



The Compassionate Friends Fayetteville Area Chapter



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October 2018



Changing Seasons



Fall is the time when nature changes dramatically. Days are shorter, the air is crisper; the leaves begin to change color, and children return to school. I used to love the fall. This was the season of order after a carefree summer. Time for new beginnings at school, a time of choosing new interests among the array of possibilities....

For all us bereaved parents, changing seasons are a poignant reminder that another block of time has passed, another season will begin without our beloved children. Each season has its own memories, and like turning pages in the family album, we experience the joy and the sorrow over again. We remember buying school clothes and new felt pens, the soccer tournaments, and the excitement of a new teacher...only for us, the

memories stop growing. Once again we ask ourselves what would our child be doing right now?

Jessica Easton has mentioned that changing seasons can cause depression or restlessness. Fall may usher in feelings we thought we had overcome. How can we fight those feelings?

Autumn is a time of splendor. The leaves are crisping into orange and red. The geese are gathering overhead, and the air is filled with the perfume of sun-ripened apples and early morning fog. We can draw strength from the orderly progression of nature. Of all things, the seasons keep on changing in a predictable pattern. Even though our lives have been

shattered, we can draw strength from the beauty and solidness of the natural world around us. Breathe deeply, re-live your favorite memories and then go for a walk. Enjoy the beauty around you, combine memories from the past with a special moment of remembrance today. Make this a new tradition.

Rosemary Maier

A hug is the perfect gift...
One size fits all,
And nobody minds if
you exchange it.

Irvin Ball, Bereaved Parents USA,
N. Texas

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A Note From The Editor

“Losing a child is like living in two worlds, our survival depends on our ability to balance both” unknown author. This is a powerful statement and definitely applies to this time of year. Yes the holidays are quickly approaching and I am not ready to face them! How many of you feel that way? **STOP**, for just a few minutes each day. Close your eyes, try to block out any surrounding noise, take slow deep breaths in and out, drop and relax your shoulders. And with each breath say to yourself “I will survive this season”. Do it several times each day if possible. It will help you balance those two worlds. Remember that you have compassionate friends to call upon if you need a helping hand, a shoulder to cry on, an ear to listen or just a hug. You will make it through the holidays just like I have done for twenty two years.

Read the information about the Candle Lighting Service on the next page and plan to come, bring family and friends. Do this for your child and do it for yourself. If you would like to help with the service by doing a reading or lighting a candle, please talk with Cindy Tart or myself.

Peace & Love, Jennifer German “Amy's mom”

OCTOBER 2018



**The Fayetteville Chapter of The Compassionate Friends
Memorial Candle Lighting Service**

December 9, 2018 at 2 PM

**Fayetteville Community Church
2010 Middle River Loop
Fayetteville, NC 28312**

The service is open to bereaved families and friends who have experienced the death of a child at any age and from any cause. You are encouraged to bring picture or an item of remembrance for the memory table.

We will have refreshments after the service. Please bring your favorite refreshment (finger foods, deserts, etc.) to share.

To get to the church take I-95 N Bus/ US-301 N / N Eastern Blvd.

Take the first exit/ Middle Road

Turn right onto Middle Road

Turn right onto Middle Loop Road

Fayetteville Community Church is on the left

Please arrive early, the service will start at 2pm

For more information or questions or

To **volunteer** for a part in the program call

Cindy Tart at (910) 391-0779 or

Jennifer German at (910) 245-3177

Also

Be a part of The Compassionate Friends 21st annual Worldwide Candle Lighting

By lighting a candle where ever you are from 7 – 8 pm on December 9 and

help create a wave of light around the world

*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.

A Sibling Dies

It is January first. My heart twinkles once again because the holidays are over. How can a season of light bring so much dark? Thirty years ago, on Christmas morning, my brother died in our home by suicide in a very violent manner. He was 23; my other brother was 24; and I was 19 years old. Our family of five was irretrievably shattered. Don, my brother who died, was so much a part of us. He brought so much joy in his living and then so much pain in his dying. Who am I to grieve him still? The memories well up every December like a deep dark night unbidden. Anger, sadness, rejection, guilt become my Christmas ornaments. "Give me back my family – give me back my Christmas, you creep. Give me back your laughter," I want to shout at him. Who am I to miss him? Who am I to rage when he was the one in the grips of a pain so untenable that he could not speak of it, but only act upon it? Who am I to cry? Well, I'm entitled. I'm a survivor after all. One doesn't get there on a water slide, if you know what I mean. When Christmas rolls around, I do my dance with grief once again. Some years, it's a waltz; other years a tango. It doesn't seem to matter if it's two, 20 or 30 years since my brother died; I get out my dancing shoes. I don't go looking for pain like some wacky masochist. It finds me. Some years I announce – around November 25th, "I'm over this." I act accordingly. I shop for Christmas cards and don't go near my dancing shoes. It doesn't matter. They find me. It's not like I didn't have therapy. I've had dance therapy, art therapy, regular therapy, travel therapy, friendship therapy, biofeedback/hypnosis therapy, creampuff therapy, swimming therapy, forgiveness therapy, spiritual community therapy, law school therapy ... Law School therapy? The fun had to end somewhere. Seriously, losing a sibling is heart wrenching and no laughing matter. It took me 10 or 15 years to truly laugh again, let alone make light of myself. That just happened this year. No doubt, because I am writing of it, rather than speaking of it which I rarely do. It feels safer to write. Other than to therapists, I've spoken of his death to three people in 30 years. Who could understand, I felt, and why diminish his being or expose myself? I adored my brother Don – he made me laugh like a monkey. I adore both my brothers; as a child they were my world. Not very healthy perhaps, but it worked for me. Home life was chaotic and quite frightening because my father was more than a little nuts. My mother's energy was spent containing his insanity and keeping our bodies and souls together. She was part steel, part angora. We never spoke of Don after his death. The community ostracized us; my father took a trip down devil's lane, and my mother mourned my brother until the day she died. I'm sad to say that we never had Don's picture in our home again, because the pain was too severe. It seems we could not get past it. We went to our separate corners and quietly mourned. It was different years ago; so much remained hidden. Self-healing groups were non-existent; shrinks were stigmas, and the Catholic Church unforgiving. I couldn't save him. I was the last person he talked with on Christmas Eve. For months, I barely spoke and relived the shock daily. I ate a lot. Death by mashed potatoes. That was sure to bring him back. I retreated into a private world for several years where if I wasn't dead, I'd sure like to be. This is grief. And it does soften over time. It softens like water softens rock, in its flowing, gentle, rushing, mysterious way. It softens like a sweet whisper of a memory that lulls you to sleep, knowing that love knits the bones of despair together, tighter, stronger, more curious, more delicious than ever before. Knowing that the fires of your being burn the dross of despair. Knowing that the chamber of the heart is strong beyond measure and can take it and transform the pain into joy. Joy for having known this person, for a day or 10 years or two months. Joy for having the courage to be. For knowing yourself in many garments. For taking a risk to love anyone again: a neighbor, a friend, a cat, a lover, a stranger, yourself. The broken heart opens and mends itself in the middle of the night, when no one is there but many are listening. Joy seeps into me. After all, I'm entitled. I'm a survivor.

For Don By L. Nicole Dean © Permission to reprint granted to TCF.

OCTOBER 2018



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.

John and Jennifer German in memory of their daughter Amy Elizabeth German

If you wish to make a donation or a love gift, please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends, and mail to TCF Fayetteville Area Chapter, 703 Rosebud Court, Vass, NC 28394. Please include the name of the child, love one, or friend that you wish the donation to be made in memory or honor of.



The Compassionate Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

The National Office of The Compassionate Friends

P.O. box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

Web Site: www.compassionatefriends.org Toll free: 877-969-0010

Regional Coordinator for the Fayetteville Area Chapter of TCF

Donna & Ralph Goodrich

704-822-4503 or iluvu2lauren@gmail.com

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We can shed tears because they are gone or
we can smile because they lived.
We can close our eyes and pray that they'll
come back,
Or we can open our eyes and see all they left.
Our hearts can be empty because we don't see them,
Or full of the love we shared.
We can turn our backs on tomorrow and
live yesterday,
Or we can be happy for tomorrow because
of yesterday.
We can remember them and only that they're gone,
Or we can cherish their memory and let it live on.
We can cry and close our minds,
Be empty and turn our backs,
Or we can do what they'd want
Smile, open our eyes, love and go on.

Read at the Queen Mum's funeral, author unknown
(Adapted for TCF by Margaret Pringle/UK)

Always

Remember you still have a child.
He is no longer with you.
He is simply in a different place.
But you will always be his mother or father,
And he will always be your child.
Nothing can change that.

– from Clackamas County, OR newsletter

*“Even from the deepest, darkest
places something beautiful can
grow” ~ Anonymous ~*



THE COLOR OF THIS SEASON

Today, I took the time to look
At all the colors in the trees.
I watched as their colors changed,
With each breath of November breeze.
It hurt me to see this season...
The reds, greens, yellows & gold...
For in the empty space within my heart
There's a memory too painful to unfold.
Last year, you were here with me.
We shared laughter, tears and fun.
I will treasure those memories forever.
I will hold them dear to my heart.
And as this season rolls around again,
I can't let those memories depart.
The colors of the season can be seen.
And what a beauty they are to behold.
But the wings you wear on this very day...
Are the wings of an angel in gold.
Though the colors of this season are many,
The main one I see is **blue**.
It remains a stain within my heart,
As long as I am here ... without you.

Kaye Des'Ormeaux



MEETINGS

First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm
meetings will be held in **room 224** of the General
Class Building at Fayetteville Technical Community
College. 2817 Ft. Bragg Road, Fayetteville, NC
28303 (across the street from the Barbeque Hut)
Unless otherwise posted on our website.

If there are changes for any reason, meeting
information will be posted on our website
www.tcffayetteville.org

Questions
Contact: Cindy Tart at (910) 391-0779 or
flossiemay4771@gmail.com

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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.

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a non-profit mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents and families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child of any age, from any cause is welcome. Our meetings provide an opportunity to talk about their child and about their feelings as they go through the grieving process. There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership dues. The purpose of this support group is not to focus on the cause of death or the age of the child, but to support bereaved parents, grandparents and adult siblings in the positive resolution of the grief feelings and issues that revolve around the death of their loved one and support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health.

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work. Try to attend three times before deciding if TCF is right for you.

TO OUR MEMBERS WHO ARE FURTHER DOWN THE "GRIEF ROAD"

We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting we have new parents. THINK BACK – what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF ‘veterans’ to welcome you, share your grief, encourage you and tell you, “your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!”

INFORMATION REGARDING OUR MEETINGS

PLEASE come to a meeting. We are here to discuss whatever is on your mind. This is YOUR group and we are here for each other. You do not have to talk at meetings. We welcome your participation in our group, but it is not a requirement. Coming to listen to the other members is okay, too. Our meetings are open to parents, grandparents, adult siblings, or adult family members such as aunts and uncles.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

This group belongs to you and cannot survive without assistance. You can help with refreshments, being a greeter, send out reminders for the next meeting, help with the newsletter, send thank-you notes, become a facilitator, volunteer to help with Chapter activities or serve on the steering committee. Part of getting better, sometimes is being there to assist others, too, through this journey. Through helping others, you will help yourself.

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Our Children & Siblings Remembered on Their Birthday's

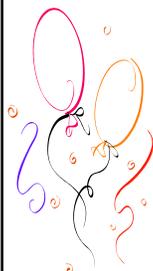
Each month some of our members face special but very painful days. We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents, grandparents, and siblings of the following children's:

October

Bryan Bowles October 1
 Jimmy Wallace October 2
 James Page October 4
 Sharnale DeMar Thompson October 8
 Mark Draughon October 15
 Kevin Harlan October 15
 Carissa Gillis October 18
 Ryan Malcom October 20

November

Preston Riley November 1
 Ryan Stevens November 5
 Carolyn Kapperman November 7
 Elijah Caddick November 8
 Baby Davis November 9
 Renee Anderson November 11
 Omar Sharaf November 11
 Cameron "Cameo" Booher November 12
 Keith Parker November 12
 Jeffrey George November 13
 Charles Cook November 14



Zackery Hollister November 14

Johnny Cole November 15

Brianne Stewary-Goodrich November 18

Lamont Saffore November 21

Lawrence Boivin November 24

Brittney Stokes November 24

Kristen Wactor November 30

Matthew Guin November 30

December

Joe Konen December 1

Pam Tatum December 5

Crystal Dawn Jackson December 5

Zach Grullon December 6

Tammy Owens December 7

Kendra "Candy" Seay December 8

Christine Geier December 9

Shawn Leigh Watkins December 15

Ricky Diaz December 15

Derrell Lee Dean December 16

Hope Parker December 19

Nickolas Ross Hayden December 25

RaMael McArthur December 28

Lexi Minyon December 31



Our 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, and siblings of the following children's:

October

Melba Ross October 1
 James Page October 5
 Carla Parker October 9
 Valencia Fredrick October 10
 Kirsten Wactor October 10
 Pam Tatum October 11
 Brittney Stokes October 19
 Ralph Lanier October 20
 Archie Kagy October 21
 Johnathan "JD" McKenzie October 21
 Christopher Ortega October 26

November

Kyle Harris November 6
 Christopher Hrvoj November 7
 Talisha Morris November 8
 Kendra "Candy" Seay November 8
 Baby Davis November 9
 Joe Konen November 9
 Patrick "Pat" Shea November 14



Joshua Gurierrez November 12
 Zackery Hollister November 14
 Lawrence Boivin November 15
 Amy Elizabeth German November 16
 Joshua Jona November 16
 Christine Geier November 20
 Brianne Stewart-Goodrich November 22

December

Joseph Barnes December 1
 Andrew Beutelspacher December 2
 Kayla Francis December 10
 Stephen Dew December 12
 Cameron Booher December 16
 Ryan Malcom December 19
 Grant Miles December 22
 Preston Riley December 23
 Ryan Stevens December 30

What the caterpillar thinks is the end of the world, the butterfly knows is only the beginning.

The Holidays Are Coming!

"The Holidays are coming! The Holidays are coming!" Most bereaved parents make that observation with the same sense of fear and dread that Chicken Little had when he announced, "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!" We view Christmas or Hanukkah differently than the rest of the world. In our minds they become great trials to be endured. In my opinion, this trial is tougher than birthdays or death anniversaries. This is the time when love abounds. The family (and extended family) all gather together, coming from near and far, to share in this love. The only trouble with this happy scene is that our child is missing. He or she has traveled too far from us to come for the holidays! We can't buy gifts for a photograph or hug and kiss a memory. The emptiness that this creates in us cannot be filled, no matter how many relatives gather by our hearth. To add to the pain, most well-meaning friends and relatives feel that the best way to handle the problem is to pretend that it doesn't exist. They never mention the one person that is on the minds and in the hearts of everyone. We found out early on that it is not possible to keep the "presence" of our child out of a family gathering. Trying to do so makes everyone uncomfortable and causes us as parents to feel disloyal.

The first Christmas after our son died, we did it "their" way. Never again! Now we make sure that he is very much a part of our holiday. For starters, we decided once again to hang all three stockings. We don't fill them, but just seeing them all hanging together is right for us. The tree was very important to Blake. Every year he took the responsibility of stringing the lights for us. Now it is important to us to see that Blake has a tree. We have a very special one, about 3 feet tall, that we weight heavily at the bottom. We decorate it with weather-proof ornaments and place it at his grave. We leave the tree there until spring so it can make the gravesite when the snows are deep. We also have a lovely candle that we burn on special days. This is our way of including our missing son in the family circle. But most important, we talk about him. We don't do it obsessively, but we don't hesitate to recall memories of him as often as we recall those of other children in the family. Because we talk of him in an easy and natural manner, the rest of the family has taken our cue. They now bring up his name naturally. It is all so much more comfortable than the way we tried to handle it that first year.

Another couple in our chapter had a wonderful idea for the first holiday after their daughter died. Their greatest fear was that no one would mention her, so they compiled an album of her pictures and casually left it out on the coffee table. It wasn't long before people were looking through it, recalling favorite memories of her, and the ice was broken.

There must be so many other ways that you can make your child a part of your holiday—ways that seem right and comfortable for you. You may choose to keep your thoughts private rather than share them with others. But the most important thing to remember is that the choice is yours. Do what makes you comfortable, not what others think should make you comfortable. If you follow the dictates of your heart and that gives you comfort, those around you will see that it is so and follow your lead.



Marge Frankenberg
TCF Arlington Heights, IL
In loving memory of my son, Blake

The Compassionate Friends
Fayetteville Area Chapter
703 Rosebud Court,
Vass NC 28394



The Compassionate Friends
Fayetteville Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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We're on the Web
www.tcffayetteville.org

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Love Gifts

Love gifts are tax-deductible donations made to the Fayetteville Area Chapter of TCF in memory of your beloved child, sibling, grandchild or loved one. There is no charge for our newsletter, meetings, or lending library, and we depend solely on your contributions. We sincerely appreciate your support. 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 _____

Phone Number _____

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.**