



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

TOPEKA CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

ADVISORY BOARD - Topeka Chapter
Rev. Art Donnelly, Second Presbyterian Church
Chaplain Ty Petty, MDiv., L.S.D.C.S.W.
Colleen Ellis, L.S.C.W., Family Therapist
Donna Mathena-Menke, Funeral Director/Bereaved Parent
Irving Sheffield, M.P.A., Menninger Foundation, Ret.
Donna Kidd, Bereaved Parent
Byron Waldy, Chaplain/Counselor
Bebe Bahr, Bereaved Parent

Published Bimonthly by The Topeka TCF Chapter

NEWSLETTER - Issue #6
The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
National Headquarters, P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
Toll Free 877-969-0010; Fax (630) 990-0246

National TCF Website:
www.compassionatefriends.org

NEW Topeka TCF Chapter Website:
www.tcftopeka.org

November ~ December 2014
Editor: Susan Chan
3448 S.W. Mission Ave.
Topeka, KS 66614-3629
(785) 272-4895

NOVEMBER MEETING

Monday, November 24, 2014
Most Pure Heart of Mary Church
3601 S.W. 17th St., Topeka, KS
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Please Note Date Change!!

DECEMBER MEETING

Monday, December 15, 2014
Most Pure Heart of Mary Church
3601 S.W. 17th St., Topeka, KS
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

The Gift of Gratitude - Sometimes it is difficult to see anything to be grateful for following the death of our child, grandchild or sibling. At this meeting we will take the opportunity to discuss and look for those things, or people, or events for which we are grateful as we travel on our grief journey. Examples might be friends and/or family who have been supportive to us, a workplace that was aware of and responsive to our needs as a bereaved person, someone who shared a story about our loved one with us that we had never heard and that may have brought us tears but also joy that they were being remembered. Gratitude can be a gift we give ourselves as we grieve, but we need to be open to the possibility that gratitude does indeed exist in our lives.

Memorial Candle Lighting - Please plan to join us for this special event to honor the lives of our children, grandchildren and siblings who "left too soon". You are asked to bring a framed photo of your loved one (if you do not have photos, plan to bring something that represents them to you). During the Candle Lighting we will share special music, poetry and each person will have an opportunity to light a votive candle in memory of that special life and place that candle by their photo/memento. After the Candle Lighting we will have a time for fellowship and refreshments. You are encouraged to bring your or your child's favorite holiday treat to share with the group. Votive candles are provided.

Meetings are always held on the fourth Monday of each month unless otherwise noted. Listen to radio & TV for cancellations due to severe weather conditions.

This newsletter is sponsored by:

Hank & Cathy Harman in loving memory of their son Shawn M. Hatfield who died on December 5th

George & Sharon Orff in loving memory of their niece Rachael Renee Chan who was born on December 28th

Gary & Linda Ramey in loving memory of their daughter Kiley Ramey who died on November 24th



Gene & Sandy Reams in loving memory of their son Adam J. Reams who was born on November 24th

Joe & Ann Steinbock in loving memory of their son Jeff Steinbock who was born on December 13th

Chuck & Ginny Trygg in loving memory of their daughter Denise McAlexander who died on December 31st

David & Laura Wiebler in loving memory of their son Eric Edward Gordon Wiebler who was born on November 11th

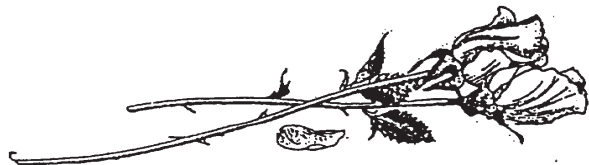
The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents. The purposes are to promote and aid parents in the positive resolution of the grief experience following the death of a child of any age, from any cause; and to foster the physical and emotional health of all bereaved parents, grandparents and surviving siblings.

Copyright ©2014 The Compassionate Friends
All rights reserved

Mark Your Calendars!

***December Memorial Candle Lighting
Monday, December 15, 2014 ~ 7:00 p.m.
at Most Pure Heart of Mary Church
Takes the place of our regular
December Support Group Meeting.***

***Remember to bring a framed photograph of your loved one
HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE !!***



We Need Not Walk Alone

From the Chapter Coordinator

Dear Compassionate Friends Family,

Local Topeka TCF Chapter contact info:
Phone - 785-272-4895; Email - chanx2@cox.net

Our TCF Chapter's 21st Annual Memorial Picnic and Dove Release held September 27th at Lake Shawnee was a wonderful event with about 60 members and their families attending. I would like to thank all those who helped with the organizing, setting up, and cleaning up for this event. We were able to share special fellowship time together, remember our beloved children, grandchildren and siblings, and enjoy sampling everyone's favorite potluck food items.

Our next memorial event will be our **December Memorial Candle Lighting** which will be held on Monday, December 15, 2014 in the Formation Room at Most Pure Heart of Mary Church. **Please note that this is a date change** from our usual fourth Monday meeting time due to holiday scheduling at the church. This event also **takes the place of our regular December support group meeting**. The event will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. and will include special music, poetry readings and the candle lighting. You are reminded to bring a framed photo (no larger than 8 x 10 inch) to place on the memory tables. The Chapter will provide votive candles for you to light and place by your loved one's photo. If you do not have a photo available, please feel free to bring a small item representative of your special person. The program and candle lighting will be followed by a social time with refreshments and you are encouraged to bring your child's favorite holiday treat to share with the group.

We are currently working on plans for our Annual Walk to Remember which will be held in April. Please watch for further information on date and time in upcoming newsletters and on the Topeka TCF Chapter website at www.tcftopeka.org

We are pleased to welcome three new members to our Chapter Steering Committee: Nason's mom Dee Hobelman; and Aurora's parents Chris and Trista Philippi. Other members of the Steering Committee include: Brittany's parents Damon and Collene Tucker; Claire's mom Debra Fisher; Jessica's mom Jennifer Meyer; Jerry's parents Duane and Mary Eberhardt; and Rachael's parents Susan and Gary Chan. We always welcome input from members on the Chapter and encourage you to consider volunteering some of your time to help with the varied aspects of managing the Topeka TCF Chapter.

Finally, please mark your calendars for the 38th TCF National Conference that will be held in Dallas, TX July 10-12, 2015. This may be the closest national conference to us in some time so you should really consider making plans to attend. It is within driving distance and by carpooling and possibly sharing hotel accommodations, it can be more affordable. The theme for the 2015 conference is "Hope Shines Bright Deep in the Heart".

In Love They Are Remembered. In Memory They Live.
Until next time, be patient and let the healing happen

THANK YOU !

~Susan Chan, Coordinator

The Topeka TCF Chapter wishes to extend its sincere thanks and appreciation to Glenda Seene and Chapter member Debi Harvey for organizing the Quarter Mania FUNdraiser on October 18th. Our TCF Chapter made nearly \$600 from the event as well as an opportunity to make more people aware of TCF and its mission. The donated income will pay for the printing of one issue of this newsletter as well as the postage costs to mail it. We would also like to thank all those Chapter members who provided goodies for our bake sale and helped with the event and clean-up: Damon & Collene Tucker, Chris & Trista Philippi, Dee Hobelman, Becky Bodeman, Duane & Mary Eberhardt, Susan and Gary Chan, and Debra Fisher. Thanks also to the Fairlawn Church of the Nazarene for allowing us to use their facility for the event. We would also like to thank the following vendors who supported us at the Quarter Mania:

Jessica Stanley - 31 Bags ~ Tammy Call - Close to my Heart ~ Amy Wiggs - Jamberry Nails ~ Christine Riffel - Just Jewelry ~ Rhonda Beets - Kitcheneez ~ Kathy Dahm - Longaberger ~ Ronni Sales - Pampered Chef ~ Glenda Senne - PartyLite ~ Kasey Wurtz - Premier Jewelry ~ Kelli Shaw - Scentsy ~ Michelle Gee - See Me Save ~ Jackie Diediker - Stampin Up ~ Kelsi Berg - Tastefully Simple ~ Bonnie Prescott - Tupperware ~ Charity Deleay - Wantz ~ Lois Shuck - Watkins ~ Kristy Mattison - Nerium ~ DeAnna Reeves - AVON ~ Megan Russell - Pink Zebra ~ Kelly Legleiter - Mary Kay ~ Ronni Church - Younique

Upcoming Events/Dates to Remember

December 14, 2014 - Compassionate Friends World Wide Candle Lighting - at 7 p.m. in every time zone. Remembrance Book available to sign that night online at www.compassionatefriends.org

December 15, 2014 - Topeka Chapter Memorial Candle Lighting in the Formation Room at Most Pure Heart of Mary Church. Please note date change from regular meeting time due to Christmas holiday schedule. This event takes the place of our regular support group meeting in December.

July 10-12, 2015 - 38th National Compassionate Friends Conference in Dallas, TX. See more information at www.compassionatefriends.org

Love Gifts

**Your Love Gifts Help Spread
the Message of Hope & Healing ~ Won't You Help Today?**

What is a Love Gift? A Love Gift is a gift of money (or books, etc.) to The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in memory of a child, grandchild or sibling who has died, but it may be from individuals who wish to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanks that their children are alive, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help. The Compassionate Friends charges *no individual dues* or fees and depends on such Love Gifts to meet the Chapter's expenses, including the printing and mailing of this newsletter. When you make a donation, make sure to check to see if your employer may have a "matching gifts" program as this could double the amount of your donation. If you are not sure whether your company has such a program, check with your Personnel Department. This month we thank:

♥ *Mike and Ginny Becerra in loving memory of their daughter Lori Ann Becerra who was born on December 15th*

Thank you for your gifts which enable us to print this newsletter and reach out to newly bereaved families. Donations are our only source of income and are **tax deductible**. If you would like to sponsor a newsletter, the cost is \$30.00. If we have more than one sponsor, we recognize all of them. If you wish to send a Love Gift, any amount is appreciated. It is whatever you feel you can give. Donations of books that you have found helpful to the Topeka Chapter Library are also greatly appreciated, and it is a nice way to remember your child or other loved one. If you would like to send a Love Gift or a Newsletter Sponsorship, you may do so by sending it to: The Compassionate Friends, c/o Susan Chan, 3448 SW Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. For Newsletter Sponsorships, please indicate which issue you wish to sponsor (Jan/Feb, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, or November/December). Makes checks payable to "TCF".

DO YOU NEED TO TALK? LOVING LISTENERS AVAILABLE

Yvonne Albright - Sudden Infant Death
Leader, Infant Loss Group (785) 246-3298

Carol Cummings - Heart Surgery
Former Coordinator (785) 272-2155

Donna Martin - Accident
Former Coordinator (785) 286-0538

BeBe Bahr - Bicycle/Car Accident
Advisory Board (785) 234-2897

Tom and Carolyn Voth - Cancer
Former Coordinator (785) 235-5406

Susan Chan - Motorcycle Accident
Current Coordinator (785) 272-4895

Leslie Johnson-Wingert - auto accident
and SIDS (785) 840-0512

Debi Harvey - Drug Overdose
(785) 806-2836



Submit a Memory Page

Remember your child, grandchild or sibling in a special way by submitting a Memory Page to be published in the Topeka Chapter Newsletter. You may include a photo, drawing, a poem, letter to your child, etc - just about anything you would like to put on it in memory of your child. You do not have to put the page together - I can help you with this from the materials you select to use. Memory Page submissions should be sent to: Susan Chan, 3448 S.W. Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. Photos will be returned, but DO NOT send a photo of which you only have one copy. No charge for page.

TCF National Office email:
nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

Compassionate Friends web address:
www.compassionatefriends.org

Topeka TCF Chapter NEW web address:
www.tcftopeka.org

Kansas Regional Coordinator:
Tom & Carol Weatherd - (785) 283-4704

Our Thanks to:

Midland Care Connection for giving us a mailbox and Most Pure Heart of Mary Church for allowing us to meet at their facility.

TCF Mission Statement: When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

And We Remember.....

Because of the potential for the hurtful crime of identity theft, TCF Chapter Newsletters will now only publish the date of a child's birth or death without listing the year of each event. This is a directive from the National TCF Office to protect all TCF members.

Christine Marie Allen, daughter of Mark and Pamela Reser, born on January 29th; died on December 27th

Scott Michael Allen, son of Cleo and Dee Allen, born on January 25th

Daniel Gerado Anguiano, son of Luis and Candace Anguiano, born on December 8th

Sherri Axline, daughter of Roy and Donna Axline, died on January 13th



Jeff Balch, son of Dan and Pam Balch, who was born on December 27th

Debbie Ballard, daughter of Bonnie Ott, born on January 17th

Lori Ann Becerra, daughter of Mike and Ginny Becerra, born on December 15th and died on December 15th

Shawn L. Bergstron, son-in-law of Randal and Linda Bollinger, born on November 22nd

Bradford Lee Bettcher, Jr., son of Amy Heslet and Brad Bettcher, stillborn on January 28th

Michael Bidinger, son of June Bidinger, born on January 4th

Jacob "Jake" Binfield, son of Jenny Binfield, brother of Sarah, who died on January 27th

Holly Shalleen Bindley-Nott, daughter of Deana Bindley, born on December 25th and died of December 14th

Antwon L. Blanks, son of Robert E. Blanks, born on December 7th

Devin Burkhardt, son of Deb Ballard, born on January 17th

Seth Austin Carney, son of Clay and Michelle Carney, born on January 29th

Rachael Reneé Chan, daughter of Gary and Susan Chan, born on December 28th

Willy Cheung, foreign exchange student and "son" of Mike and Karen Esslinger while he lived in the U.S., died on January 27th

Kaden Lawrence Clark, son of Kevin and Laura Clark, died on January 30th

Misty Dawn Cloud, daughter of Robin Proudfoot, born on December 8th

April Dawn Cobos, daughter of Patrick and Linda Cobos, died on December 24th

Frederick C. Coe, III, son of Esther Coe, born on December 31st

Taylor Joseph Cooper, son of Nancy Cooper and brother of Morgan Cooper, born on December 19th

Justin Corbet, son of Ken and Bev Corbet, born on December 5th

Steven Allen Corbett, son of Emery and Judy Corbett, born on January 8th



Gary E. Corley, son of William E. and Ida C. Corley, died on January 19th

Elaine Mae Curtis, daughter of Gary and Elizabeth Curtis, who was born on January 14th



Leslie Lynn Davidson, daughter of Dave and Gerry Davidson, born on December 12th

"Junior" Dickinson, son of Curtis and Debbi Dickinson, stillborn on December 24th

Angel Winter Dawn Dickinson, daughter of Curtis and Debbi Dickinson, stillborn on December 25th

Rick Douglas, son of Morris and Neva Douglas, born on December 29th

Michael Ent, son of Cheryl Ent, born on January 16th

Gregory Ralph Eilert, son of Marge Eilert, born on January 26th

Barry Eaton Epoch, son of Nancy S. Epoch, died on December 31st

Ariel Esslinger, daughter of Mike and Karen Esslinger, died on January 26th

Shawna Brook Esslinger, daughter of Ariel Esslinger and granddaughter of Mike and Karen Esslinger, born and died on January 26th

Claire Elise Fisher, daughter of Debra Fisher, died on January 2nd

Jeff Fitzgibbons, son of Bill and Jean Fitzgibbons, born on January 27th

Ryan Flanagan, son of Dennis Flanagan, who died on December 3rd

Wyatt T Frost, son of Thomas and Sara (Chris) Frost and brother of Lori A. Stauffer, died on January 8th

Theodore W. Fuller, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Fuller, died on December 9th

John Michael Garcia, son of Rufino and Dolores Garcia, born on December 14th

Garen Lee Gideon, son of Shawn and Renee Gideon, died on November 25th



Spenser Thomas Good, son of Margaret Kramar, born on January 30th

Cambrynn Christine Greenfield, daughter of Kevin and Amy Greenfield, born on January 27th

Krystopher Allen Michael Griffeth, son of Christina W. Fairhurst, died on January 2nd

Roger Jon Hackler, son of the late Ronald Hackler and Freda Hackler Rickson, died on December 15th

Laurie Lynn Hanvy-Newport, daughter of Doyle E. and Jo A. Hanvy, born on December 15th

John Carl Harrington, son of Mary Harrington, born on December 15th

Seth Harris, son of Brian Harris; brother of Bridget and Kandace Harris, who was born on December 15th

Nathan Harvey, son of Mark and Debi Harvey; brother of Rachel, Amanda and Caleb Harvey; grandson of Vevala Tibbs, born on December 9th

And We Remember.... *(Cont'd)*

Brad Harwell, son of James and Mary Harwell, died on January 31st

Shawn Michael Hatfield, son of Hank and Cathy Harman, born on January 11th; died on December 5th

Erwin and Gary Hayes, sons of Ed and Judy Hayes, died on January 29th



August James (Gus) Hildebrand, son of Jim and Callie Hildebrand, born on January 31st

Sabrina Hinson, daughter of Mack Hinson, born on December 23rd and died on December 24th

Korrynn Marie Hoffman, daughter of Matthew and Katie Hoffman, born on December 11th; died on December 13th

Jeffrey Hoium, son of Mel and Helen Hoium, born on December 25th

Cheryl Kay Hoppes, daughter of Jim and Twila Taylor, died on January 16th

Michael Hudson, son of Bruce and Teri Clark-Hudson, stillborn on January 30th

Bryan Ray Huffman, son of John and Janet Huffman, died on December 24th

Barbara A. Hunninghake, daughter of Raymond (deceased) and Rosann R. Hunninghake, born on January 15th

Dennis Earl Hunt, grandson of Velma Ogle Smidt, died on January 18th

Dennis Hunt, son of Welbert and Janice Hunt, died on January 18th

Steve Isley, son of Webb and Jeanette Isley, born on January 4th

Colby Jackson, son of Frances and August Jackson III, who died on December 15th

Ethan, Ashton and Jackson Jackson, children of Amy Jackson, died on January 12th

Jayamalrah Jackson, son of Ternanglia Jackson, died on December 7th

Kelly Dale Jennings, son of Rosemary Jennings, died on December 16th



Buzz Johnson, son of Harold and Penny TenEyck, died on January 24th

Madeline Ruth Jones, sister of Sara Hobbs, born on December 29th

Scott Daniel Jordan, son of Terry and Julie Jordan, born on December 21st

Robert "Skip" Justice, son of Leslie Justice and the late Sarah Justice, born on January 12th; died on January 24th

Dustin Wade Kasson, son of Stephen and JoEllen Kasson, died on January 6th

Daniel Craig Katsbulas, son of Gus and Amelia Katsbulas, died on December 20th

Tyler Austin Kirk, son of Kim L. Kirk, died on January 30th

Paula Ann Dreiling Lucas, daughter of Daniel and Betty Dreiling, born on January 27th

Kirk William Manwaring, son of Kimberly Manwaring, died on January 9th

Denise McAlexander, daughter of Chuck and Ginny Trygg, died on December 31st

Justin John Mercado, son of Vicki Mercado, born January 19th

Justin Miller, son of Jessica Whitehead, died on December 7th

Kristin Dee Morford, daughter of Bill and Nancy Morford, born on December 19th

David D. Morris, son of Merwin (Bud) and Velma C. Morris, born on December 18th

Howard Ray Moses, son of Howard J.C. and Lorna A. Moses, born on December 6th

Patrick Murphy, son of Allen and Madeline Tollefson, born on January 18th

Ethan Neu, son of Billy Neu, died on January 20th



Eric Alan Palmberg, son of Jim and Doris Palmberg, died on January 1st

Greg Lee Paulson, son-in-law of Frank and Brenda Bissey and brother-in-law of Brad Bissey, born on January 24th

Krystil M. Pearson, daughter of Patti Pearson Cox, born on December 24th

Erik Dean Pilcher, son of Mitchell Dean Pilcher and grandson of Marilyn J. Pilcher, born on December 31st

Jamie Barks Pursley, daughter of Dave and Kathy Barks, born on December 11th

Sara J. Pusker, daughter of Susan Pusker, born on December 14th

Bryan Ralston, son of Winona Ralston, born on December 19th

David Rasmussen, son of Naomi Hartner, born on January 25th; died on January 1st

Michael Lee Reser, son of Donald L. and Mary L. Reser, born on December 3rd

Carol Haas Rumsey, daughter of George and Melba Haas, born on December 31st; died on January 17th

Kathryn (Katie) Rush, daughter of Thomas and Barbara Rush, died on January 24th

Jamie Lynn Russell, daughter of John and Elaine Chandler, born on January 7th; died on December 29th

Ali Saiedipour, son of Janis Humbert, died on December 5th

Adam Sands, son of Steve and Claudette Sands, who died on December 20th

Molly Annette Sapata, daughter of Joseph and Thelma Sapata; granddaughter of Jerry and Karen Boldra, died on December 28th

Scott Allan Seidel, son of Stan and Pat Seidel, died on January 18th

Evan Michael Schuetz, son of Tom and Debbie Schuetz, born on January 23rd

Gregg W. Scott, son of Garry and Jo Scott, died on December 8th

And We Remember..... (Cont'd)

Anita Sheffel, daughter of Irving and Beth Sheffel,
died on December 29th

Darren Shiflett, son of Nyla Suffron, died on January 22nd

Kacie Rae Skidmore, daughter of Alan and Laura Skidmore,
born on December 16th

Chase Spencer, granddaughter of Loren and Beth Mitchell,
who was born on December 23rd

Patrick Sprowl, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sprowl,
died on December 10th



Holly LuAnn Stack, daughter of Donald and Evelyn Monroe,
died on December 9th

Ryan Paul Stack, grandson of Donald and Evelyn Monroe,
died on December 9th

Sara Nicole Stack, granddaughter of Donald and Evelyn Monroe,
died on December 9th

Nicholas Regis Stallbaumer, son of Terry and Norma
Stallbaumer, born on January 15th

Melody Starkey, daughter of Judith Starkey, died on December 10th

Brady Stauffer, son of Curt and Cheryl Satuffer, born on January 5th

Jeffery Alan Steinbock, son of Joe and Anne Steinbock,
born on December 13th

Keith Strathman, son of Don and Julie Strathman, brother of
Becky Strathman, died on January 8th

Neil Bradley Stroh, son of Ronald R. and Kay L Norris;
brother of Kristy D. Stroh, born on January 14th

Sydney Diane Tate, daughter of Jeff and Misty Tate,
died on December 28th

Lindsay Marie Taylor, niece of Gregg and Theresa Watkins,
died on January 15th

Christine René Thuro, daughter of Dwight and Nancy Thuro,
born on December 26th

Brandon Toler, son of Marty Tyson, who died on January 18th

Michelle Traxler, daughter of John and Dianne Traxler,
died on December 11th

Lynda E. Turner, sister of Woody Turner, died on December 31st

Zachary Typer, son of Mike & Jennifer Typer; brother of Gillian,
born on January 4th

Mary Jane Varner, daughter of Will and Kay Hasty,
died on January 3rd



Cody Vines, son of Rebecca Percival and Brad Vines,
who was born on December 2nd

Greer Elizabeth Volkmer, daughter of James and Raina Volkmer,
born on January 21st

Carley Jo Walker, daughter of Heidi Needels, born on January 24th

Nacole Brook Winter, son of Ronnie and Vickie Winter, died on
December 14th

(Use the form below to submit your listing if you have not already done so.
Once you have submitted your listing you **do not** have to do so every year.
Your child's name and dates will remain on the We Remember database
unless you request their removal. This month's listing includes birth and
death anniversary dates for December and January)

.....

And We Remember - If you wish your child, grandchild or sibling included in the We Remember section of this newsletter, please fill out the form below and return to: Susan Chan, 3448 S.W. Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. You may also email the information to chanx2@cox.net. We do not automatically list your information just because you are receiving this newsletter. We only list information for those parents requesting it. If you have previously submitted your child's information and it has appeared in the newsletter during the past year, you **do not** need to resubmit it. If you have just begun receiving this newsletter, or have never submitted this information, you will need to do so in order for it to be included. **Please type or print clearly.**

Child's Name _____ Son__ Daughter__ Grandchild__ Brother__ Sister__

Date of Birth _____ Date of Death _____

Father _____ Mother _____

Note: Please list your address and phone number. You will only be contacted if there is a question about your listing.

Is this a change of address for you? (please circle) YES NO

THE CRUELEST SEASON



I'm surrounded with the signs of fall, my favorite season. With school openings, colorful leaves, the brisk pace of Redskin games, and cooler evenings, I'm reminded of the fall seven years ago following the death of our 19-year-old son, Eric, the June before.

That fall was a very different season, indeed. I didn't understand why I was enveloped in such monumental sadness or why that special time of year evoked such longing, dreariness, and tearful lethargy. Actually, it was the cruelest of seasons, and I finally realized that this was the first seasonal change since Eric's death in the summer.

This was the first time a season had dared to approach without his presence in our lives. Surely, he would be here to register for sophomore engineering classes at Maryland, to start volleyball practices, to cheer the Redskins, and to propose the inevitable outlandish projects teenagers find at the start of a new school year.

But he wasn't here for all those harbingers of fall-signs that were a part of our family life as well as his own activities. I remember when I listened to the first Redskins game without him. I was so overcome with grief and anger that I never even heard the score. I was outraged that they dared to continue the season without his cheering. Registration at Maryland went on without the attendance of their most promising and energetic student. His friends even managed to organize the weekend volleyball tournaments without his leadership.

Weeks went on. Leaves still dared to change color and demand our attention, and I returned to my teaching. All signs reminded me that the hot, humid haze of the summer of this death was gone. But fall had renewed my grief, this cruel season that pronounced earth's movement and proclaimed its own due. It was a testimony to the reality of his death and to the necessity of moving on, despite the grief that still burned within like the hottest of summer suns.

Newly bereaved people are very vulnerable to seasonal change, I think. We miss the presence of our loved ones and their participation with us in the new season's activities. Whether it is the briskness of autumn, the holiday preparations that go with wintertime, or the renewal brought by spring, a part of us angrily resents the change. We resist the obvious insistence that we, too, must move on ... alone!

And yet, kindly and gently, the same seasons also herald hope that there is order and stability in the chaos of our despair.

We are not forever stuck in our earliest season of the despair we felt when our loved ones died. Gently, the changing days and the demands of each seasonal activity nudge us on, reminding us that there is still a place for us, that the earth's rotation is for growth, too.

Gradually, as we turn to new seasons of healing and hope, we can begin to trust the next season of change to make us stronger and wiser. Maybe then it will not stir so much of our pain.

We've been given strength for this task of moving on, and our strength will be renewed. When the sadness returns and tears testify to remembered sorrow, we will be more seasoned in our grief.

~Joan Liljedahl, Silver Springs, MD

The Wounded Heart

Children have preceded their parents in death for eons of time. We are not the first, nor will we be the last to enter the realm of "Bereaved Parents". But for now--right now--it is OUR HEARTS that are freshly wounded and OUR HEARTS in need of mending.

Wounded hearts must be allowed to mourn and lament their loss, to pour out their pain, agony, sadness, hurt and anger, and to release their well of tears.

Wounded hearts need to be wrapped in quietness, gentleness and compassion, away from the turmoil of daily life. A wounded heart not allowed to mend from the depth of its agony, will be an abscess--to swell and undermine--erupting at a distant time. Or, suppressed, it will slowly choke the spirit of its host.



Only the bearer will know when his heart has healed. The wounded heart, encouraged and given time and freedom to mend, will carry in its chambers the memory and shared love of a precious child.

~Nancy G. ~ TCF, Livonia, MI

A NEW THANKSGIVING

On Thanksgiving morning 1991, I was standing at the sink, peeling potatoes. The turkey was in the oven, the pies were cooling on the sideboard. Just another normal holiday morning. At 10:30 the phone rang. I was closest, so I answered it.

That call from the San Diego medical examiner changed my life forever.

Within seconds our whole household was in chaos and shock our beautiful daughter Nancy had been killed in a car accident earlier that morning.

How could this be? I had just talked with her less than 24 hours before. She had wished us a "Happy Turkey Day" and closed her call with "I love you, Mom." That was to be the last time I would hear her voice.

How did I get from that day of wrenching pain to this day nine years later? The simple answer is: a minute, an hour, a day at a time....putting one foot in front of the other, reaching out for people who had been where I was.



The first Thanksgiving after Nancy's death was the most difficult. I couldn't bring myself to cook or even look at a turkey. The decorated paper plates and napkins in the store were sickening to me. My solution to the turkey was to serve prime rib instead. That strategy got me through the next two Thanksgivings.

One of my watershed moments came on the fourth Thanksgiving after Nancy's accident. My surviving children wanted the traditional turkey-and-trimmings dinner. They missed the old ways. The truth is, they had moved forward and they wanted me to take that step also.

Reluctantly, I obliged, but with a heavy heart. With red roses nearby and her candle lit, we gathered together and counted our blessings.

Today with love and support of family and friends, I will once again prepare the Thanksgiving dinner. It will always be "different." I can't change what was. I can, however, choose to embrace the life I have now. There is so much more to be grateful for. Not a day goes by that I don't count my blessings. Among the greatest of these is the love of family and friends, and peace in my heart.

I truly believe that those blessings can be yours, too. Time, tears, love of family, good friends, and reinvestment can lead you there.

*~ Mary Conway
TCF, Nashville, TN
In Memory of my daughter, Nancy*

AS THE HOLIDAYS APPROACH

When the holidays are fast approaching, we who are bereaved always have mixed emotions about having a nice holiday when our child or loved one is no longer with us. We wonder if we will ever be as happy and if we can ever again celebrate the holidays or any meaningful family occasion, especially the first birthday, first thanksgiving, or first Christmas since our loss. We try to look ahead to how we are going to feel when the time arrives, but it is usually not as hard as we had anticipated. Still, the occasion may not be as enjoyable as we'd like it to be or as we remember it from the past.

I would like to offer a few ideas for what we can do to make our holidays a little better. Consider buying gifts for less fortunate children, adopting a child/family at Christmas time, or inviting a lonely person to share your holiday meal. Make your child's favorite foods and discuss your loved one as you share the meal. Some people like to volunteer to serve holiday dinners for the homeless. Some bereaved parents want to visit familiar places their child loved to go, while others want to travel where their child had never been.

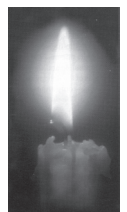
Several of our Compassionate Friends members put a small Christmas tree at the cemetery and decorate the graves with Christmas flowers and/or a grave blanket. Making a grave blanket is very fulfilling; we did that for 10 years after our daughter Teresa died. Attending a candle light program is a wonderful way to honor your child or loved one.

These suggestions are things we feel we can still do for our child, but they are not reserved for bereaved parents only. All of them can be done for any member of a family or a friend who has died. After someone dies we must keep going and doing things that lift us up. We can't always try to please any people who feel we should act in a certain manner.

*~ Jackie Wesley
TCF, East Central Indiana and
Miami-Whitewater Chapters*

Chanukah

At this season of life, we remember
the light you brought into our lives:



The light of your laughter
The light of your wit and intelligence
The light of your love

May the time not be distant when the memory of these
lights will illumine our hearts and minds and eradicate
the darkness therein.

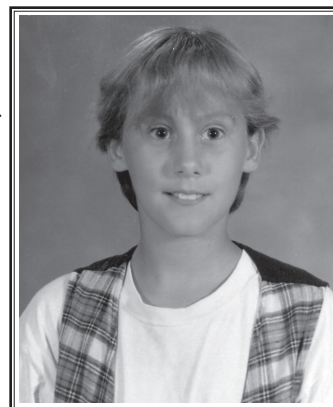
*~ Stephanie Hesse
TCF Rockland County, NY
TCF North Palm Beach County, FL*

In Loving Memory
Lori Ann Becerra
December 15, 1983 ~ December 15, 2006

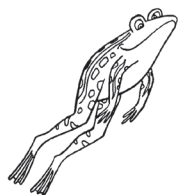


Lori, it's been 8 years since God called you home and gave you wings. There isn't a day goes by without thinking of you. You are always on our minds and in our hearts and prayers. You are missed and loved always. Someday we will all be together again.

Love,
Dad, Momma Ginny, Kelly & Dustin



Lori and Adrian at 3 months



Lori and Adrian at 9 months



Christmas Past, Christmas Present

As the holidays approach, most bereaved parents feel anxiety, apprehension and some little bit of fear. The past is gone along with our beautiful children. We live in the now, the new reality, of holidays without our children.

This will be my fifth Christmas without my son, Todd. It will be my fourth Christmas without his children. And yet, I find that on some small level, I am looking forward to the holiday. I imagine the Christmases of the past when Todd was growing up and after he started his family. I also imagine Christmases of the future where Todd's children share in the traditions that their Dad so dearly loved. But that won't happen. I have come to accept that wives and children go on with their lives. I have come to accept that my son's children will not be a part of their father's family, his heritage or his legacy. That is the reality.

But I have also found that wonderful people can help make the holiday special. I do very little at Christmas. Some shopping....most of it on the Internet, a little in local stores. I send cash to my son's children. I don't know who or what they are these days, but cash is far better than something that has no significance to them. I do get pleasure in few things. I buy small toiletries for nursing home residents. I buy a gift for my dad's sister who is now 88. I buy for my mom's sister, my cousin, her husband and her daughter. I buy for my best friend. That's enough buying. My husband and I decide whether we want something special for the two of us and, if so, we buy it. Otherwise, we skip the gift giving. We won't be decorating this year, but we haven't decorated for five years.

We have changed our traditions....traditions that Todd loved so much. It is simply too painful to do this alone. We spend time with my family and a few friends. We marvel at the wonder that is Christmas for children. John and my aunt cook and my cousin, her daughter and I clean up in the big country kitchen of my cousin's home. Gifts are exchanged. There is no Christmas tree, but the three acres in front of the house are decorated with all kinds of lights and lighted figures. Santa and his reindeer are in the front garden, close to the road. Angels, reindeer and more gather in the west pasture and front yard. The house is framed in lights. It's quite lovely. For me that is enough.

Christmas will never be what it once was, but I no longer dread the holidays as I once did. Some of my Compassionate Friends have returned to old traditions with their surviving children and maybe even with grandchildren. Each of us learns to deal with Christmas in our own way. Each year I am a different person with a new perspective on the holidays. Next year I may decide to skip it all or immerse myself in the season. My truth is ever changing.



Find what is right for you. Pressures from others mean nothing. You choose whether a celebration is in order. You choose how to celebrate. You choose the old traditions or you choose some new ones.....maybe you choose nothing and decide to go with the flow of the moment. As bereaved parents, you will always remember your child at Christmas, but as the years add up and grief starts to release its grip on your soul, you may find that you can keep your child in your heart and have room for the spirit of Christmas as well.

The holidays do get better. Life does get better. The days will gradually become softer and sweeter. The nights will ease into gentleness. Friendships will again have luster, and relationships will become deeper and more meaningful. That is the future for each of us. The present is driven by where we are in our grief. So for this and every Christmas Holiday season, be who you are and mark the day as you choose.

May we all have serenity throughout the Holiday season and in the years ahead.

*~ Annette Mennen Baldwin, in memory of my son, Todd Mennen
The Compassionate Friends, Katy, TX*

Just Flow With The Season & Take Care Of Yourself

We're well into November and it's almost time to take the "January pill". After Tricia died I decided I'd invent a pill you could take the week before Thanksgiving and when you came to, it would be January! I'm still working on the invention. In the meantime, I know many of you are already dreading the approaching holidays.

The true spirit and meaning of Thanksgiving and Christmas are not necessarily exemplified by some of our "traditions". You are re-evaluating many aspects of your life so let this also apply to the coming holidays. You will not always feel as you do now. You will find joy in holiday activities, but maybe not in all the things you once thought so very important.

Flow with the season and with your sadness, knowing strength will come as you work with what you can do without overtaxing yourself. Resolve to be as generous with your energy as you can and as selfish as you have to be to protect the emerging person you will become as a result of your loss. This person can be truly beautiful and loving because of what you have learned through grief.

You will miss your child; no magic potion can wipe the pain away. Enjoy what you can—you deserve some pleasure. And may some measure of peace overtake you before this year ends.

*~ Elizabeth B. Estes
TCF Augusta, GA
In Memory of Tricia*



TEN HARD TRUTHS ABOUT GRIEF

By Thom Dennis, Bereavement Coordinator, NorthShore Hospice, Skokie, IL

At first glance, this list of ten hard truths of grief won't offer much comfort. It might even feel like pouring salt into an open wound. You may be wondering, "What's the value in reminding me that grief is hard? That point has already been made abundantly clear". At the risk of re-stating the obvious, I suggest that giving voice to the groaning of the heart can promote healing. You've heard the saying, "The truth hurts." No doubt you've also heard, "The truth can set you free." By naming these truths, you have got the first tool to start dealing with your heartaches creatively. By naming them, you can also enter into a dialogue with others and learn some new strategies to cope.

1. Some things are beyond our control. We would all prefer to live with the illusion that we are in control of our own lives, but a sudden change in the weather, an unwelcome diagnosis, or a random act of violence reminds us that no one is the master of their fate. The truth is: In this life there is very little of real consequence that we can control. The challenge is to accept this reality and refocus attention on what is within our power to change. We can acknowledge our feeling and choose how we will respond to whatever life has thrown in our direction.

2. There are consequences to being mortal. In our office there is a beautifully illustrated book called, *Lifetimes*, by Brian Mellonie and Robert Ingpen. We use it to explain death to children. When it comes to grief, we are all little children needing comfort, reassurance, and gentle age-appropriate explanations. The sad truth is that people die. In fact, everything dies. Death is a natural part of life. As much as we would like to believe our parent, spouse, sibling, child, friend or loved one will live forever, they will eventually die. In the end, even you and I will die. It's not fair, but it's part of being mortal.

3. It's supposed to hurt. Leo Buscaglia, the "Love Doctor", once said, "the opposite of love is apathy." To say it another way, apathy means, "I don't care." The reason grief hurts so much is because we care deeply for the person who died. If we didn't care, it wouldn't hurt so much. The more we love, the more it will hurt. The two seem to be unalterably linked. To look at it in a slightly different way, the pain we feel is love's testament to the bond we shared. Should we guard our hearts against the depths of loss, we would never have the opportunity to experience the lofty heights of love.

4. Life will never be the same. The death of a loved one not only leaves a hole in our hearts that can't be filled, it also impacts practically every other aspect of our lives. Widows and widowers report changes in their social relationships. Adults whose parents have died say they also lost their best friend or most trusted advisor. Family dynamics invariably shift when one person in the equation is taken away. The economic impact of a death can also have lasting effects. Even when we feel like we've adjusted to an environment without the deceased and life has returned to some degree of "normal," life will never be the same again. Living always requires adapting to some sort of change, so finding a reason to embrace life after the death of a loved one may be challenging. Acknowledging that life will never be the same doesn't mean that the future will all be bad.

5. The rest of the world doesn't share our grief. Beyond the circle of our acquaintances, the rest of the world won't know our loved one has died. The people we encounter on a daily basis will be focused on their own wants, oblivious to our needs and concerns. Our creditors will still require us to meet our financial obligations. Our bosses and customers will still require a certain level of performance. Our neighbors will still be annoying. Our children will still need every ounce of what remains of our patience and praise. On the flip side, it's a good thing that the stock market, oil prices, and the weather do not depend on the rise and fall of our moods. Even though we are grieving, it's good news that babies are being born and the sun will rise tomorrow morning.

6. People will say dumb things. My list of the top ten most shocking and outrageous things people say to the newly bereaved is worthy of the David Letterman Show. Except in this case the response would be gasps, not laughs. From coworkers suggesting that "things could be worse" to neighbors wondering if you plan to sell your house, I've come to the conclusion that most people simply don't think before they open their mouths. People just don't know what to say, so they try to "wing it." Either they say something inappropriate or they err on the side of not saying anything at all (I'm not sure which is worse). We have the right to educate them about the comment they make, but if we can see these blunders as fumbled attempts to offer comfort, then it is easier to experience the sympathy that underlies their misspoken comments.

7. Friends and family disappoint us. If you have friends and family who love and support you, consider yourself blessed. There are folks who don't have a builtin support network and when their loved one dies, they have to start from scratch. One of the most common laments I hear in support groups is the failure of family and friends to offer the kind of support that we need. I encourage people to consider the temperament of each of the people in their circle of support. Are they generally a good listener? If not, is it fair to expect them to change now? Remember that each family member had a different relationship with the deceased. Consequently, their grief will look different than yours. If your spouse hasn't lost a parent, they may not "get it" when your parent dies. Best friends may not know how to react, so they might pull away. You may feel like a third wheel at social gatherings. You may need to be more direct when it comes to expressing your needs. It may also take some time, but you will gravitate toward people who have experienced a similar type of loss. You will find additional sources of support. You will hear from old friends, or an acquaintance may step forward to fill the void.

8. We have to be assertive. It's not easy to ask for help, but that is exactly what we have to do if we want our needs to be met. Whether it's legal, financial, or cooking, we have to ask for advice. Whether it's respect, intimacy needs or driving directions, we have to be more assertive. What is the alternative? Also, we will have to mention our loved one's name at the family or holiday gathering, because most people will be afraid to say it out of fear that it might upset us. Little do they know that our departed loved one's name is sweeter to us than our own.

9. Decisions still have to be made. Immediately following a death in the family, certain decisions have to be made. Hopefully, there are people around to share the burden, but more often than not, the sole responsibility falls on our shoulders. As time passes, the business of life requires that other decisions be made. Our loved one may have been our trusted advisor or decision-making partner; and yet we still have to make important decisions. We will make some mistakes, be we will learn from them. If we choose to accept the challenge, we will grow from this experience and become stronger and wiser.

10. There is no time frame and no road map for grief. If grief were on a time clock, we could punch in and punch out at our own convenience. That way we could schedule our tears to fit neatly into daily life. If someone offered a road map for grief, we could take a shortcut or bypass the tricky spots. Everyone grieves in their own way at their own pace, so don't let other people project their discomfort with grief onto you. Stop and take a break when you need it. This is not a race. Linger along the back roads of memory; it is there that treasures will be found.

Your personal hard truths: This list of ten hard truths of grief is certainly not exhaustive. There must be other truths that you have learned on your own grief journey. I invite you to add to this list or create your own list of hard truths. What are the truths that have helped you cope with your loss, make decisions and enter this new phase of your life?

Reprinted from *Grief Digest*, Centering Corporation, Omaha NE, www.centering.org

A Special and Important Message to Our New Compassionate Friends

If you are newly bereaved and have recently attended your first Compassionate Friends meeting, you may have left the meeting feeling overwhelmed and emotionally drained. With the heavy load of grief you are carrying, you cannot bear to hear about all the pain shared at meetings. Consequently, you may have decided not to return. We would like to let you know that these feelings are common to all our members, many of whom resolved not to expose themselves to such anguish again, but were drawn back by the knowledge that they were among those who "know how you feel".

Please give us at least **three** tries before you decide whether or not the meetings are for you. You will find a network of caring and support which will help you as you travel your grief journey, and most assuredly, you will find hope along the way. We truly care about you and want to make certain that no bereaved parent ever needs to walk this path alone.

---Topeka TCF Chapter Steering Committee

Additional Support Group Resources

HEALs - Healing after loss of suicide offers support to all survivors affected by the loss of a loved one to suicide. Meetings are at 7 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month. Pozez Center (north side of Stormont Vail). Contact Information: Jay Sheer 785-220-1368 or Sandy Reams 785-249-3792.

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Group - Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from 6-8 p.m. at the Pozez Education Center. The group, which has regular meetings to share information and experiences, also has a blog for members that offers communication, resources and support. If you are interested in learning more about the blog, please email irosen@stormontvail.org. For information call (785) 354-5225.

ForTheSurvivors - this website offers resources, support and connection for those who have experienced the death of a child. See <http://www.forthesurvivors.org/>

From Victims to Survivors - Support group for families who have had a loved one murdered. The group meets the fourth or last Wednesday of each month at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 4775 S.W. 21st. For more information, call Bill Lucero at 232-5958 or see <http://fromvictimstosurvivors.com>.

CALL FOR PHOTOS

If you would like your loved one's photo included in our TCF Chapter's memorial slide presentation, please do one of the following:

1. If you have computer access and can send a jpg file of your child's photo electronically, please send to dtucker35@cox.net. Be sure to include your loved one's full name, birth and death dates.
2. If you are not able to send a photo file electronically, you may send a photo print (do not send the only copy you have!) so that we may scan it into digital format. Send the photo plus the full name, birth and death dates for your loved one to: Susan Chan, 3448 SW Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return of your photo. We will continue to collect photos throughout the year to add to the slide presentation. If you already sent in a photo, you need not resend one.
3. We would love to have your child, grandchild or sibling's photo included for our December 15th Memorial Candle Lighting, but we need to have your photo no later than December 5, 2014 to be included in this year's slide presentation.
4. If you would like to have your loved one's photo displayed in our Photo Collages at the regular monthly meetings, please send a 4 x 6 inch photo (horizontal or vertical presentation) to Susan Chan at the address above. Include parent's names to be listed and birth and death dates for child, grandchild or sibling.

Are You Moving?

If you move, please let us know your new address so you can continue to receive this newsletter. It costs the Chapter 65 cents every time a newsletter is returned by the Post Office with an outdated address. Please send address changes to: Susan Chan, 3448 SW Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. You may email address changes to chanx2@cox.net. We appreciate your cooperation as this will save the Chapter money which can be better spent on bereavement outreach. If, for any reason, you wish to have your name removed from our mailing list, please drop me a note or email and I will take your name off the list.

Do You Have a Book Checked Out of the Topeka TCF Library?

If you have checked out a book(s) from the Topeka Chapter Library, we would greatly appreciate it if you could return it (them) as soon as possible. We want to keep the books available for others to use. We ask that you keep Library materials no longer than two (2) months. You may return books at a regular monthly meeting or leave them in the Most Pure Heart main Office. Please place books in a sack marked "For Susan Chan, Compassionate Friends". It is very expensive for us to try and replace missing materials so your cooperation is greatly appreciated. THANKS!

Sign up for Compassionate Friends E-Newsletter

The Compassionate Friends National Office publishes a monthly e-newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on what's going on with the organization and its 630 chapters. Published once a month (as well as occasional special editions), the e-newsletter includes information on such things as TCF National Conferences, the Walk to Remember, the Worldwide Candle Lighting, regional conferences, and other events of importance.

Each e-newsletter also includes a story specially selected from a past edition of *We Need Not Walk Alone*®, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends. For the siblings, the e-newsletter features a past question and answer column by Dr. Mary Paulson.

All you have to do to receive The Compassionate Friends e-newsletter is sign up for it online by visiting The Compassionate Friends national website at www.compassionatefriends.org. and clicking on e-newsletter at the top of the Home page.

GRIEF WEBINARS Offered

The Compassionate Friends is now offering monthly webinars on grief-related subjects as a service to our membership. A library of previously aired webinars is maintained on the TCF national website. For times and listings of upcoming webinars visit www.compassionatefriends.org. Past public webinars include: Handling Grief through the Holiday Season, Getting Stuck and Unstuck, Caring for Your Health While Grieving, Grief and Religion and Seven Dos and Don'ts For Staying Connected as a Couple During Grief. Upcoming Webinars will be on Grandparent Grief and Sibling Grief. Webinar registration will open approximately one month prior to the presentation. Watch the website for dates and times of other great webinars. If you have questions about the webinars please email us at webinars@compassionatefriends.org.

TCF National Magazine Available Free Online!

The Compassionate Friends announces that you can now receive our award-winning national magazine *We Need Not Walk Alone*® for free online thanks to the wish of the National Organization to make it readily available to anyone seeking support after the death of a child. Previously the magazine, winner of the Apex Award for Journalistic Excellence, had been available only in print and it remains available in that form free with any patron donation or when ordered by paid subscription through TCF's online store.

We Need Not Walk Alone, for almost 14 years, has provided comfort and support to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents as the country's premier magazine providing stories, poems, advice columns, and much more for families devastated by the death of a child. It has been referred to as "a support group in print" and is published three times a year.

To sign up for a free online subscription, go to TCF's national website at www.compassionatefriends.org and click on "Sign up-for National Publications" at the top of the Home (or any inside) page. Fill out the information and when each issue of the magazine is published, the National Office will send you a special link so you can be among the first to read its great content. When you sign-up in-between issues, during the upcoming week, you will receive your own link to the current edition. It can then be read online or downloaded to your computer for personal use.



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting (WWCL), Sunday, December 14, 2014, unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 18th annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. TCF's Worldwide Candle Lighting started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

A Remembrance Book will be available to sign on the night of the WWCL if you go online at www.compassionatefriends.org. You are encouraged to leave a message for or about your loved one, but also to browse the many entries from around the world.

Editor's Note: We encourage you and your family to participate in the Worldwide Candle Lighting on December 14th, but also hope you will join us for our Chapter's Memorial Candle Lighting on Monday, December 15th at 7 p.m. at our regular meeting site at Most Pure Heart of Mary Church. Be sure to bring a framed photo of your child; votive candles will be provided. You are also encouraged to bring your child's favorite holiday treat to share with those attending.

