



Bread Crumbs—Finding Our Way Back

Bread crumbs are all we have.

They are what is left behind after the death of our child. They are our memories and our mementos.

A bread crumb is the little answering machine cassette tape that says “Hi, it’s me. Leave a message at the beep.” We may be the only people with a cassette tape in our safe deposit box. It’s not much, a few quick words, but it’s his voice—a small crumb from the original.

A bread crumb is his favorite shirt that I still can’t part with, so I wear it for good luck on special days. A bread crumb is the last Father’s Day card he wrote in his own hand before he went off to college.

Thanks for everything Dad, especially the \$. My years at home were better than words can say and I never took anything for granted. I’ve had the best childhood anyone could have. Thank you for the ideas and opportunities I grew up with. I love you. Mark

I call these things crumbs because they are a disappointing piece of the real thing, but treasured because they are all we have.

I also think there is a second way of looking at this. Bread crumbs are a part of children’s stories

symbolizing signposts along the way to help lead us out of the forest—to find our way back to the land of the living, at least if the birds don’t eat them

I like to think that the return from grief is like finding our own way out of the forest. The way is marked by great changes or signposts if we will only follow the bread crumbs. I think of them as gifts left behind by our children. They change us and they lead us out of the forest—but at a very different place than we first went in. Here are three I have found. Maybe you will find others.

Crumb One

We pick up a new sense of what is important and what is not. We suffer fools, superficial cocktail parties, and convenience friends poorly. We seem to develop an immediate impatience for the meaningless and the trivial. On the other hand, we pick up an incredible sensitivity to the world around us that we did not have before. We watch the news differently. We value people more than things. We live more in the moment and less in the future because we know that sometimes “tomorrow doesn’t come.”

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Words from the Editor

Spring is here or so I have been told. I always feel a little better in spring. Not sure why, maybe it is the longer days or the vivid colors of the flowers and bright greens of the new leaves. What ever the reason, I will take it. Spring seems to be a rebirth of nature following a cold and often gloomy winter. Maybe that is why I feel better, I get a little rebirth of my soul.

Please take time to read all the information regarding the annual conference on pages 6 & 7. Call Cindy or I if you have questions. Our numbers are on the last page. There are five people that I know of from our chapter who will be

attending the conference this year.

I need **your** help. I can always fill the newsletter with stories and poems off the web, but I would rather have stories and poems from our members. So please contact me. I will start working on the next newsletter in early June. I know there are stories out there.

Always hope,
Jennifer German
Amy’s mom



love + eternity = eternal love for our angels

Crumb Two

We find our real self on the road back. After the loss of a child and a period of emptiness, we do eventually come back. But we come back differently—and I believe better—than the person that entered that awful forest. With our new understanding of priorities, we listen again to “that still small voice” that we silenced in the race to climb the career ladder or have the “perfect life” or do what our parents or teachers thought we “should” do. We find new courage to be the person we really are.

We begin living from the inside out instead of the other way around—from a sense of what is important, not what is expected. From a life of “what’s in it for me?” to “how can I help you?” We discover new and compassionate friends, and sometimes drift away from old ones. We go from a thousand name Rolodex of contacts to a handful of people we love.

We often also find our spiritual center and an inner peace. We become unafraid to died, at the same time we are beginning to live again.

Crumb Three

We pick up one more gift that I have noticed. We seem to get anointed with an ability to help someone else. You know what I mean. We didn’t want it. We didn’t ask for it. But we got it, anyway. It’s almost like a giant invisible radar screen gets mounted on our head and we now pick up vibrations from other people in need. And we find that we really can help. People seek us out. People who don’t know what to say when a child dies call us and ask: “Could you please go over?” We know we can and will, if only to listen

I am reminded of the story of a little boy who arrived home late from school. “Where have you been?” his mother asked. “I was helping Timmy who broke his bike,” the child answered. “But, Honey,” the mother said. “You don’t even know how to fix a bike.” “I know Mom,” came the reply, “But I was just helping him cry.”

Sometimes we can just help someone else cry, and that is enough. Unlike most other people, we can walk directly up to a bereaved parent or sibling, look them in the eye, and say, “I know how you feel.” That is what TCF is all about. And in helping another person, we help ourselves heal too.

So, what do we do with these new gifts or bread crumbs left along the way for us? New priorities. A new sense of self. And the ability to help someone else.

These are definitely good things. They did not come *from* the death of our child. Nothing good comes from the death of a child. As Rabbi Harold Kushner said in Seattle: “there is no silver lining.” But there is change. These changes come *after* the death, when we recognize that we can’t change what happened, but we can change what we do about it.

One day our surviving son, Rick, put his arms around us in a family hug and said: “Okay Mom and Dad, now that we are a family of three instead of four, we each have to live our lives one-third better.” That, more than any other moment in our grief, marked our turning point.

My wife has a reoccurring dream. She is in Heaven many years from now and she greets our son. “Okay, Mom,” Mark says, “So tell me everything you did after I died?” On that day she will be proud to answer: “I lived the rest of my life one-third better in your name.”

I suspect most bereaved parents divide their lives into those two distinct stages of time: before and after the death. What we do in State Two we do in our child’s name.

And because we do it, the world after our child died in some small way is changed forever. And when the world in some small way is changed forever, then our child’s life continues to make a difference.

And when our child’s life continues to make a difference, he or she is never entirely gone.

Rich Edler
In Memory of my son, Mark

Rich and his wife Kitty are founding members of the South Bay/LA Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. Son Mark died in 1992 and Rich’s first book “If I Knew Then What I Know Now” is dedicated to him. His following book, “Into the Valley and Out Again” is the story of a father’s grief after the loss of his son and the changes in priorities and approaches to life that follow.” Rich served on TCF’s National Board of Directors for several years as has his wife, Kitty. He died in February of 2002.

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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.

A Sibling's Feelings

The pain of a sibling is so real we
 sometimes hide it deep inside of
 ourselves. As we watch our parents
 hurting we see the pain in their eyes.
 We are also hurting not only for the loss
 of our brother or sister but also for our
 own parents. We need to reach out to
 each other to let each other know we are
 hurting inside.
 Our lives have all changed forever. I
 know they lost a son but I lost my
 younger brother I loved, and as siblings
 we share a special bond that will never
 have anymore for he no longer lives...
 my brother, my friend.
 I will always miss you and I will never
 forget you for you will always live in
 my heart, and I have wonderful
 memories no one can ever take away
 from me. In my heart you will stay, love
 you forever.

Marie Porreca
 TCF Rockland County, NY

COME SIT WITH ME

Come sit with me awhile and let me
 Hold your hand, I understand your
 Sorrow and know you need a friend.

I understand the pain that lies within your
 heart,
 I have felt the silent screams that tear you
 all apart

I know about the sleepless nights that last
 so very long,
 I understand the emptiness when you hear
 that special song.

Come share with me your memories and let
 me be
 Your friend, you can cry, laugh or say
 nothing at all,
 And I will understand.

Come sit with me my friend, I'll try to help
 you through.
 I understand my friend, for I have been
 there too.

Judy Peckinpaugh
 TCF Inland Empire, CA

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.

Inga Hondros in memory of her son Christopher "Chris" Hondros

Frances Jackson in memory of her son Joey Jackson

Ramona Jackson in memory of her brother Joey Jackson

Robert Jackson in memory of his brother Joey Jackson



The National Office of The Compassionate Friends

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Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

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[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

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.

Father's Day---Feel Me Near

Hi dad!

I wish I could be there, for your special day, I'd give you a big hug, so much that I'd like to say!

You've been so sad since I left, yet you try to be so strong But if you cry when you miss me, it truly won't be wrong. Your voice is music to my ears, so smile as you speak, And remember I am listening, all seven days a week Don't worry about how I am, I have no need or fright One day we will join again, when the time is right. So look for some little signs, like a butterfly, flower or bird, This is how I'll contact you, and hope that I'll be heard! I love you more than ever, I hope you feel me near, For I am with you each day, all throughout the year.

- For Dads, Fathers Day 2003 –
by Dan Bryl, Jessica's dad
In Memory of Jessica Bryl, 1/19/77
– 4/3/00

Put the Brakes on Anxiety

There is a direct correlation between the frantic acceleration of the advertising for gifts for mom this week and the increasing anxiety that many of us feel as Mother's Day approaches.

Some ads will be heartbreaking, some will be goofy, some will be trendy, some will be timely.

Each ad on television, in the newspaper, in the mail, on the radio, in our e-mail, on web sites.....adds to the increasing anxiety in each of us....mothers and fathers alike.

Here are some suggestions on avoiding the advertising bombardment: a good book, a good movie (no commercials), a nice walk in the park, a visit to a museum, clean out the garage, an evening with friends and an evening alone, buy potting soil, run your hands through it, smell the sweet fragrance of mother earth and do some special work in the garden and yard; hand watering plants is especially therapeutic. The water is relaxing, our plants are happy to receive it and our thoughts often move into a more harmonious state. If you have a fountain or pond...indoors or out....now is the time to use it. Listen to it, read by it, let the running water sweep into your mind and gently carry away the stresses and anxiety of this fragile moment.

When you watch commercial television, keep the remote nearby. Switch from anything related to Mother's Day. Find channels that do not broadcast commercials at the same time. When I watch television, I usually watch two shows at once. Find several channels that do not broadcast their commercials at the same time. Consider PBS, C-Span and the various entertainment and movie channels that have no advertising.

When you read the paper, do not look at the advertisements. Read the headline, the story and move on in the text area. Stay away from that which could start an anxiety swing. When you listen to the radio, be ready to button push if a commercial is orienting towards Mother's Day. When the direct mail comes to your house, sort it quickly, keep the first class mail and throw away the rest. Somebody's bound to be trying to tug at your heart with cleverly disguised advertising.

Why avoid the commercialism? Why seek peace at this time? There are two very important reasons for this. The first, and most obvious, is the fact that the anxiety can and will build all week long if we let it. Don't feed anxiety.

The second, truly most important reason, is that Mother's Day is a very special day for us. Whether we choose to make organized plans or do nothing, our thoughts will be where they belong: with our beautiful children. We must keep that place in our heart safe from the attacks of crass commercialism. The memories of our child's life and the unconditional love we feel as Mothers (and fathers) must not be demeaned by the marketing genius of Madison Avenue.

The love of our children is ours and ours alone to nurture, to protect, and to keep in our hearts as our fondest treasure. For each of us Mother's Day has a deeper meaning now. We must approach this week with an effort at balance and low anxiety and awaken on Mother's Day with sweet memories in our hearts of our beautiful children.

If you have thoughts about how to handle this week that you would like to share with our Compassionate Friends, please e-mail me. There are many paths up the mountain.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen

There is Another Side of Grief

Where the tears still flow
Not as often

Where memories bring smiles
Not just sadness

Where blessings are recognized
Not just struggles

Where joy and peace are present
Not just sorrow

Where you are remembered
Not just Mourned

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www.facebook.com/grieftoolbox

42ND TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE**RINGS OUT IN
PHILADELPHIA****JULY 19-21, 2019**

The Compassionate Friends National Conference is a weekend spent surrounded by other bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. It is a place where hope grows and friendships are made with others who truly understand. With inspirational keynote speakers, abundant workshops for everyone's wants and needs, and a remembrance candle lighting program culminating with the annual Walk to Remember, this time of healing and hope is the gift we give ourselves. Join us as together we remember and share the everlasting love we have for our precious children, siblings and grandchildren.

The 42nd TCF National Conference will be held in Philadelphia, on July 19-21, 2019 at the Philadelphia 201 Hotel. "Hope Rings in Philadelphia" is the theme of next year's event, which promises more of this year's great National Conference experience. We'll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#) and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

- Choose to attend from nearly hundred different workshops and sharing sessions, given by professionals and also individuals just like you.
- Take advantage of "Healing Haven" to receive free personal services such as a massage.
- Craft items to commemorate the love for your family member in the "Crafty Corner".

20TH ANNUAL WALK TO REMEMBER

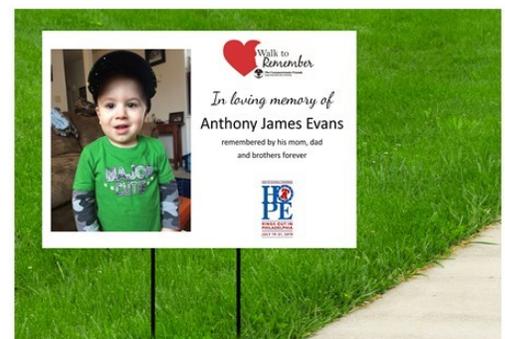
JULY 21 AT 9:AM—10:AM

The Compassionate Friends Walk to Remember is a highlight of every TCF National Conference. It was created as a symbolic way to show the love we carry for the children we mourn. Held at 9:00 am Sunday on the final day of the National Conference it starts at the host hotel of the Conference. There is an air of anticipation and excitement as everyone gathers in preparation for the start of the Walk. Finally the Walk begins and, hand-in-hand everyone walks, meditating on a much different time in their lives. Since its inception in 2000, the Walk to Remember has taken on many distinctive facets. There is the main Walk to Remember where those attending the conference join with local bereaved families and others who fly in from across the country just for the Walk. As many as 1400 have participated. Some go the full distance while others only walk a short way knowing that in participating, they are remembering. Special Walk to Remember t-shirts are given to all who register, as well as walk bibs where the names of the children being remembered can be written.

The Walk to Remember is also used as a major fundraiser to help support the work of The Compassionate Friends. Many participants seek pledges from relatives, friends, neighbors, and business acquaintances, turning in the dollars they have raised prior to the start of the event.

Personalized Walk to Remember Sign

Sponsor's name displayed on a sign that will be displayed on the Walk to Remember route with your child's/grandchild's/sibling's photo.



SPONSORSHIPS

- Centerpiece Sponsor \$35
- Sharing Session Sponsor \$50
- Workshop Sponsor \$100
- Conference Scholarship \$250
- Enter another donation amount

For Workshop sponsorship and Sharing Session sponsorship a large picture of the person in which the donation is memorializing will be placed outside the workshop or sharing session. These belong to the donor following the session. Any of these sponsorships may be made whether you attend the conference or not. Photo memento may also be purchased without conference attendance. A \$5. mailing fee will be added. If you purchase one or more, let me (Jennifer German) know and I will be happy to bring them to you and save you the mailing fee. The same with sponsor pictures.

Crossing Over

Oh, please don't feel guilty
It was just my time to go.
I see you are still feeling sad,
And the tears just seem to flow.
We all come to earth for our lifetime,
And for some it's not many years
I don't want you to keep crying
You are shedding so many tears.
I haven't really left you
Even though it may seem so.
I have just gone to my heavenly home,
And I'm closer to you than you know.
Just believe that when you say
my name, I'm standing next to you,
I know you long to see me,
But there's nothing I can do.
But I'll still send you messages
And hope you understand,
That when your time comes to
"cross over," I'll be there
to take your hand.

—Author Unknown

Keep your child's, grandchild's or sibling's memory alive with this two-sided personalized photo memento - one side features the 2019 TCF National Conference logo, and the other side is a photo of the one you love with their name along the bottom. These mementos are created of porcelain, measuring 3" in diameter and include a ribbon for easy hanging. This is a wonderful remembrance of your TCF national conference experience to take home and cherish. Mementos are also available from some of our past national conference logos as well. The cost of this beautiful keepsake is \$15.



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:

April

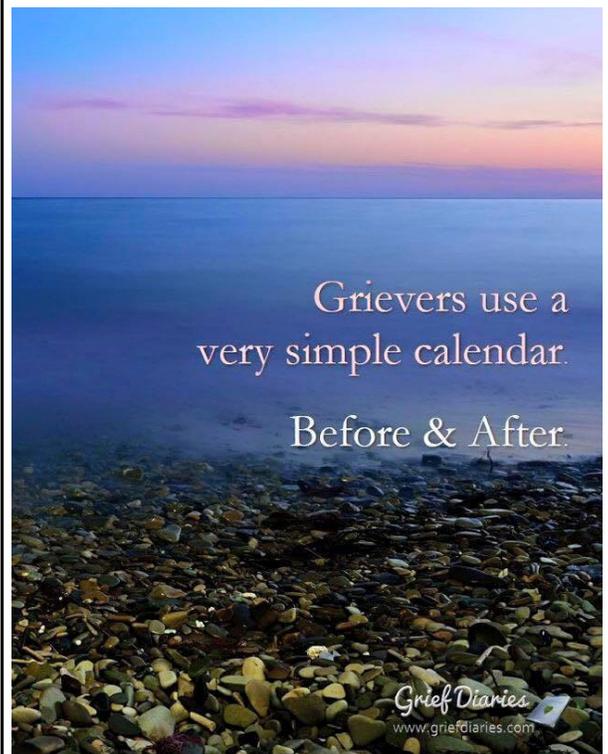
Joey Jackson April 1
 Erran Dawson April 5
 Christine Gable Powell April 8
 Dustin Nerren April 10
 Anthony "Brian" Smith April 10
 Ralph Lanier April 14
 Chris Eggleston April 15
 Amy Lynn Zinsser April 21
 Izhia Kraut April 23
 Scott Tyree April 26
 Andrew Beutelspacher April 29

May

Gregory Lovings May 7
 Allison Bennett May 8
 Thomas Payne Hollers May 22
 Michael Cline May 28
 Rachel Berry May 28
 Whitney Berry May 28

June

Michael Pizzarella June 5
 Kylon "Kyle" Smith June 7
 Amy Elizabeth German June 8
 Christopher Hrvoj June 8
 Melissa Lynn Thornton June 16
 Christopher Ortega June 20
 Micah Paul Laymon June 25
 James "Randy" Smith June 25





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.

April

Christine Gable Powell April 5

Spencer Walden April 5

Michael Cline April 9

Manzonian Hall April 9

Glenda Hudson April 16

Carissa Gillis April 17

Ian Redshaw April 18

Christopher "Chris" Hondros April 20

Izhia Kraut April 23

Lamont Saffore April 24

May

Hope Parker May 15

Phillip Berry May 17

Derrell Lee Dean May 17

Thomas Payne Hollers May 22

Lexi Minyon May 25

Christine Bailey May 25

Amber Marie Hall May 26

Rachel Berry May 28

Whitney Berry May 28

Robert Stevens May 28



June

Chris Eggleston June 2

Querokee Vélez June 4

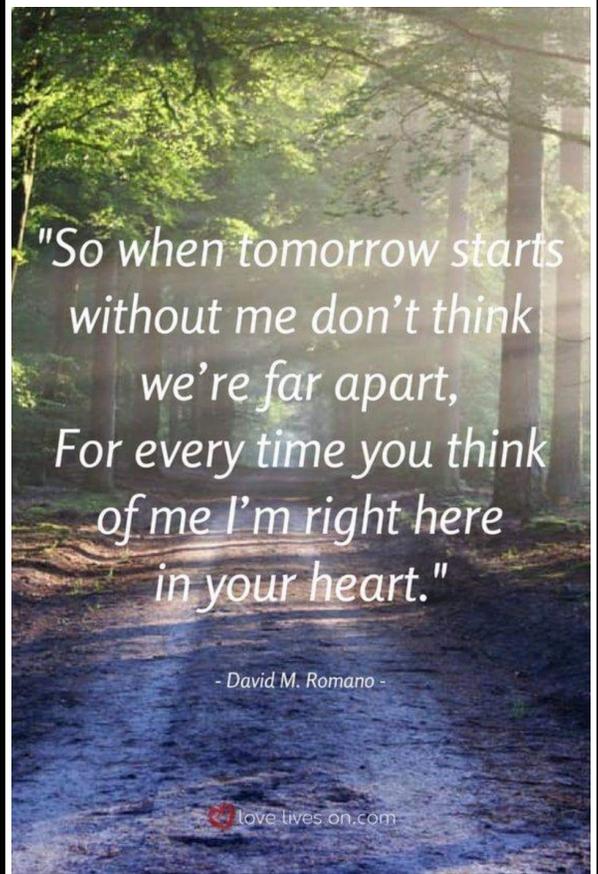
Randy Lee Dalton June 22

Keith Parker June 22

Timothy Bowman June 22

Wayne Tyner, Jr. June 26

Joey Jackson June 29



The Compassionate Friends
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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
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.**