



Our Mission Statement:

The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families who have experienced the death of a child. The primary purpose is to assist them in the positive resolution of the grief experience upon the death of a child and to support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health. The secondary purpose is to provide information and education about bereaved families. The object is to help those in their communities to be supportive, including family, friends, employers, co-workers and professionals.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS of Green Bay

A Bi-Monthly Newsletter by and for Bereaved Parents

Mar/April 2011

The Green Bay Compassionate Friends newsletter- March 2011 Donna Wilkinson, chapter leader

It is the beginning of March, which means we are hopefully nearing the end of a long winter. It is hard to imagine that spring will ever come as I look at the mountains of snow still piled high in our front yard and the icicles hanging from the roof. We have endured bitter cold winds and traveled cautiously on treacherous roads. The days have been long and dark and often free of sunlight.

As I describe these winter days, I feel as if I'm describing the days of my early grief. At that point, I did not believe that a day would ever come when I would thaw from the chill that had overtaken my life. It is frightening to remember those early months after Dustin died. How could I ever feel spring in my heart again?

Spring is a beautiful season of hope and new life. It is our reward for surviving the freezing winter months that preceded it. It should bring a smile to our faces and a bounce in our steps. However, it was in March of 1998 that we lost our precious son to cancer. It was during this happy season of warm breezes and green growth that his life on this earth ended. I wondered if my thoughts about spring would ever be the same. Rather than anticipate with gladness the coming of spring every year, I dreaded it with the knowledge that it contained the anniversary of his death. I know that anyone who has lost a loved one, no matter the season, understands.

Will spring come again to your life? In the thirteen years since Dustin died, it has come again to mine. Looking back at my description of the winter of "my early grief", I know that I have come a long way from that time of desolation. I have found that with each subsequent spring, I have rediscovered some of the joy I used to feel and I have learned that it doesn't mean I am dishonoring my son's memory. I now take him along with me in my mind and my heart. I will always feel tenseness, apprehension and sadness as March 29th draws near, but I no longer hold on to it.



The Green Bay Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

meets the third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m.
at First United Methodist Church, 501 Howe Street, Green Bay.
(Enter the parking lot off Monroe at Doty)

For further information contact:

Donna Wilkinson, Chapter Leader, 920-391-0734
Phyllis Calder, Programs, 920-468-4820
Joleen Krings, Newsletter Editor 920-676-8050
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Sue Van Straten, Remembering our Children
Mickey Schmeisser, Remembering our Children
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Dan Davis, Webmaster, 920-496-0629
Rev. Dave Wilkinson, Chaplain, 920-391-0734
E-mail: admin@tcfgreenbay.org

Monthly Support Group

Thursday, March 17, 2011, 7 p.m.

Speaker, Beth Haasl, Grief Counselor, Blaney Funeral Home, will speak on "Dealing with regret in the Grieving Journey".

Thursday, April 21, 2011 7 p.m.

DVD Documentary on Parents' loss and grief, "Space Between Breaths; What loss can teach us about a Life Fully Lived".

If the Green Bay Schools are closed due to inclement weather, there will not be a meeting that night.

Cont from Page 1:

This grief pathway we travel is a slow, difficult journey. It is as treacherous as the roads we maneuvered following the winter storms, never knowing when we will hit an icy patch on the road and be thrown into a tailspin. Yet, we must travel it if we are to find any measure of peace and healing.



Please be patient with yourself as you are working hard to survive this winter in your heart. Trust that spring, though a much different one than the one we knew before our beloved child died, will come again.

See you at the next Compassionate Friends meeting. We need not walk alone.

Daisies in Huge Handfuls

"Pick more daisies" was the most popular expression in our family. I picked it up from a magazine article about a 94 year old lady in Kentucky who, when asked what she would do differently if she had her life to live over, responded "I would take more chances; I would eat more ice cream and less beans; I would have more real troubles but fewer imaginary ones; I would climb more mountains; I would swim more rivers, and I would pick more daisies." Our son, Mark, seized the daisy expression as the theme both for his life and his entrance exam essay at UCLA. It helped him live his brief 18 years; his essay helped him get an academic scholarship.

Daisies became our family flower. They marked our attitude about living. And they marked our son's memorial service. After it was over, his friends and fraternity brothers each threw a daisy into the ocean. Daisies still mark his grave every week. It has taken me almost two years to return to really thinking about daisies and what that quote by a 94-year-old lady really means. During that time I made a pretty big mess of things. I did the best I could, but I was often going through the motions outside, but empty inside.

To me, what this quote means is we really do have to pull ourselves together again and go on. Dr. Charles Heuser, a former pastor at our church, notes "going through the steps of grief is like walking through the valley and shadow of death. Keep walking, but don't camp there." Our children would not want us to "camp there," but to go pick more daisies—to somehow live an even more meaningful life in their name. As I go on I am truly a different person. I don't suffer fools or superficiality very well any more. As one of my best friends said..."I get tired of beige people." Yet, I will drop everything to help another bereaved parent. I certainly have more "real troubles and fewer imaginary ones." But it's OK—I like myself better that way.

And I am returning to embrace life each day again. But this time I am following my heart instead of my expected career. I am taking more chances, climbing more unfamiliar mountains, and picking daisies in huge handfuls. Mark would want it so.

Rich Edler, TCF, South Bay, LA, CA



*The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen,
nor touched, but are felt in the heart ~*

HELEN KELLER

FINDING SPRING AGAIN

Cathy Seehuetter, TCF/St. Paul, MN



It is the end of February, which means we are nearing the end of what has often been a brutal winter. While gazing at the mountains of snow piled high in my front yard and the foot-long icicles hanging from my roof, it is hard to imagine that spring will ever come. We have endured bitter cold winds that have chilled us to the bone and treacherous roads that we have cautiously traveled. The days have been long and dark and often free of sunlight. No matter how long you have been a native of the Upper Midwest, I know we all will be glad when it comes to an end.

However, as I described these thoughts about winter, I felt as if I was describing the days of my early grief. At that point, I did not believe that a day would ever come when I would thaw from the chill that had overtaken my body and mind. The bleakness of my existence during those early months after Nina died is almost frightening to remember; it is so difficult to even conceive of that much pain. I was anesthetized from some of its cruelty by the protective blanket of numbness that blessedly shielded me from the gale force of such overpowering sorrow. How could I ever feel spring in my heart again?

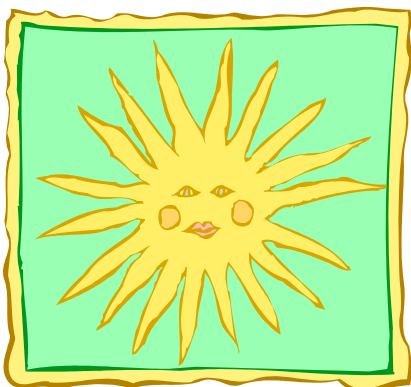
Spring had always been my favorite season. The air had a certain freshness to it that I would drink in. Simply put, it always made me feel happy and light of heart. Spring was our reward for surviving the freezing winter months that preceded it. It brought a smile to my face and a bounce to my step.

However, it was the spring of the year where my heart was irretrievably broken. It was during this exquisite season of warm, lilac-scented breezes and sun-kissed mornings where my sweet daughter Nina's life would end.

I wondered if my thoughts about spring would never be the same. Rather than anticipate with gladness the coming of spring, I dreaded it with the knowledge that it contained the anniversary of her death. The smell of the air and the look to the sky that I once found exhilarating now brought me back to my darkest day. I know that anyone, who has lost a loved one to death, no matter the season, understands.

Will spring come again to your life? In the almost six years since Nina died, has it come to mine? Looking back at my description of the winter of "my early grief", I know that I have come a long way from that time of desolation. I have found, especially after the first two years, that with each subsequent spring, I have rediscovered some of the pleasure I used to feel. I have learned that just because I have found things to feel joyful about again; it doesn't mean I am dishonoring my daughter's memory. I now take her along with me in my mind and my heart. I try to retrieve memories of the dandelion bouquets she so carefully gathered and presented to me, the rides to the park in the Radio Flyer, our talks while sunning on the deck, and, of course, shopping for spring clothes! Her favorite pastime! I will always feel tenseness, apprehension and sadness as May 11th draws near, but I no longer hold it against spring. It is a slow, difficult journey, this grief pathway we travel. It is as treacherous as the roads we maneuvered following the winter storms, never knowing when we will hit an icy patch on the road and be thrown into a tailspin. Yet, we must travel it if we are to find any measure of peace and healing.

Please be patient with yourself as you are working hard to survive this winter in your heart. Trust that spring, though a much different one than the one we knew before our beloved child died, will come again.



As long as I can I will look at this world for both of us. As long as I can I will laugh with the birds, I will sing with the flowers, I will pray to the stars, for both of us. ~

Sascha

Angels Among Us

*Our Angels are among us
We see them everyday
In all the forms that God created...
They are with us along life's way.
We see them in the sunrise,
That brightens and warms our soul.
We feel them in the summer breeze
That chases away our cold.
They are there among the flowers...
Their sweet scent a memory of love.
They soar with the eagles,
As they fly so high above.
The night will find them in the stars,
Lighting our path below.
And even in our dreams,
Their presence we'll still know.
As the snow melts with the sun,
And spring flowers peek through their
beds,
They come on the wings of butterflies,
And flutter about our heads.
They are telling us they are with us,
And will be forever more...
Until it's time for us to meet again,
As we pass through heaven's door.*

*Jacquelyn M. Comeaux
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The Jelly Bean Poem for Grieving Families

~**RED** is for my love for you that will never sever; for love is not measured by the time we had together, but what's in our hearts for ever.

~**GREEN** is for memories that I always will treasure; although time may pass, our memories will last forever and ever and ever.

~**YELLOW** is for sunshine that you have given to me; you brightened up my life and made my world shine and will continue to shine brilliantly for the rest of time.

~**ORANGE** is for the candle flame I light in memory of you; a flame that glows so bright as I speak your name in prayer asking God to hold you close until I join you there.

~**BLACK** is for my grief from my broken shattered heart; taking each day one at a time as I keep your memory alive. Life is different; I am different but I Can and Will survive.

~**PURPLE** is for tears I shed as I remember you; precious memories you left behind preserved deep inside. You will always live on through our family, Forever, by our side.

~**WHITE** is for my hope and faith in God above; the promise of resurrection knowing we will be reunited above the clouds over the rainbow in His everlasting light.

~**PINK** is for the signs you send from Heaven up above; lighting my path wherever I go and whatever I may do.

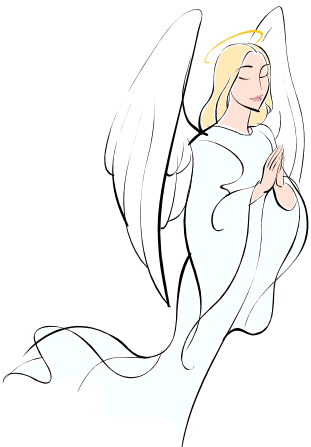
My precious child I will always love and always remember you.
I will remember you on Easter always.

-Footprints Ministry Inc

Love

by Fay Harden TCF Tuscaloosa AL

Why when I know you are not there am I drawn to the place where your body lies? Why am I filled with such peace and strength while I tend your own small piece of real estate—to clip the grass around the monument we made for you—to take away the weathered flowers and replace them with new ones—housekeep in a motherly fashion the only way I can for you now. Why is my muddled mind seemingly soothed and wrinkles that were causing distress, leaving me in peace temporarily—can it only be that this is the last physical place that can be yours? It is your place, your earthly temple housing your earthly body. A shrine of sorts for you. Purchased, constructed and tended now so lovely by we who loved you so in life and love you now in death.



*Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure you are.
Let me learn from you, love you, savor you, bless you before you depart.
Let me not pass you by in quest of some rare and perfect tomorrow.
Let me hold you while I may, for it will not always be so.
One day I shall dig my nails into the earth, or bury my face in the pillow,
or stretch myself taut, or raise my hands to the sky,
and want more than all the world for your return. ~*

by Mary Jean Irion

Remembering our Children

During the two months that each newsletter covers, we include your child's birthday and the anniversary of your child's death — if we know those dates. Based upon TCF National policy, we will not print the year of your child's birth or death.

BIRTHDAYS

David Staude (son of Irv & Bev Michaud)	3/01	Rebecca Sommers (daughter of Tim & Donna Sommers)	4/05
Stacie Lepp (daughter of Ginny Lepp)	3/01	Elizabeth Turek Bigley (daughter of Albert & Mary Turek)	4/06
Mark Louis Starr (son of Ruth (Patti) Schmidt)	3/04	Mylisha Klapatch (daughter of Dennis Klapatch & Tamara Walker)	4/06
Molly Klika Zarnoth (daughter of Bob & Barb Klika)	3/06	Craig Kozloski (son of Bobbie & David Kozloski)	4/09
Kelley Calkins (daughter of Kate Calkins)	3/11	Jason Kurey (son of Deb Kurey)	4/09
Erin Marie Larscheid (daughter of Maribeth & Timothy Larscheid)	3/11	Cody Green (son of Dan & Gwen Green)	4/10
Bailey Hartmann (son of Pamela Phillips)	3/20	Brandon Scheider (son of Deb Scheider)	4/10
Ella Cumicek (daughter of Chris & Rhonda Cumicek)	3/21	Kevin Kazik (son of Sally Kazik & Charlie Kazik)	4/11
Cezonne Upton (son of Maria Smith & Frank Smith)	3/23	Tammie Gustman (daughter of Victoria Fifield & Marvin Gustman)	4/12
Cam Wendt (son of Lon Wendt)	3/24	Rebekah Puzen (daughter of Larry Puzen & Carol Schroeder-Puzen)	4/14
Tami (Sam) Cornelius (daughter of Brenda Cornelius)	3/25	Jacob Peters (son of Jerry & Natalie Peters)	4/15
Loren Hubert (son of Debbie & Butch Vander Kinter)	3/26	Joel Bagneski (son of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	4/19
Steven L Vosters (son of Patti & Marvin Vosters)	3/26	Nathan Jarosinski (son of Mark & Jean Jarosinski)	4/21
Lane Harris (son of Susan Harris)	3/27	Jeffrey Van Lieshout (son of Dave & Connie Van Lieshout)	4/21
Andrew (Andy) Short (son of Barbara Short)	3/29	Joshua Calaway (son of Bonnie Calaway)	4/24
Matthew Daley (son of Mary Daley)	4/01	Jacob Engel (son of Billie Jo Engel)	4/24
Brandon Ross (son of Jeff & Patti Ross)	4/02	Kaitlyn Marie Schley (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	4/24
Hannah Lynn Flauger (daughter of Daniel Flauger)	4/02	Justin Plate (son of Mark & Grace Plate)	4/25
Rick Strombach (son of Donna Strombach)	4/02	Katie Zeitler (daughter of Vickie & Mike Radue)	4/26
Barbara VanBoxtel (daughter of Angeline Broucker)	4/03	Ryan Bader (son of Mark & Cheryl Bader)	4/26
Jason Ison (son of Rene Ison)	4/04	Catherine Strom Schmidt (daughter of Pete & Karen Strom)	4/30

Every moment and every event of every man's life on earth plants something in his soul.

~Thomas Merton

ANNIVERSARIES

Mike Neddo (son of Debra Neddo)	3/01	Justice Delveaux (daughter of Sarah Wirtz)	4/07
Elizabeth Turek Bigley (daughter of Albert & Mary Turek)	3/13	Wendy Johnson (daughter of Tom & Debbie Johnson)	4/08
Erin Marie Larscheid (daughter of Maribeth & Timothy Larscheid)	3/14	Amy Laedke (daughter of Debra & Fred Laedtke)	4/11
Josh Gilson (son of Ron & Cindy Gilson)	3/17	Jon Daniel Strawser (son of Brenda Choat)	4/13
Alexia Prosecky (daughter of Wayne & Jennifer Prosecky)	3/18	Shane Lardinois Malliet (son of Debbie Lardinois)	4/14
Michelle Schmidt (daughter of Diane Kroll)	3/18	Jared Gehm (son of Mary Gehm)	4/15
Rebekah Puzen (daughter of Larry Puzen & Carol Schroeder-Puzen)	3/19	Travis Christenson (son of Cherie Oettinger)	4/18
Bryan VanderKelen (son of Bob & Debi Lepak)	3/20	Kaitlyn Marie Schley (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	4/19
Hunter Vincent (son of Steven & Dawn Vincent)	3/24	Marisa Nelson (daughter of Amy Nelson)	4/21
Dustin Wilkinson (son of Dave & Donna Wilkinson)	3/29	Andrew (Andy) Short (son of Barbara Short)	4/22
Kayla Lego (niece of Christine Newtols)	4/02	Doug Kwiatkowski (son of Dave & Theresa Kwiatkowski)	4/23
Andy Bell (son of Patrick & Debbie Bell)	4/02	Mike Smith (son of Dave Smith)	4/23
Joshua Calaway (son of Bonnie Calaway)	4/02	Catherine Strom Schmidt (daughter of Pete & Karen Strom)	4/24
Hannah Lynn Flauger (daughter of Daniel Flauger)	4/03	Dalon Calkins (son of Kate Calkins)	4/26
Nicholas Resch (son of Lynn & Steve Marcks)	4/04	Evan Van Lanen (son of Dan & Peg Van Lanen)	4/26
Rick Strombach (son of Donna Strombach)	4/06	Jesse Mason (son of Jeff Mason & Janice Yglesias)	4/29
Eric Barlament (son of Jim Barlament & Penny Maraccini)	4/07	Crystal (Falish) Peterson (daughter of Steve & Darlene Enderby)	4/30

Love gifts were recently given by:

Bruce & Diane Hietpas in memory of Nick Hietpas
 Irving & Bev Michaud in memory of David Staude
 Doug & Renee LaViolette in memory of Brian LaViolette
 TC for Kids Memorial Foundation: Cheryl Oettinger in memory of Travis Christensen
 Don & Karol Cole in memory of Douglas & Dane Cole
 Brenda Choat in memory of Jon Daniel Strawser
 James & Roberta Charneski in memory of Stephen Charneski
 Steve & Margaret Krings in memory of Dylan Krings
 Jason Baudhuin in memory of Matthew Baudhin
 Carol Wautlet in memory of Robby Rohr

ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS, & MISC.

On behalf of the TCF Board of Directors and staff, I want to personally take this opportunity to extend warmest congratulations to The Compassionate Friends of Green Bay #2102 on its 10th anniversary.

To be long running and successful, a chapter must have many caring people, both in the leadership and membership. Your chapter has, without a doubt, been blessed with dedicated and committed individuals throughout its many years of existence.

Please pass along our best wishes to the entire chapter. You have our heartfelt appreciation and thanks for all you do for the bereaved parents and family members who have come to your chapter for help -- and found it -- because you have taken the time to be there and truly care. Your contribution to your chapter, community, and society are an incredible tribute to all of your children!

Warmest personal regards,

Patricia A. Loder
Executive Director

RECOMMENDED READING

Big George

Autobiography of an Angel:

The touching and emotionally stirring story of two newborn infants in a neonatal unit. The parents of these babies form a bond with each other and the babies. Little does anyone know, one of the babies is an Angel, sent from Heaven, on a mission to help. Bible verses are referenced within the story. This book inspires hope to those who have experienced the heart wrenching trials that having a baby in a neonatal unit can bring.

Find an error? Have an idea?

Feel free to email me, Joleen Krings, at:

jkrings04@hotmail.com

BOOKS NEWLY ADDED TO TCF GB LIBRARY:

“Big George-Autobiography of an Angel” – published & distributed by Hay House, Carlsbad, CA

“Healing After Loss: Daily Meditations For Working Through Grief” – Martha Hickman

“When There Are No Words: Finding Your Way to Cope with Loss and Grief” – Charlie Walton

“Empty Cradle, Broken Heart: Surviving the Death of Your Baby” – Deborah Davis



34th National Conference
Minneapolis / St. Paul, MN
July 15-17, 2011



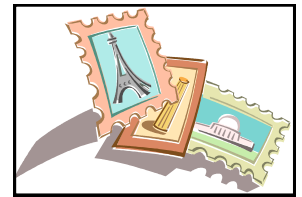
Reserve Rooms Now for 2011 TCF National Conference in Minneapolis, MN

Room reservations can now be made for TCF's 34th national conference, this year in Minneapolis, Minnesota July 15-17. The conference, which has the theme "Shining Stars-Guiding Hope" is being held at the Sheraton Bloomington Hotel Minneapolis South, only about 10 minutes from the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport (shuttles will be available to and from the hotel—as well as the hotel and the Mall of America). Special room rates are \$129 per night for King or Double Bed with third and fourth persons at an additional \$10 each in the same room. Reservations can be made online or by telephone. Go to TCF's national website at www.compassionatefriends.org and click on "TCF 2011 National Conference – Minnesota" under "News and Events" for how to reserve a room and for latest up-to-date information on the conference and the Walk to Remember, held on the final day of the event. Information will also be made available on Facebook at The Compassionate Friends/USA.



The
**COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**

of Green Bay
PO Box 211
Green Bay, WI 54305



Our monthly
support group
meets next on:

Thursday,
March 17, 2011
at 7 p.m.

at First United
Methodist Church,
off Monroe at Doty.
Call 920-496-0629
for information.

We need not walk alone!

OTHER TCF CONTACT INFORMATION

The Door County Chapter meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month at the Door County Memorial Hospital in Sturgeon Bay. Call 1-800-589-2669 (voicemail).

The TCF of Kewaunee County Chapter does not meet at this time. Call Dorothy Konop at 920-863-8003 for information.

The Fox Valley Chapter of TCF meets at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of the month in Neenah at Faith United Methodist Church, 1025 Tullar Road. Call Deb Schultz at 920-725-6340 for information.

Oneida, WI, has a new chapter that was recently chartered. They meet the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 6:30pm at Parish Hall – 2937 Freedom Road, Oneida, WI. Contact Jean Williquette at 920-469-4135 for more information.

To contact the **National Organization:**

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

P.O. Box 3696,

Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696

Phone Toll-free: 877-969-0010

Web site: www.compassionatefriends.org

To contact the **TCF Regional Coordinator:**

Jim Staniforth

4705 Eisenhower St.

Oregon, WI 53575

Phone: 608-835-7493



Resources for Siblings: The national organization of TCF has resources for siblings. Visit the online Sibling Resources Page at www.compassionatefriends.org