



**P.O. Box 647, Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340**

**June 2010**

**Chapter Co-Leaders**

**Suzie McDonald**

[catholic20@windstream.net](mailto:catholic20@windstream.net)

**Janie Fields**

[butterflymom@windstream.net](mailto:butterflymom@windstream.net)

**Treasurer**

David Fields

**Newsletter Editor**

Lisa Fields

**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 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 the Lexington Meeting:

Denise Pursel, mother of *Sean Joseph Looney*

**The Compassionate Friends  
National Office**

P.O. Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522

(877) 969-0010

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

## Our Children Forever Loved and Remembered

### June Birthdates

- 6/1 **McKenna Brooke Hatchett** Daughter of Tim and Melissa Hatchett  
6/1 **Mark Davis** Son of Harold and Jeannie Davis  
6/1 **DeAnna Marie Friend** Daughter of Barbara Friend  
6/2 **Robby Matthew Oesch** Son of Candy Oesch  
6/3 **Victor M. Martina** Mar Son of Don and Judy Martina  
6/4 **Chasity Marie Green Leach** Daughter of Larry Leach  
6/6 **Julie Ann Kilpatrick** Sister of Roy Stewart  
6/7 **Nicholas Alan Norris** Son of Greg and Joanne Norris  
6/8 **Rylee Jorja McFarland** Daughter of Joy and Chris McFarland  
6/9 **Brenda Nicole Smith** Daughter of Carla and Kenneth Smith  
6/9 **Brian Jason Hardin** Son of Richard and Sue Hardin  
6/10 **Tressa Parsons Adams** Daughter of Linda and Bobby Parsons  
6/11 **Donald Ray Bingham** Daughter of Barbara Bingham  
6/12 **Cynthia "Cyndy" Ellen Crim** Daughter of Becky & Keith LaVey and Howard Crim  
6/12 **Gary James Travis Burke** Nephew of Addie Waugh  
6/13 **Thomas Allan Woodrum "Tommy"** Son of Mimi & Thomas Woodrum  
6/14 **Becky Fister** Daughter of David and Mariam Fister  
6/14 **Erin Renee Glass** Daughter of Martha and Wesley Glass  
6/14 **Tim Sizemore** Son of T. C. Sizemore  
6/14 **Jonathan Walker Mayberry** Son of Jonathan & Stephanie Mayberry  
6/16 **Steve Elliot** Son of Nancy and Carroll Elliot  
6/20 **John Martin Laswell** Dec Son of Frances Shaver  
6/21 **Juan Pirir Cux** Son of Donna and Dave Uckotter  
6/22 **Timothy Ray Elkin** Son of Betty and the late Billy Elkin  
6/24 **Thomas E. Masters II** Son of Bess Masters  
6/25 **Sharon Davidson** Daughter of Melvin and Sonia Davidson  
6/25 **Jacob Daniel Akin** Son of Becky Akin  
6/26 **Julie Dawn Hall** Daughter of Sharon and Don Hall  
6/28 **Darius Xavier Jerome Young** Son of Deborah Young  
6/29 **Phillip Old** Jul Son of Priscilla Old

## Our Children Forever Loved and Remembered

### June Remembrances

- 6/2 **Spencer David Turner** Son of Kathy and Danny Turner  
6/4 **Missy Ann Tomblin** Daughter of Gail Tomblin  
6/7 **Kimberly Sue Toye** Daughter of Gail Toye  
6/7 **Colin Spencer** Son of Stephanie Spencer  
6/7 **Carrie Elizabeth Griffin** Daughter of David and Debbie Griffin  
6/8 **Robby Matthew Oesch** Son of Candy Oesch  
6/8 **Rylee Jorja McFarland** Daughter of Joy and Chris McFarland  
6/9 **Jonathan Hepburn** Jul Son of Jo Hepburn  
6/9 **Jan Cecile Richardson** Daughter of Jim and Jean Richardson  
6/14 **Dawn Chrystine Beckett** Daughter of Mike and Lynn Lindsey  
6/15 **David Scott Fine** Son of Aida and David Fine  
6/16 **Gary Ryan Delanhousaye** Son of Glynn and Catherine Delanhousaye  
6/17 **Brandon Holbrook** Son of Linda M. Holbrook  
6/18 **Richard (Rick) Allen** Son of Richard and Linda Allen  
6/19 **Paul R. Criswell, Jr.** Son of Georgia and Paul Criswell  
6/20 **Mark Grimes** Son of Betty and Steve Grimes  
6/22 **Jacob Issac Gibson** Son of Veronica and Darrell Gibson  
6/22 **Spencer David Turner** Son of Kathy and Danny Turner  
6/23 **Fred "Lance" L. Murphy III** Son of Patty Murphy, Brother of Stacy Hoskins  
6/27 **Edward Charles Cambell** Son of Martha E. Stone  
6/28 **Davey Allison Dunavant** Son of Anita and J. C. Harris  
6/30 **Katherine "Kate" Tudor** Daughter of Suzanne Tudor & Lewis Perry

It is with great sadness we say goodbye to Ed Wilson,  
father of Edward G. "Star" Wilson.  
A donation was made by Jo Hepburn  
to the Bluegrass Chapter of the Compassionate Friends in Ed's memory.

## Co-Leader's Corner

By: Jim Sims

It's confession time. I've done a lousy job of planning and implementing a timely chapter leader transition. Although I made multiple attempts that appeared poised for success some issue would arrive and prevent it. However, I can now proudly proclaim success. Suzie McDonald and Janie Fields have agreed to become chapter co-leaders! They have both been deeply involved with chapter activities and I am extremely confident that they will be strong leaders. Thank you Janie and Suzie, I appreciate the commitment that you are making in honor of Missy & Jamie.

After Becky & Keith's daughter Cyndi died in 2006, I agreed to help with what I thought would be a caretaker role for a few months until Becky was ready to continue leading the group. Instead that "temporary" role has lasted almost 4 yrs. Although it's in the best interest of the chapter as well as myself, I'm stepping aside with mixed emotions because this has become one of the most meaningful things I done in life. It has been frustrating at times to know how much TCF can help many grieving parents that aren't willing to become a part of The Compassionate Friends. However, it has been very gratifying to reach out and give

to others during their most difficult time. It has helped me with my grief and I've come to feel that at least one positive thing has resulted from Jeff's death.

There have been important changes in our chapter during this time. We've redesigned the chapter website with increased information and resources for the newly bereaved as well as seasoned griever, friends and families. The newsletter has gone digital allowing us to reduce the cost and effort of printing and mailing, first distributing monthly via email and now posting on the chapter website. Changing the leadership mode by using a steering committee has spread out the workload while gaining valuable ideas & insight of those that have graciously served on the committee. We now have monthly meetings in both Lexington and Winchester. I believe these changes provide a solid foundation for the continued success of the Bluegrass Chapter. But I am most proud of the one thing that hasn't changed, namely the dedication and commitment of our chapter and it's members to provide a safe caring environment where bereaved parents and families can share their beloved children, find hope and inspiration to survive this terrible ordeal.

I've asked Lisa to include elsewhere the article Who Packed Your Parachute which many of you know as the story of Charles Plumb\*, retired Navy pilot and Vietnam POW. My thoughts and feelings are perfectly expressed in the last 2 paragraphs of that article, I can't say it any better. I know that those TCF Bluegrass members that preceded me packed my chute well. I thank all of them - starting with Jo and continuing through Becky and all the others who gave me hope and showed me there was a way in those first years after Jeff died. I hope that I've been able to give as generously as they gave to me.

While I'm leaving the chapter leader role, I'm not leaving The Compassionate Friends or the Bluegrass TCF chapter. I plan to remain involved and help as much as I can. I will continue to be "on-call" 24/7. I'll end with this final thought...

***If you've found a quiet place of peaceful accommodation, Rejoice! If you're still searching, struggle on. You will find it!***

\* for more details, see:

<http://homeport.usnaweb.org/parachute.html>



## The Compassionate Friends Bluegrass Chapter Annual Picnic



**Date:** Saturday, June 26, 2010



**Location:** South Elkhorn Christian Church



**Time:** 5:00 pm.



***Chapter will provide:***



- hamburgers/hotdogs/buns
- condiments
- drinks
- paper goods
- silverware



*Please bring a side dish or dessert*



***Events planned for this year:***



- Memory Table



***Please bring a photograph of your child or sibling to share.***



- Silent Auction to benefit the Garden of Angels at Bluegrass Memorial Gardens.



***Please contact Suzie McDonald at (859) 576-7680 if you have items to donate in memory of your son, daughter or sibling.***



## Who Packed Your Parachute?

By: Marcia Carter TCF Marietta GA, author of Stephen's Moon

Charles Plumb was a U.S. navy jet pilot in Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and spent six years in a Communist Vietnamese prison. He survived the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that experience.

One day Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant and a man at another table came over to them and said, "You're Charles Plumb, aren't you?" Surprised, Mr. Plumb said yes. The other man said, "You flew jet fighters in Vietnam for the aircraft Kitty Hawk. You were shot down" "How in the world do you know that?" Plumb asked. "I packed your parachute," the man replied. Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. He jumped up and shook hands and thanked the

man. "If that parachute hadn't worked. I wouldn't be here today," he told him gratefully.

Plumb couldn't sleep that night, thinking about the man. He kept wondering what the man might have looked like in a Navy uniform. He wondered how many times he had walked past him on the ship and not even said 'good morning' because he was a fighter pilot and maybe thought he was a little better than the sailor. He thought of the many hours that the sailor spent on a long wooden table down inside the ship carefully weaving and folding the silks of each chute, holding in his hands the fate of someone he didn't know.

In his speeches now Plumb asks his audience "Who's packing your parachute?" I know who packed mine. It was other TCF parents who had been shot down before me when they lost their child. These

people knew that my parachute had to be packed carefully. It was Charlie Walton whose book "When There Are No Words" gave me the first glimmer of hope. None of these people could spare me the pain of landing in foreign territory and serving that time in grief prison, but they saved my life just the same by packing my parachute well.

I hope I am passing that on to someone else and packing their parachute well. I can't spare anyone the heartaches of the grieving process, but I can try to pack their parachute well enough so that they survive. And a heartfelt thank you to all of you who packed my parachute so well, holding on your hands the fate of someone you didn't really even know.

### Love Gifts

*In memory of Jamie Flynn by his mother, Suzie McDonald*  
*In memory of John Reynolds by his mother, Joan Reynolds*

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!*

## The Father's Grief

By David Pellegrin, TCF Honolulu, HI

At my second meeting of The Compassionate Friends about three years ago, one of the mothers said how nice it was to see a man attending, since "men grieve differently from women."

Her remark was no doubt meant to help put me at ease. I hadn't said a thing so far, and might have been intimidating in my silence. But it caught me off guard. What I was feeling after George's death was so absolute, so awful, how could it possibly come with any "differences"? Would one grieve differently for an infant than for an adolescent? For a son than for a daughter? Surely, grief was absolute for both mothers and fathers.

Over time I came to acknowledge the differences the well-meaning mother had in mind:

- Neither I nor the other men who occasionally attended talked much; the women talked freely.
- I sensed I was better at compartmentalizing my grief than the mothers, better at keeping a lid on it socially and at work.
- My male friends seemed less comfortable talking about George, bringing up his name or even looking at his pictures than female friends.
- I came to see how intensely I felt I had let my son down as his protector, the father's primary role.

Shortly after becoming editor of my chapter newsletter, I sent a copy to my friend Jack Knebel in California. Jack and his wife, Linda, had been involved with a Compassionate Friends chapter after the death of their daughter, Hollis. He replied, "It's good to see that a man is taking an active role in the group." Then he went on to write movingly about those male-female grieving differences. The rest of his letter, which touched me deeply, follows:

*. . . Several years after Hollis died, Linda and I were being trained by Compassionate Friends to be 'buddies' for newly bereaved parents. One of the exercises was to list all the unhelpful things that others had said in trying to comfort us, so that we wouldn't make the same mistakes. The other trainees, all women, made long lists, and did it with enthusiasm. When the lists were read aloud, they nodded knowingly at every entry and eventually hooted and howled with derision at the worst (some of which were pretty bad). When it came my turn, I held up an empty page and said:*

*"People may have said such things to me. I just don't recall.*

*"What I do remember is that people tried to tell me how sad they were for us. I remember being told how much they loved Hollis and how much they cared about us. I*

*remember one of my partners hugging me in the halls of my very stiff and proper law firm. I remember men who had never told me anything more personal than their reactions to a Giants' loss crying at our loss and their fears.*

*"You women are used to talking to each other about your emotions and about personal things. I wasn't and my friends weren't either. So the fact that we could do so was a great gift, and it wasn't marred in the slightest by someone's choice of words."*

*Now, the shell has been broken and I find it easier to talk about my emotions, my hopes and fears, about those things that really are important. And that for me was one of Hollis' greatest gifts.*

*I know that even after George's death, he is a major part of your life. My guess is that you're becoming more open to the gifts that he and those who care about you are able to give.*

*Yours, with compassion and friendship,*

*Jack*

### (Winter 1996)

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## SAVE THE DATE

### TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

### JULY 2-4, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

"Reflections of Love, Visions of Hope" is the theme for this year's **TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE** — an event unlike any other! Bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents are able to share with others walking the same grief journey — with well-known speakers, entertainment, and more than 100 workshops on most topics of grief following the death of a child. And join us for our 4th of July **WALK TO REMEMBER** or sponsor a walker in remembrance of your loved ones! (*You don't have to attend the conference to participate*). While you're in the area, visit other nearby attractions or catch the world-class display of 4th of July fireworks over the National Mall.

Hyatt Regency Crystal City is hosting our conference. (Be sure to ask for TCF conference rates; 1-800-233-1234 or <http://www.crystalcity.hyatt.com>.)

**LEARN MORE, SIGN UP TO ATTEND, OR  
FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP.**

For more information, contact your local chapter or visit:

**[WWW.COMPASSIONATEFRIENDS.ORG](http://WWW.COMPASSIONATEFRIENDS.ORG)**

### 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.