



# The Compassionate Friends Fayetteville Area Chapter

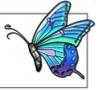


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## Reflections on a New Year



We begin a new year, one that many of us enter with reluctance. After all, it means another year away from our child and another year to be lived without the physical presence of the one we have lost. Apprehensive about any new challenges that we may be called upon to face in our broken condition, we call out, “Wait, I’m not ready yet!”

The death of our child changed the course of our life; nothing will be the same again. But it also has shaped us into who we are today. And it will continue to do so as we learn to incorporate this loss into who we are to become.

Have you found that you have already begun to live differently? Compassion toward others is more profound. Trivial things are no longer important. Appreciation for

life, and those in our lives, is paramount. We’re living the same life—differently.

Tragedies, disappointments, and heartaches combine with beauty, love, and joy to fashion our life. These are all a part of life, and our challenge is to incorporate them into our world. The difference that our child’s life has had upon the world continues through us.

So, rather than being fearful of the challenges that lie ahead, perhaps a better question to consider at this time might be: What opportunities will present themselves in the coming year to honor this loss that is already a part of our life? Our child has become more integrally entwined into our being than ever before. We bring him or her to every situation that we encounter. How can we make that

situation better because of this bond?

The start of a new calendar year is a good time to remember that we are in the midst of life. It is not perfect. Nor is it one that we might have chosen. But, our struggles do not put life “on hold.” Rather they are a part of life itself! Our life is ours to make the most of, with many gifts that we can share with others. There is no better time than the present to gather up the pieces and recognize the uniqueness that we each call “me”—uniqueness made more wonderful because of our child’s presence in the life we choose to live.

*Paula Staisiunas Schultz  
In memory of Melissa and Jeff*

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### QUARTERLY NOTES

Our candle lighting service was beautiful as always. Even though the weather was iffy until the last minute, then our guardian angels came through. It was a little wet, but there was a good turn out. It was so good to see some very dear friends that I had not seen in a couple of years and two that I had not seen in many, many years.

The holidays are over and we all survived. Now the new year rushes in. July will be here before we know it. Mark your calendar and save the date for the National Conference. I will have more information in the next newsletter or you can go the national website (<https://www.compassionatefriends.org>)

*Jennifer German, Amy’s Mom*

42ND TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE



**RINGS OUT IN  
PHILADELPHIA**

**JULY 19-21, 2019**

It is a place where hope grows and friendships are made with others who truly understand.

### Our 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 we feel helpless and see no hope.  
 Some of us have found our 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 that 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.

### An Image of Grief

I am a tree, standing alone in the early winter. I feel cold, empty, gray, and ugly. The winds of grief



have ripped away a branch and have left me unbalanced – with a great gaping hole. The sap of my innermost being rushes to the hole to provide a balm for the pain of the open wound. The icy cold rain of my weeping falls through the shaking of my boughs. continue to sway in the harsh gales of reality, and the keening of the winds are the voice of my heartache. But...Under the ground there is life. Each root of love, friendship, care, family, and faith is feeding into the trunk, and I know for a certainty that surely spring will come again! The bark of time will cover the rending wound. The scar will always be there, but the drain on my heart will be over. The leaves will burst forth and gently surround the sound with breezes of living memories and promises of life to come. My boughs will be heavy with the wonder of living. Nestled near the scarred trunk, secure in the knowledge that God is my refuge and strength, the sweet bird of happiness will sing again.

**Anite King**  
 TCF/Hagerstown, Maryland

### A DEATH HAS OCCURRED

A death has occurred, and everything is changed by this event. We are painfully aware that life can never be the same, that yesterday is over, that relationships once rich have ended.

But there is another way to look upon this truth. If life went on the same without the presence of the one who died, we could only conclude that the life we here remember made no contribution, filled no space, meant nothing.

The fact that this person left behind a place that cannot be filled is a high tribute to this individual.

*Life can be the same after a trinket has been lost, but never the same after the loss of a treasure.*

**Paul Iron**  
 The Compassionate Friends  
 Savannah, Georgia

*We are put  
 On this earth to  
 Love them  
 For as  
 Long as  
 WE live,  
 Not for  
 As long as  
 THEM  
 Lived.*



*Alan Pedersen*

## Sleep, My Brother

(Modified)

I wish you sweet sleep,  
my brother dear.  
Although there's so much  
that you've left bare  
I hate that you had to  
endure such pain  
On my mind, your  
saddened  
eyes have left a stain.  
I want to know what  
crossed your mind  
Unspoken words you've  
left behind  
Undone things we'll  
never do  
No sharing thoughts  
you never knew.  
A peace has fallen upon  
your head  
A taste of sorrow we have  
been fed  
It really is like a hole in  
our lives  
One swiftly dug but carved  
out by knives.  
But I have hope that those  
sleeping will rise  
The Bible says that  
God will  
open their eyes.  
No suffering, sickness,  
yes not even pain,  
Those who did good,  
eternal life they'll gain.  
So... sleep on my  
brother, sleep tight  
For now with you  
the sky is night.  
But after night will come  
daybreak  
Therefore I will wait  
hoping to see you awake.

By *T. Hutchinson*

## My Sister's Rocking Chair

Over in the corner sits an empty rocking chair,  
Yet, my mind's eye can still picture her there,  
Gently rocking to and fro at a slow steady pace,  
Wearing a soft loving glow upon her sweet face;  
As the rocking seemed to carry her worries away,  
And eased the painful weariness of the long day.  
My sister's old rocking chair sits so quietly now,  
But seems to revive my grieving heart some how;  
For it stirs fond memories of talks we once had,  
Which gave us such comfort when we were sad,  
Or helped us recall funny stories of childhood years,  
That brought glorious laughter mixed with  
joyful tears.  
To many it's just an old forgotten chair in the corner,  
But it is so much more to this solemn mourner;  
For it is where a beloved sister would often sit,  
Sharing her humorous stories with charming wit,  
Or giving advice that came from a  
compassionate soul,  
Oh, how these lovely memories now serve  
to console.  
Sometimes I will sit in my sister's rocking chair,  
At moments when missing her is too much to bear,  
And I need to feel closer to the kind generous heart,  
To which I was forever bonded from my life's start;  
She was my most trusted confidante  
and loving friend,  
Who I will always cherish beyond my life's end.  
How lonely and forlorn that old chair seems to be,  
But I realize it's not the chair that is  
lonely - only me!  
For I miss the dear sister who once graced the chair,  
Oh, how I wish she was still quietly sitting there;  
Gently rocking to and fro at a slow steady pace,  
Wearing a soft loving glow upon her sweet face.

Source: <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/my-sisters-rocking-chair>

© Belinda Stotler



## *Sibling Walking Together*

(Formerly The Sibling Credo)

We are the surviving children of  
The Compassionate Friends.

We are brought together by the  
death of our brothers and  
sisters.

Open your hearts to us. But have  
patience with us.

Sometimes we need the support  
of our friends.

At other times we need our  
families to be there.

Sometimes we feel we must walk  
alone, taking our memories with  
us, continuing to become the  
individuals we want to be.

We cannot be our dead brother or  
sister; however, a special part of  
them lives on with us.

When our brothers and  
sisters died, our lives changed.  
We are living a life very different  
from what we envisioned, and we  
feel the responsibility to be strong  
even when we feel weak.

Yet, we can go on because we  
understand better than many  
others the value of family and the  
precious gift of life.

Our goal is not to be the forgotten  
mourners that we sometimes are,  
but to walk together to face our  
tomorrows

as surviving children  
of

The Compassionate  
Friends.



## Love Gifts



A Love Gift is a donation to honor a child who has died, or as a memorial for a relative or friend.

The Compassionate Friends depends entirely on voluntary contributions from individuals and organizations to meet chapter expenses. TCF is a 504(c)(3) non-profit organization: all donations are tax deductible.

100% of every dollar donated goes toward chapter expenses.

We thank the following for their kind generosity, love and sharing. There are no dues. We have already paid the ultimate price to be a member.

Leonard & Lorie Hawkins in memory of their son Scott Tyree

Bill and Diane Lanier in memory of their son Ralph Mitchell Lanier

Justin & Trina Stokes in memory of their daughter Brittney Stokes

Hazel & Mickey Smith in memory of their son James "Randy" Smith

Jon & Mary Tyner in memory of their son Jon Wayne Tyner

Martha Brennan in memory of her son Robert Stevens

Cindy Tart in memory of her brother Dennis Tart



### The National Office of The Compassionate Friends

P.O. box 3696  
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

Web Site: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) Toll free: 877-969-0010  
[facebook.com/TCFUSA](https://www.facebook.com/TCFUSA)

### Regional Coordinator for the Fayetteville Area Chapter of TCF

Donna & Ralph Goodrich  
704-822-4503 or [iluvu2lauren@gmail.com](mailto:iluvu2lauren@gmail.com)

TCF Mission Statement: The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.



## Time Rolls On

Whether we see time going by or not, whether we are aware if it is winter or spring, May or June, day or night...time keeps rolling on.

I remember back in those early days of grief, when time seemed to stand still. I remember looking at the clock, realizing that it was 3:00 a.m.

and being surprised that it was nighttime.

I remember not knowing or caring whether it was a

Sunday or a

Tuesday...

But I did know when it was a Wednesday. I knew it was a Wednesday each week because Wednesday was the day our daughter died.

Everything from that moment on was measured by a different standard of time. At first we marked the hours, then the days, then the weeks. All time was measured by how long it had been since she had passed on from our world.

Days became weeks, weeks became months, and now...months have been years. For us, the marking of time has evolved.

Our family history will forever be divided into "before..." and "after..."

but we have gradually become aware of time again. We keep a calendar, we make appointments, and we schedule ourselves into events and commitments.

Once again, time is rolling on.



## To Start a New Year

If I can concentrate on the moral and spiritual side of the holidays

I can make it through.

If I can absorb the love and warmth that was the beginning

I can give love back.

If I can share the grief and love that is in me

through these holidays

I can start a new year.

Tom Spray  
TCF Ventura, CA

## Winter Memories

The days are getting colder, and the first snow's not too far off.

It used to be so pretty gently falling from aloft.

But the snow won't be as pretty, as it gathers on the ground, 'cause there'll be a snowman missing, my son is not around.

The playing children's laughter, used to be a special song, but this year will be different, without my son to sing along.

The song has lost its music, and it'll be just another day, as I gaze down from my window and watch the children play.

But the snow will again be pretty, in a far off distant time, and we'll build snowmen together and we'll never look behind.

For now, I'll remain with memories, and the melting snow will fade, but he builds snowmen to his heart's content,

because he now lives where snow is made.

Jeremiah Sundown  
TCF Nashville, TN



## Five Myths About Grief

### 1. Time heals all wounds.

**False:** Time by itself is only the passing of days. Time – **plus** permission to grieve, **plus** the willingness to face and process feelings, to reminisce, to express your pain – these together over time will heal your wounds.

### 2. If you just move on with life, your grief will eventually go away.

**False:** Repressing your feelings is like not doing your homework. You think you're getting away with something but in fact, you're only hurting yourself. You'll pay when it comes time for the test. Likewise, not facing your grief is cheating yourself. You'll pay for it with a range of potential problems: health issues, depression, anxiety, bitterness, etc. True healing comes when feelings are accepted, expressed, and processed.

### 3. If you grieve properly, you will achieve closure.

**False:** Even if you allow yourself to experience your feelings head on, there is no such thing as "closure." The human heart never closes because love itself can never die. Just because a person has died does not mean that the relationship is over. Therefore, you will continue to feel pangs of loss over the years; it comes hand in hand with the love you feel in your heart. Closure is not the goal of healing.

### 4. You will never feel joy again after a major loss.

**False:** Love and joy are abundant and will fill your life again one day if you let them. Though you may feel despair during the darkest days of grief, you won't feel that way forever. The very same love that makes your loss feel so hard now will one day be the source of an inner wellspring of joy in your life.

### 5. At some point, you just need to "get over it."

**False:** You will not get over grief the way you get over the flu. You will learn to live with loss and integrate it into your life. At some point you will have to decide whether or not to let grief expand you to a life of compassion or shrivel you to a life of bitterness. But initially, all you need to do is allow grief into your life.

Ashley Davis Bush, LISCW

### For the New Year

Where there is pain,  
Let there be softening  
Where there is bitterness,  
Let there be acceptance  
Where there is silence,  
Let there be communication  
Where there is loneliness,  
Let there be friendships  
Where there is despair,  
Let there be hope.

Ruth Eiseman  
TCF Louisville, KY

## Some Quiet Valentines

While watching an evening sunset  
 Fade in the western skies,  
 We know that when tomorrow  
 dawns,  
 From the east the sun will rise.  
 Although it may be hidden  
 By veils hanging low,  
 We're sure it will appear again  
 And we'll feel its warming glow.  
 And so it is with life,  
 When seen through misty eyes,  
 When our world is suddenly  
 dimmed  
 And we plead and ask those whys.  
 It is then we learn, 'no man is an  
 island,'  
 As someone wisely said,  
 As we travel life's uncharted  
 course  
 And by an unknown hand seem  
 led.  
 To walk that path of sorrow,  
 Enduring life's great loss,  
 But by chance or fate that  
 someone's  
 Path we are guided to cross.  
 That someone through kindness  
 In his or her way does impart,  
 A warmth and a tenderness  
 That so lifts a sad heart.  
 For it's the depth of their smile  
 That lifts this sorrow of mine,  
 And by far they are best suited  
 To be our Valentine.  
 We may be someone's Valentine  
 And never be aware,  
 In these caring, still-grieving  
 hearts,  
 Our children's love is there.  
 We've no choice but to continue  
 On life's uncharted way,  
 And be thankful for those quiet  
 friends  
 Who brighten up each day.



-From TCF Newsletter  
 Cleveland, OH

## LOVE AND HOPE

On a cold winter day the sun went  
 out Grief walked in to stay. I  
 turned away from the unwanted  
 guest and bid him be on his way.  
 Grief was merciless, he brought  
 his friends, Loneliness, Fear and  
 Despair. They walk these rooms  
 unceasingly. In the somber cloaks  
 they wear.  
 Every so often now, Love pays a  
 call She always has Hope by her  
 side I welcome Love as well as  
 Hope. For I thought surely they  
 had died.  
 Love counsels Grief in a most  
 gentle way. Bids him be still for a  
 while. Then Love walks with me  
 through memory's hall. And for a  
 time...I can smile.

Kerry Marston, TCF, Grand Junction, CO

**The trick to surviving** is to  
 find life, to find the gifts, the  
 miracles, however small, at first.  
 Find whatever it is that  
 breathes you back to life  
 again— whatever it is that  
 brings you even the smallest  
 amount of joy. No matter how  
 impossible it seems, try to find  
 the gift in your pain, or let it  
 find you.

Angela Miller  
 stillstandingmag.com

## My Angel Day

*Yes Mom, this is my Angel Day  
 From my earthly life, I know I  
 left quite soon  
 But only to enter my greatest  
 reward in Glory  
 Far beyond the moon  
 Today you'll perform your  
 loving rituals  
 And do your best to keep my  
 memory aware  
 Yes Mom, this ritual is for  
 both of us  
 For I am both here and there*



No matter where you are in your  
 journey toward healing, **bolster**  
 the **hope** that arises within you.

**Your healing** is probably the best  
 memorial you may erect to your  
 dead child.

Robert Gloor

## MEETINGS

First Tuesday of each month  
 At 7:00pm;

Meetings will be held in room 224 of the General  
 Class Building at Fayetteville Technical  
 Community College, 2817 Ft. Bragg Road, Fayetteville, NC 28303  
 (Unless otherwise stated on our website)

tcffayetteville.org.

If you have questions contact Jennifer German  
 jojegerman@outlook.com or (910) 245-3177

## Our Children & Siblings Remembered on Their Birthday's

*Each month some of our members face special but very painful days. We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings of the following children following children's:*

### January

Michelle Andrews January 1  
 Demetrius Jordan January 2  
 Randall James-Berlin January 6  
 R. Davis Turner January 7  
 Jeremiah Davis-Kraut January 9  
 Joseph Barnes January 9  
 Erica Graham January 10  
 Eddie Santistevan January 10  
 George Lee Perry January 14  
 Benny Michael Traylor January 15  
 Ronald Hamilton Jr. January 23  
 Deborah Atkinson January 23  
 Wendy Hair January 25  
 Sherry McCordle January 25  
 Manzonian Hall January 25  
 Christine Bailey January 28  
 Graylin Jackson January 29

### February

Patrick Shea February 2  
 Richard Miller III February 3  
 James Campbell February 5  
 Juliana Wilkins February 6  
 Allen Arnette February 12  
 Amber Marie Hall February 13  
 Darrell Sweatt February 14  
 Dustin Hunt February 14  
 Mary Beth Snyder February 15  
 Pierce Brantley Matthews February 16  
 Erik Tornblum February 16



Jackson Vogel February 19

Tyler Clark February 21

Daniel "Adam" Clark February 22

Ian Redshaw February 23

Stephen Carroll February 27

Dillon Reed King February 27

Leslie King February 28

### March

Cory Fullwood March 1

Joe Dan Rumley March 3

Robert Stevens March 4

Kyle Harris March 7

Mikayla Brielle Watkins March 7

Bobby Beller March 8

Dennis Tart March 9

Stephen Bruno March 10

Sharon Washington-McBrydy March 12

David Warlick March 13

Christopher "Chris" Hondros March 14

John Konen, Jr March 15

Daniel McDonough March 15

Malachi Matthews March 18

R. Davis Turner March 18

Logan Zimmerman March 18

Jonathon Casey March 19

Talisha Morris March 22

Michael Hurt March 25

Akiana Lopez-Sellos March 25

Joshua Huggins March 26

Sean Thomas March 28

George Lee Perry March 31



## Children & Siblings Remembered On Their Angel Date's

*Each month some of our members face special but very painful days.  
We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents, grandparents, aunts,  
uncles and siblings of the following children.*



### January

RáMael McArthur January 1  
 Melissa McCoy January 2  
 Britany Solewin January 2  
 Randall James-Berlin January 6  
 Rodney Dietrich January 8  
 Jeremiah Davis-Kraut January 9  
 James "Randy" Smith January 12  
 Duane May January 12  
 Sean Thomas January 15  
 Charles Cook January 17  
 Dallas Locklear January 20  
 Michelle Andrews January 21  
 Kevin Harlan January 21  
 Erica Graham January 24  
 Amy Zinsser January 24  
 Shermicka Grant January 25  
 Zach Grullon January 28  
 Joshua Huggins January 28  
 Andrew Williams January 28  
 Karlie Williams January 28  
 Laura Williams January 28  
 Karissa Williams January 28

### February

Evelyn Copeland February 5  
 Dennis Tart February 5  
 Juliana Wilkins February 6



Omar Sharaf February 8  
 Gregory Lovings February 10  
 Chad Allen Arnette February 14  
 Mark Draughon February 14  
 Judith Bowman February 19  
 Cory Fullwood February 21  
 Lamar Beard February 23  
 Michael Pizzarella February 24  
 Shawn Leigh Watkins February 24  
 Wendy Hair February 26

### March

Cody Mclendon March 2  
 Tammy Owens March 2  
 Melissa Thornton March 3  
 Dylan Mckelvey March 5  
 Matthew Guin March 7  
 Sharnale Thompson March 13  
 Elizabeth Akins March 16  
 R. Davis Turner March 16  
 Cody Phillips March 17  
 Stephen Bruno March 18  
 Bryan Bowles March 26  
 Stephen Carroll March 27  
 Michael Heart March 30  
 John Klemenko March 30

The Compassionate Friends  
Fayetteville Area Chapter  
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Secretary/Treasurer



**The Compassionate Friends**  
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Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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**We're on the Web**  
[www.tcffayetteville.org](http://www.tcffayetteville.org)  
**And Facebook**

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Love Gifts

There is no charge for our newsletter, meetings, or lending library, and we depend solely on your contributions. Love gifts can be made in memory of your child, grandchild, or sibling. Your love gift will insure that all who need our newsletter, will receive it.

I wish to make a donation in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_

Donated by \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to make a donation please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends, and mail to TCF Fayetteville Area Chapter, 703 Rosebud Court, Vass, NC 28394  
Please send form with check. **A donation is not required to submit items for the newsletter.**