drug dealers behind bars for overdose deaths. Cordie's son, Parker Rodenbaugh, died in 2014 from a drug overdose of 25b-NBOMe, a controlled substance referred to as "synthetic" LSD. We wish Cordie a speedy recovery.</p> <p>Our group did a general sharing time WHICH IS ALWAYS HEPPFUL. Many parents have a hard time even after many years, some because friends and family can't understand why parents are still grieving. Many parents say no one says their child's name because they think it will upset YOU! What upsets parents that have lost a child is you not talking about that child, they want to remember them, and they want to know you remember that the child did exist. One new parent, Lee Speed, mother of Zy Keenan Rae who was hit by a car while he was riding his motorcycle. He was nineteen years old. Lee talked about Zy as he was growing up and what a delight he was to her and the family, she shared about Zy with tears flowing, but that is love that flows down when you're talking about your child, laughter and tears. Lee honored Zy by telling about his life and his last day and the kiss you give a child as they walk out for the day. Lee thank you for sharing your child's story.</p> <p>I thank everyone that came tonight and thank you for the delicious food you brought, Each person is a link of our chain in Compassionate Friends that holds us together.</p> <p><i>Virginia Horton, treasurer TCF/ Jackson, MS.</i></p>  <p>When you lose a precious Member of your family, The love you shared Does not die With them.</p> <p>It lives on forever Among the shattered Pieces of your heart.</p> <p><i>Gillian Roberts</i></p> <p><i>Thanks to Chuck Prestwood for sharing this poem with us.</i></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, March 12 - 7:00 p.m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our Annual Pot-luck Supper</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Facilitator: Marcia Leteroff Please bring a dish to share. If you would like, bring your child's favorite dish. 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;">*If the meeting date falls on a holiday—the following Wednesday</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> <p>.....</p> <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> <p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter folding: Saturday, March 23rd @ 4:00 pm at the Church. Please come and help fold if you can.</p>

TCF Jackson Chapter Update

Our chapter is going through a few changes and updates that we would like to inform you of.

(1) Update on Children's Memorial Statue:

The property committee of Fondren Presbyterian Church is in the process of having a landscaping professional look at the proposed area on their premises and draw out some plans. After their property committee reviews the plans that they are presented, they will get in touch with us to share information. Hopefully, sometime this coming Spring, the plans will be formulated, and we can begin the process of having the fountain/statue installed. Of course, there will be plans and decisions to consider as per the concrete base, the wiring of electricity and running a water line. As soon as there is more information, we will provide it to you. Thank you for your understanding and patience as we continue to forge ahead with plans for a beautiful new children's memorial and statue/fountain to honor our children's memory. We are continuing to take donations for the children's memorial and deeply appreciate each one.

(2) As most of you may know, we have been blessed to have a security guard guarding our parking lot at our meetings now for the past two or three years. This has been lovingly provided free of charge to our group by Wiley & Beth Greer doing business as A-1 Detectives in memory of their son, Benjamin Quin (Ben) Greer. Most of you probably know that owner, Wiley Greer passed away some months ago and Beth has continued to provide the security guard free of charge. But the time has come when she can reluctantly no longer be able to provide these services for free. After discussing this situation, our steering committee voted unanimously to pay to continue to have the same services provided as long as we can. The idea put forth to provide members the opportunity to send in donations in memory of their child to go toward the cost of paying for these services to continue. We already have two members who have volunteered to pay for a month of security. The cost will be \$15.00 per hour. We are usually there for 3 hours so that will be \$45.00 per month. If you would like to sponsor a month of security in memory of your child, please send in a check to the address on the front of your newsletter in the amount of \$45.00, making note of your child's name and designate it for security. Thank you so much to each one who would like to commit to this worthy cause in memory of your child/children or a loved one or friend. Your donations are tax deductible and deeply appreciated. Thanks to each of you!

*Faye McCord
TCF/Jackson, MS*



Look To the Sky

When your heart is in despair
Look deeply into the sky
Because the heavens have opened for me
You'll marvel at the peaceful things you see

Look at the happy white clouds
They smile that my life's work is done
All my life's trials have passed
I'm an angel at last

Look at the trees of the forest
So stately they stand
With leaves waving in the breeze
To let you know I am at ease

Look at the river
Rolling on to the sea
So lazily and steady
You'll realize I'm finally free

Look at my belongings
They're only material things
Holding sweet memories for to you share
Bringing happiness, while in your care

You must look at yourself
Your pain of loss, you must keep brief
Go on and live your life to the fullest
Do not dwell in the depths of grief

You need to look up to the sky toward me
I'm here because I've already run my race
Now nothing in life could ever compare
To the wonders of this heavenly place

You should know
When I arrived at the City Four Square
I learned that "I'll not be a stranger"
I'm acquainted with folks up here

I'll look back to you from time to time
But my burdens and worries in life no longer exist
Because there's only peace, love, and joy
In this beautiful place of everlasting bliss

Now understand the cycle of life
The day you arrive at the end of life's rugged road
You should not fear the passage into eternity
When the Lord relieves your heavy load

Before, I was with you in the flesh
Yes today, I am with you in your heart
Some glorious day when you get the call
We'll have our great reunion, and never again will part.

*Donald Moyers
TCF Galveston County, TX*

An Only Child

Parents and the only child learn to adapt in the multi-child culture. Family members, friends, school and the community at large assume that an only child is not normal therefore, something must be wrong or at least could be improved.

The years of Kari's life taught us to do the best we could each day. All of her life, we encouraged her to do her best, because it is important to have a deep self-satisfaction of a job well done.

After the sudden auto accident that claimed her life and in our deepest grief we received some strength from the values we had seen in her life. I did not feel that I was alone in the world without my only child. I felt as if I did not want to live without my child, not that she was my only child. Perhaps the fact that parents of other children who have also died and had other surviving children felt they were not able to live without their precious children either, helped us to understand no child can be replaced.

Again, the community came assuming that you could not survive the death of an only child, just as you could not have normalcy with an only child in life. Many freely gave suggestions ranging from you should move, to adoption (had we been younger, I am sure the advice would have been to have another baby) and other well meaning, misguided advise.

We remembered our numerous encouragements that we had given Kari, we do not live alone in the world: our pain is no greater, we are no different from any parent whose child has died.

There are actually some blessings to not having other children in the household. What little energy you have can be spent on your own grief work and not worrying about what you need to do to help surviving children. Parents with surviving children have a blessing. They also have the awesome task of helping surviving siblings understand issues of life and death. Not a topic most parents plan on teaching. Without this distraction parents grieving the death of an only child can spend uninterrupted time toward healing.

The death of an only child does tend to exclude the parents from most family events. They will never experience grand parenting, weddings, holidays and all the other family oriented gatherings. This leaves a very 'left out' feeling in conversations, knowing they will never get to experience these special times.

Each parent that experiences the death of a child, no matter the age or cause, has not had a choice in the event. It does not matter if we have multiple children or only the one child, we love each one and could not make a choice. We each have a difficult time in learning to live again after the death of our child.

We do heal. We do learn to live again. We are not the same person as we were before but in time each will find a new normal. Patience to let time and grief work to help us heal is the path to knowing we will survive.

*Gerry Hall
TCF South Central, MO
In Memory of my daughter, Kari*

Sharing a Private Grief

The other day someone said to me, "My grief is too private to share." I think we all feel that way sometimes. We are saying two things when we say that. First, "You could not possibly know how I feel." And, second, we are saying, "I hurt so much, I'm not about to tell you of my anguish and leave myself open to your judgment of my feelings." We have to protect ourselves, but, in protecting our privacy, are we forgetting anything? Is it possible that our friends are not judging us and that in not giving voice to our sorrow we are closing the door of the healing love that may be in store for us?

It is possible that our friends don't know what to say to us. People have no trouble wishing us, "Happy Birthday," and, "Get well soon," and, "Have a good day," and meaning it. But it is hard for people to express their sorrow, often because they are afraid of hurting us. That they don't express their grief, isolates us.

Sometimes we have to encourage others to address the issues closest to our hearts – for our own protection.

*Pat Ryan
TCF Silverdale, WA*



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 had 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*

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
03/01	Patti Lynn Gary	Ms. Lynda F. Gary	Auto Accident
03/02	John Wayne McFarland	John/Julia McFarland	Suicide
03/03	Clayton Marble	France Marble	Cancer
03/04	Brian Demond Hollins	Hattie Hollins	Homocide
03/09	Kevin Lefteroff	Marcia Lefteroff	Car wreck
03/11	Chad Aaron Pigg	Rick/Mary C. Pickens	Accidental gunshot
03/12	Lee Bailey Wigglesworth	Cindy/Jerry Wigglesworth	Drug overdose
03/12	John Robert “Robby” Barnette	Donna Barnette	Motorcycle accident
03/12	Sarah Louise Hollis	Jim/Linda Hollis	Auto accident
03/14	Scotti Lynn Mooney	Jill Calendar	Auto accident
03/15	Peck Cranston	Suzie/Phillip Cranston	Suicide
03/16	Brendan Chase Roberts	Deborah Roberts	Auto accident
03/17	Bryant Shanks	Dean/Pat Shanks	Auto accident
03/18	Britney Gail Brinlee	Reba Gail Walker	Accidental overdose
03/18	Britney Gail Brinlee	Belinda Woolard	Accidental overdose
03/19	Walter A. Booker	Tom/Gretel Ekbaum	Hit/run/Easter Sunday
03/20	Ross Allan Hailey	Ben/Charlotte Hailey	Suicide
03/23	Justin Lloyd Hartley	Ron/Terry Hartley	Cardiac Arrest
03/25	Deanna Boyd Knight	Wilma Davis	Leukemia
03/28	Sean Michael Thomas	Denise Douglas	Seizure
03/28	George “Eddie” Chapman, Jr.	George/Emma Chapman	Vehicle accident
03/28	Walker Woodward	Nathan/Sherri Woodward	SIDS
03/30	Michael Ward	Melody Vaughn	Cancer
03/31	Lance Darryl Wroten	Bruce Wroten	Auto accident

GRIEF: OUR ACT OF LOVE

“I had a child who died.” How simple these words are, yet how painful they are to say. The death of a child is the harshest blow life has to offer; it destroys our trust in the world at the most basic level. Grief is our total response to the death of a child; our body, mind, emotions and spirit all react to the loss. While many of us wish to stop the intense grief work, we are doing, we find it impossible for many reasons.

First, grief is an act of love, not a lack of strength or faith. The more we loved our child, the greater will be our grief. The more integrated our lives were with the life of our child, the more we will miss his or her very presence. The intensity of our grief is often representative of our love.

Second, grief is a necessary process that we must go through in order to maintain our wholeness and sanity. If we do not grieve, we will not heal. One of the earliest and hardest lessons we bereaved parents learn is that men and women grieve differently; women, in general, grieve more openly than do men, and women, on the whole, are more comfortable verbally expressing their feelings of loss. While segments of our culture indicate it is more “manly” not to cry, we know this is not true.

Grief work also helps us to complete unfinished business with our child and close the past relationship that we had. We will never “get over” the loss of our child, nor would we ever really want to. We are who we are partly because of our relationship to that child. Our lives will always be influenced by our son or daughter, but most of us will eventually learn to live a meaningful life, despite our tragedy. Our child will always be with us in spirit and in love, and we often feel a need to hold on to tangible items, such as toys or clothes, to maintain that feeling of closeness. But, intense grief work allows us to let go of the relationship we had and create a new relationship with our child. Our remembrances, love and feelings of oneness with our child can never be destroyed. I cannot see nor touch my Philip, but I vividly remember him. I have completed earthly mothering, but I still have an intense mother-child relationship with my son.

Grief over the death of a child is the hardest work that most of us will ever do. While we all wish for the pain to stop, we need to remember that we grieve intensely because we loved intensely. It is unrealistic to expect that grief to ever totally go away, because the love we have for our child will never go away. Our grief is an act of love and is nothing for which we should be ashamed.

*Elaine Grier
TCF Atlanta, GA
In Memory of my son, Philip*

OUR CHILDREN—LOVED, MISSED & REMEMBERED

Heaven Date	Child's name	Parent's name(s)	Cause
03/01	Bryant Shanks	Dean/Pat Shanks	Auto Accident
03/01	Bradford Dale Houston	Vora Pinter	Unknown
03/03	Jesse Allen Gates	Bob/Joy Gates	
03/04	Dean Allen McGhee	Chick/Nancy McGhee	Auto Accident
03/07	Michael Pham	Hal Lindsey Pham	Murder
03/07	Michael Pham	Gerry/Victor Gray-Lewis	Murder
03/07	Jason Douglas Beard	Mary Pierce	
03/08	Shamburger Jimmy	Vicki Shamburger	Suicide
03/12	David Vantrease, Jr.	Leah Wheelless	Suicide
03/15	Susan Michelle Ware Canoy	Ted/Mary Joe Ware	Lung clot
03/18	Scott (Scotty) Austin Reese	Layla Reese	Drug Overdose
03/19	Peck Cranston	Suzie/Phillip Cranston	Suicide
09/19	Shannon C. McNeil	Bob/Jeanette McNeil	Murder
03/24	Kristi Kay Brandon	Gary/Wanda Brandon	Auto Accident
03/24	Mitch Giles	Aden Giles	Drug Overdose
03/24	Carrie Lee Elliott	Dottie D. Elliott	Suicide
03/25	John E. Brown, Jr.	Vincent/Dawn Venturini	Auto Accident
03/26	Kyle Horn	Julie Diaz	Drug Overdose
03/26	Dalton Proctor	Michael/Tammy Proctor	Suicide
03/26	Daniel "Dan" Yates	Harry Larue/Marilyn Yates	Homicide
03/31	Andre' Conway	Sigrd Conway	Suicide/Depression

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