



P.O. Box 647, Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340

December 2009

Chapter Co-Leaders

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David Fields

Newsletter Mailings

Janie Fields

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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



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 those 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 for the 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 regardless of the age at which their child died or the length of time that has passed since that day.

New to our Lexington Meeting:

Susan Bayes, sister of **David Wayne Meade**
Alex Milsom, sister of **Kiah Nicole Milsom**

*The Compassionate
Friends*

National Office

P.O. Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522

(877) 969-0010

www.compassionatefriends.org

Tis' the Season by Janie Fields

It doesn't seem possible the holidays are here again; but all we have to do is walk in any store and without a doubt we know the holidays are upon us front and center! As bereaved parents, our new "normal" can get pushed to the limit more than usual during this time with so much focus on family. This time of the year is a very emotional time for us; for many of us, "happy holidays" is no longer in our vocabulary.

The second Sunday of December is my "Happy Holiday" event! I feel so connected to my Missy that day! I can't wait for 7:00 pm so I, along with my family, can light a candle to celebrate the life of our precious Missy. On this night, we will celebrate all of our children by lighting a candle that symbolizes the light and memories they will always hold in our hearts, never to grow dim. The entire world will be filled with light in honor and memory of the children will burn bright on December 13, 2009! I hope you can join us for the 2009 Candle Lighting as we honor and celebrate the lives of our children. Make this night your "Happy Holiday" event.

*The Bluegrass Chapter of The Compassionate Friends
TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting
December 13, 2009*



Lexington Location

*South Elkhorn Christian Church
4343 Harrodsburg Road
Lexington, Kentucky
7:00 p.m.*

*Light Snacks and Punch
6:00 - 6:45 p.m.*

Please bring a photograph of your child or sibling to be displayed.

Winchester Location

*Rolan G. Taylor Funeral Home Gazebo
289 S. Main Street
Winchester, Kentucky
7:00 p.m.*

In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held inside.

Family and friends are encouraged to bring photos and share memories of our children after the ceremony.

Our Children Forever Loved and Remembered

December Birthdates

- 12/1 *Cody McClure Speer* Son of Lin and Mark Simmons
12/1 *William Fredrick White* Son of Fred and Rebecca White
12/2 *Michael "Mikie" Varnell Norton* Son of Mike & Vada Barnes, Varnell Norton
12/4 *Jennifer Lee Guenther* Daughter of Helen Burch
12/8 *Chad Hammons* Son of Dottie and Walter Hammons
12/5 *Shannon D. Robinson* Son of Dale and Teresa Robinson
12/7 *Evan Charles Thomas* Son of John and Keila Thomas
12/11 *Michael Rhodes Burton* Son of Harold and Pat Burton
12/13 *Zack Camp* Son of Mary Camp
12/19 *David Wayne Meade* Son of Sue & Fred Meade, Brother of Susan Bayes
12/21 *Christopher Andrew Keefe* Son of Michael & Anna Keefe
12/21 *David Alexander Keefe* Son of Michael & Anna Keefe
12/23 *Will Fister* Son of Gayle and J. W. Fister
12/24 *Hank Butler Scolf* Son of Michael and Doretta Scolf
12/27 *Frank Thomas Glowatz* Son of Frank and Dawn Glowatz
12/28 *Bessie Renee Root* Daughter of Patricia Root
12/30 *Noah Edward Kenawell* Son of Mike and Andrea Kenawell

December Remembrances

- 12/1 *Debra Cay Stinson* Daughter of Bill and Letha Stinson
12/2 *Kevin Wayne Gardner* Son of Doug and Vicky Gardner
12/2 *John Martin Laswell* Son of Frances Shaver
12/6 *Jacob Daniel Akin* Son of Becky Akin
12/8 *Noah Edward Kenawell* Son of Mike and Andrea Kenawell
12/12 *Timothy Richard Woodworth* Son of Richard and Sharon Woodworth
12/12 *Robert "Rob" N. Lamb* Son of Carol Lamb
12/14 *Robert Allen "Robbie" Joseph II* Son of Mary Treadway
12/21 *Christopher Andrew Keefe* Son of Michael & Anna Keefe
12/21 *David Alexander Keefe* Son of Michael & Anna Keefe
12/23 *Keith Allen Gadbois* Son of George H. Gadbois
12/24 *Louis Tsey Gakpo* Son of Seth & Philomena Gakpo, Paul Gakpo
12/28 *Michael R. Lucas* Son of Anne & Ed Lucas
12/28 *Renee Peterson* Daughter of Roy and Juanita Peterson
12/29 *Julie Dawn Hall* Daughter of Sharon and Don Hall
12/29 *Tiffany Creech* Daughter of Jim and Karen Rice

Co-Leader Corner**By: Jim Sims**

For most people Black Friday has come and gone. But for bereaved parents and families struggling with getting through the holiday season without their beloved child, every day can be a dark day. However, there can be a shining light for everyone simply by lighting a candle. Every year on the second Sunday in December The Compassionate Friends sponsor the TCF Worldwide Candle Lighting (WCL). Candles are lit at 7 pm in each time zone starting at the international date line and then in each following time zone effectively creating a virtual 24-hour circle

of light around the globe in memory of all children that have died. As we quietly gaze into the flickering light of our candle, our hearts are warmed by the memories of the times we shared with our child and the love that will live forever. Individually and collectively the candle light chases away the darkness and gloom.

The Bluegrass TCF will have candle lighting services in Lexington and Winchester. Everyone is invited including family, friends and others. Details are listed on page 2 of this newsletter and our website <http://tcfbluegrass.org/>. Similar events in other areas can be

found at <http://www.compassionatefriends.org/NewsEvents/WorldwideCandleLighting.aspx>. Joining with others can enhance your experience but if you are unable to do so, I encourage you to light a candle in your home or wherever you may be.

Bluegrass TCF members should note that we will have our regular December meeting in Lexington at the normal time, date and place.

As this year draws to a close, I hope that each of you will find many moments of peaceful accommodation.

Love Gifts

**In memory of John Reynolds, by his parents, Richard and Joan Reynolds
In memory of Shanlyn 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!

Jottings from Jo**By: Jo Hepburn***In memory of Jonathan Hepburn 7/31/63–6/9/78 (from hit and run driver)**Originally published in TCF Bluegrass Newsletter, December 1981*

Christmas is a time of joy and peace. That might seem strange to some of us. Joy? Peace? Ever again?

I can only say a probable yes to all three. It hurts as I try to plan as many of the family rituals as I can handle. But we carry on. We will have a tree decorated with the treasures collected as the children grew. I get a smaller one now that I live alone and I cry some as I decorate it, but it is a necessary part of our celebration. And I enjoy doing the shopping, and helping others do theirs. The gifts are fun. I feel Jonathan was such a special gift for fifteen years. The gifts he gave us are the things we miss most. He gave us fun and laughter (Joy, Peace).

I will again take a small tree to the cemetery decorated with a few of my reminders of things

Jon loved and popcorn for the birds and chipmunks. I will cry some and I will smile because it was his love for birds and chipmunks that makes me do it. We will have a family dinner and I will miss him and know others of the family miss him too even if they do not say so.

The candles are the most special. He loved candles, fireplace fires, campfires, sunrise and sunset. I will keep a candle lit for him. I do so much anyway, but during the holidays I keep one lit in his window, day and night. I think he likes that, for Christmas is a time of light.

The music hurts too. How many of us sang carols as we rocked babies; how many times we watched cherub choirs sing with our own cherubs in little robes looking like angels. God help us. That's a prayer.

I cannot hang stockings. Cannot hang his yet, and cannot hang the others without his. I do hang a tiny one for the grandchild.

I hope my thoughts do not depress you, just help you to understand yours. I smile, I laugh, I cope better with each occasion. I miss him, but it is precious pain, for I miss him because I had him and he was very precious. His love for us hovers about us always and we talk about him and how dear he was. And he knows.

May God bless each of you and help you to find some bit of strength and hope and: Yes, Joy and Peace! Keep mindful that you have some compassionate friends. And love.

Upcoming Meeting**December 21**

Facilitator: Jim Sims

Topic: How Are You Coping? (Open Discussion)

Resources for coping with the holidays are available at:**www.tcfbluegrass.org/holidays.html**

Only December

Feelings heavy,
tears and tears.
Will the darkness last?
Or is it –
only December?
Hadn't past months
brought peace and hope?
Where is the strength
of October –
and November?
Lights, carols, ornaments on trees,
cards from friends,
happy times in seasons past.
We remember.
We remember.
Will January bring
light at last?
Will we be stronger then,
for making it through
this December?
When people ask
how I'm doing I say,
Well . . . you know . . .
it's December.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry
from *Stars in the Deepest Night- After the Death of a Child*

The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow. We Need Not Walk Alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.