



P.O. Box 647, Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340

August 2010

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Bluegrass Chapter

The Compassionate Friends

Regional Coordinator

Dusty Rhodes

(502) 330-4769

Telephone Friends

Sometimes it helps to be able to talk to someone who understands. The following bereaved parents are willing to provide support and comfort.

Jim Sims

(859) 858-8288

(859) 797-2168

Mary Camp

(859) 737-0180

Suzie McDonald

(859) 576-7680

Janie Fields

(859) 881-1991



The death of a child of any age, from any cause, is a shattering experience for a family. When a child dies, a family needs emotional support for the long grief journey that lays ahead.

Since 1980, the Bluegrass Chapter of The Compassionate Friends has been actively helping families toward the positive resolution of their grief following the death of a child.

Meeting Information

Lexington

Third Monday of Every
Month

6:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

Hospice of the Bluegrass
2321 Alexandria Drive
Lexington, Kentucky

Winchester

First Tuesday of Every Month

7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.

Hospice East
417 Shoppers Drive
Winchester, Kentucky

Meeting Format

Doors open one-half hour before meeting times to provide the opportunity to visit with old friends and acknowledge new ones. Please plan to arrive early so the meeting can begin on time.

We welcome you with Compassion, Love and Hope

It is always difficult to say, "Welcome" to people coming to our meetings for the first time because we are so very sorry for the reason they came. For some, the first meeting or two can be rather overwhelming, especially if they are newly bereaved. We hope that anyone feeling that way will return to at least a couple more of our meetings. Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings, regardless of the age at which their child died or the length of time that has passed since that day.

**The Compassionate Friends
National Office**

P.O. Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522

(877) 969-0010

www.compassionatefriends.org

Our Children Forever Loved and Remembered

August Birthdates

- 8/5 **Andrew Clive Cloyd** Son of Roxann Devereux & Richard Cloyd
8/6 **James Richard Dunn** Son of Juanita Allen
8/8 **Coy Todd Cosby** Son of Shirley and Jess Cosby
8/9 **Angela M. Meece** Daughter of Claude and Verna Meece
8/11 **Robin Ricci Kuniff** Daughter of Norma Forston
8/11 **Louis Tsey Gakpo** Son of Seth & Philomena Gakpo
8/11 **Christopher Perry Adkins** Son of Linda Brooks
8/13 **Stacey Carol Sea** Daughter of Darrell and Jean Sea
8/15 **Jason Randall Johnson** Son of Sundae and Brad Parks
8/15 **Mathew Scott Coomer** Son of Ray and Bonnie Coomer
8/16 **David Davis** Son of Curt Davis
8/16 **Rachel Elaine Sutherland** Daughter of Elly and Alan Sutherland
8/18 **Spencer David Turner** Son of Kathy and Danny Turner
8/19 **James Earl "Travis" Fryman** Son of Rickey and Mavis Fryman
8/19 **Robert Allen "Robbie" Joseph II** Son of Mary Treadway
8/20 **David James Rison** Son of Karla Scott and David Rison
8/21 **Allyson Mailfald** Daughter of Bill and Carole Mailfald
8/22 **Michael Terrell John Lee** Son of Vickie L. and Terry C. Lee
8/23 **Julian Vincent D. Regalado** Son of Ramon & Mary Frances Regalado
8/28 **Corey Len Tackett** Son of Sallie Jones
8/28 **"Baby" Potts** Daughter of Jim and Barbara Potts
8/28 **Allen Grant Borotraeger** Son of Doug and Cathy Borotraeger
8/29 **Jeffrey Scott "Scottie" Wallace** Son of Lynn Wallace
8/31 **William "Bill" Kretzer** Son of Shirley and William Kretzer
8/31 **Jennifer Lee Toadvine** Daughter of Ted and Cyndi Toadvine

August Remembrances

- 8/1 **Lori Em Kotzbauer** Daughter of Bob and Connie Kotzbauer
8/4 **Joseph Carl Richardson** Son of Jim and Jean Richardson
8/4 **David Allen Rose** Son of Ralph and Carmileta Rose
8/5 **Thomas Allan Woodrum "Tommy"** Son of Thomas and Mimi Woodrum
8/5 **William Fredick White** Son of Fred and Rebecca White
8/6 **John Martin Fay** Son of Mary Ann Fay
8/9 **Michael Wallace** Son of Jack and Carolyn Wallace
8/14 **Steven Roberts** Son of Elizabeth Roberts
8/15 **Cynthia "Cyndy" Ellen Crim** Daughter of Becky & Keith LaVey & Howard Crim
8/16 **Todd Jeffries** Son of Jim and Terry Jeffries
8/17 **Shawn Wade Kirby** Son of Tommy and Teresa Kirby
8/22 **Emily Ann Preston** Granddaughter of Bud and Gwen Preston
8/27 **Marcie Reynolds Thomason** Daughter of Barbara and Bill Thomason
8/31 **Taiann Nicole Wilson** Daughter of Sue Wilson

Five Years After Child-Loss: Evolution of Grief

By David J. Roberts LMSW, CASAC

During my early grief (two-and-one half years) following the death of my daughter Jeannine in March of 2003, I experienced shock, disorientation and doubt about my ability to ever experience joy in my life again. As I have progressed in my journey, I have developed many of my own personal observations:

- I still experience milestone events (e.g., death anniversary dates, birthdays) just as intensely as I did during my early grief. I am able to cope with them better because I know how to manage them better. I am also aware of what does not work for me and am ok with that.
- I have discovered the difference between entitlement and gratitude. During my early grief, I questioned why Jeannine had to die, and why any parent had to endure that unbearable pain. I am now resolved to be grateful for who I have in my life in the present moment.
- My definitions of relationships are redefined. This applies not only to my relationships with my friends and colleagues but with Jeannine as well. Jeannine has made her presence known to me in a variety of ways since her death. Our relationship has also transcended to others in my life as well. Accepting that relationships are eternal has helped me incorporate the better parts of Jeannine into my life and to develop more quality relationships.
- Our grief journeys are not about closure; they are about adjustment and staying connected. I have gradually adjusted to the physical absence of Jeannine. That adjustment has been made easier by the comfort that I take in knowing that she will always be with me and that she continues to guide me in my redefined world. I have also come to the conclusion that not everyone will support our continued connections to our children because of their perceptions that grief is a time-limited process. Rather than allow myself to get frustrated, I simply find individuals and groups who support my continued connections to Jeannine.
- If you take two steps forward and one backwards, you still made progress. Some days in our later grief journeys may be better than others. Experiencing a bad day does not mean we have regressed in our ability to adjust to our forever-changed circumstances. It simply means that we are missing the physical presence of our children at that particular moment. Remember, joy and pain exist separately during our lifelong journeys; there may be days when the pain that we experience teaches us something more about our grief.

It is better to grieve by remembering rather than grieve to forget.

David J. Roberts is a bereaved parent, whose daughter Jeannine Marie died on 3/1/03 of a rare form of cancer, at the age of 18.

To have your child included on “Our Children” webpage, please contact our webmaster Mary at

thecamps@roadrunner.com.

Corrections to Birth Dates or Remembrances should be sent to Lisa at garandsmom@yahoo.com.

For Fathers, Loss of a Child Carries Special Burdens

By Clara Hinton

Men go through all kinds of identity changes when they experience the loss of a child, especially a child who is older and has lived long enough to create established memories with his or her father.

A man identifies himself by mainly two things: the job he has and the family he has. When a child is taken away by death, a man suddenly loses the largest, most important part of his identity. A real crisis has been created, not just for the father, but also for the role, the father plays with the family. Fathers love to feel needed, and they love to feel like they are the one responsible for the happiness of the entire family.

Men are far less verbal than women by nature, and it makes it much more difficult for family members and friends to understand the changes that are taking place with a father loses a child. He often feels like a failure because he was unable to prevent the death or to fix the death once it took place. This is especially true if the child's life was lost due to an illness.

Fathers often believe their role is to fix things that are broken or in need of repair, and when they cannot fix their child's illness and the end result is death, a father goes through a deep grieving period of feeling tremendous guilt and failure.

A father who loses a child

also loses such a large part of his dreams. Fathers don't always openly talk about their dreams of hunting and fishing with their children, or of taking bike rides together, going to ball games together or of tossing a ball in the backyard, but they think about these events all of the time.

Fathers of girls daydream about walking their daughter down the aisle and dancing that first dance at the wedding. They dream about taking care of all of their child's hurts, wiping their tears away, and being called "hero" for all of the ways they show their strength to their son or daughter.

Child loss, in a father's eyes, often represents weakness. Men believe fathers are to be strong and in charge, not at a loss for knowing what to do when death turns life upside down. Child loss is such a helpless feeling, and often this is a foreign emotion for fathers who have been a tower of strength for their children.

What is a father to do? How can a father go on and feel whole once again?

It takes time to work through the pain of loss. It takes a long time to build back a feeling of belonging as a father. It will often take years for a father to be able to reclaim his identity of a father. It will take lots of working through feelings of failure and loss to feel like a man who can always proudly

wear the name father.

Take it a day at a time, a step at a time. Begin by telling yourself over and over that you will always be a father. Nothing can change that – not even death. Remind yourself often that some things cannot be fixed by you. Remember often that lost dreams are part of the pain every parent feels when a child dies. It takes a lot of tears and years to work past the milestone markers of such things as dreams of your child playing ball, driving a car, dating, getting married, and having children.

These are not easy dreams to release, but with time, you will be able to more vividly remember the times you had with your child than to sorrow over the time you never had. Be patient with yourself. Be kind to yourself. When you fall into the emotional pain of feeling like a failure, remind yourself that **you will always be a father and nothing can take away that badge of honor, not even death.**

At the age of 15, Clara Hinton's 13-year-old sister died tragically, and that loss began a series of events in her life that made grief all-too-real. While experiencing the blessing of living children, Clara has also felt the pain of losing six children due to miscarriage, and has delivered one stillborn son.

Compassionate Friends Unveils "Create a Memorial Website" Program

When you ask bereaved parents their greatest fear, you're likely to hear that they're afraid their child will be forgotten.

That fear can now be put to rest through The Compassionate Friends new "Create a Memorial Website" program. In partnership with online memorial leader Legacy.com., the new Compassionate Friends program allows you to easily create an online memorial website so that your child, sibling, or grandchild will always be remembered. A portion of the proceeds from the memorial website you create will also go to support The Compassionate Friends and its many national programs designed to aid families going through the natural grieving process following the death of a child.

With these unique, easy-to-create memorial tributes, you can: customize the design, yet create a site in five minutes using Legacy.com's four-step process; include photos, videos, stories, and more; add music; invite family and friends to contribute and join in celebrating the life of the child you're remembering; and much more.

There is a 14 day free trial period and 25% discount off the first year's sponsorship. To learn more and to take advantage of these offers, visit www.compassionatefriends.org and under "Resources" click on "Create a Memorial Website."

Memorial websites make a great gift anytime!

Love Gifts

**In memory of Keely Hollingsworth
By her parents**

**In memory of Sherilyn Adams
By her grandmother, Ann Adams**

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Some parents remember a birthday or anniversary date of their child, or a holiday with a "Love Gift". The Love Gifts help with the mailing of the newsletter, maintaining and updating our library and meeting costs. Please send Love Gifts to:

David Fields
P.O. Box 647
Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340

Please remember, if given in memory of your child, to include his/her full name. A very special **THANK YOU** to those who contribute to the basket during monthly meetings. ***We greatly appreciate your support!***

Library News

LIBRARY BOOKS /DVD's—Our library is a great resource for our members, friends and families. Be sure to come to our monthly meetings early enough to browse our selection and borrow a book. Please keep our library in mind if you have any books/DVD's you would like to donate contact Joan Reynolds, our librarian.

Please remember to return all borrowed books and DVD's. Many books and DVD's were donated in memory of a child. If you can't come to the meetings to return the items please call or email Janie (butterflymom@windstream.net) or Suzie (CATHOLIC20@WINDSTREAM.NET) In your email please include the book name and author, your name and phone number to set up a time for someone to pick up any items that you have borrowed from the library.

Apply for a Compassionate Friends Credit Card

Designed to promote awareness of the organization and to help as a fundraiser, The Compassionate Friends invites you to apply for your own Compassionate Friends Capital One Platinum Visa Credit Card.

After you've applied, been approved, and made your first purchase, The Compassionate Friends will receive a \$50 contribution from Capital One. In addition, as you use the card, TCF will receive a percentage of every purchase. This can range from 1-2% and, as a bonus, when you purchase at select merchants while using this card, the organization will receive up to 10% of the cost of everything you buy (these include over 300 online merchants and over 480 participating in-store retailers-national chains such as Rite-Aid, Starbucks, Pizza Hut, and Barnes and Noble).

There are three great branded designs to show your support of The Compassionate Friends. When you use one of TCF's designs, every time you pull out your card and make a purchase, someone will learn about The Compassionate Friends. If you prefer, you can custom design your own card with a picture of your child, your family, or any other scene or photographs. This can give you an opportunity every time you shop to talk about your child.

The card has no annual fee, a host of benefits, and the contributions from your use of the card may be tax deductible (please consult your tax advisor regarding how tax laws may apply).

For complete information on the program and to see the credit card designs, please go to www.compassionatefriends.org and under "Donate," click on "Compassionate Friends Credit Card."

Calling All Oldies...

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting new parents or sibling arrives with fresh hurt and frightened eyes. Remember how you felt at your first meeting? Think back...what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "your pain will not always be this bad: it really does get softer. They were the ones who wanted to really listen when you talked about your child. Please be an "oldie" for someone else? By helping someone else, you help yourself and share your child with someone who never got to know him or her. Mark your calendar now to attend the next meeting and help a newly bereaved parent or sibling. Our own healing happens when we are reaching out to others. Please plan to join attend a meeting soon!