



P.O. Box 647, Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340

November 2009

**Chapter Co-Leaders**  
Jim Sims & Richard Hardin

**Treasurer**  
David Fields

**Newsletter Mailings**  
Janie 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

*The Compassionate  
Friends  
National Office*  
P.O. Box 3696  
Oak Brook, IL 60522  
(877) 969-0010  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)



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 Winchester Meeting:  
Judy Razor, mother of **Dennis Sean Moody**

New to our Lexington Meeting:  
Jason & Dezna Napier, parents of **Ian Samuel Napier**  
Carol Lamb, mother of **Robert Lamb**  
Santee Pittman, mother of **Walter Bryan Stevenson**  
Joseph Robinson, father of **Faith Raeanne Robinson**

## 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

### November Birthdates

11/01 <i>Daryl Clinton Barnes</i>	04/16 Son of Vada and Mike Barnes
11/01 <i>Kimberly Ann Holder</i>	05/23 Daughter of David and Sondra Holder
11/02 <i>Ash Coffey</i>	04/01 Son of Stacy Coffey Pennington
11/03 <i>Taiann Nicole Wilson</i>	08/31 Daughter of Sue Wilson
11/04 <i>Brian Staats</i>	05/14 Son of Juanita Staats
11/08 <i>Ralph Winton Wesley</i>	09/01 Son of Gen Wesley
11/08 <i>Randy Blake Johnson</i>	03/11 Son of Randy and Doris Johnson
11/11 <i>Patrick McDonnell</i>	03/02 Son of Bob and Ann McDonnell
11/13 <i>Joseph Carl Richardson</i>	08/04 Son of Jim and Jean Richardson
11/20 <i>Ruth Ann Proutey</i>	07/06 Daughter of George and Sarah Hudgins
11/22 <i>Isaiah Thomas Stewart</i>	07/17 Son of Connie Stewart
11/23 <i>Debra Cay Stinson</i>	12/01 Daughter of Bill and Letha Stinson
11/23 <i>Amanda Williams</i>	03/21 Daughter of Donna Riley
11/24 <i>John Thomas Parks</i>	04/26 Son of Rosemary Parks
11/24 <i>Marcie Reynold Thomason</i>	08/27 Daughter of Barbara and Bill Thomason
11/27 <i>Bobby Lee Grimm</i>	10/17 Son of Brenda and Peter Grimm

### November Remembrances

11/01 <i>Brian Alan Frith</i>	02/03 Son of Larry & Rowena Frith
11/02 <i>Jason Randall Johnson</i>	08/15 Son of Sundae and Brad Park
11/02 <i>Christy Weldon</i>	07/20 Daughter of Connie Weldon
11/02 <i>Zane Gregory Brown</i>	07/07 Son of Gale and Joe Brown
11/12 <i>Becky Fister</i>	06/14 Daughter of David and Meriam Fister
11/12 <i>Lonnie Gene Centers</i>	09/22 Son of Oneida Centers
11/14 <i>Sherilyn Annette Adams</i>	07/11 Granddaughter of Ann Milton Adams
11/16 <i>Jonathan Walker Mayberry</i>	06/14 Son of Jonathan & Stephanie Mayberry
11/19 <i>Jennifer Lee Guenther</i>	012/4 Daughter of Helen Burch
11/21 <i>Paul Travis Hickey</i>	01/01 Son of Al and Sandy Hickey
11/21 <i>Allyson Mailfald</i>	08/21 Daughter of Bill and Carole Mailfald

## Autumn By Lily de Lauder, TCF, Van Nuys, CA

*In the fall  
When the amber leaves are shed,  
Softly-silently  
Like tears that wait to flow.  
I watch and grieve.  
My heart beats sadly in the fall,  
'Tis then I miss you most of all.*

## An Empty Chair by Daniel Yoffee

The first wedding was two years after Alan, my twin-brother, passed away. My second oldest brother was getting married. I was waiting for the question, "When was I going to get married?" I was never asked so I couldn't use my prepared response, "When Alan could be my best man."

I thought if I did get married I would have an empty

chair next to me. If Alan couldn't be my best man, I didn't want anyone. My brother's name would appear in the program (that he would have designed) as honorary best man. This year I turned thirty-six, it was my sixth birthday without Alan. At the restaurant we had made a mistake, the reservation had been made for one too many. I

had ended up sitting next to an empty chair.

Although I thought, I was doing better, no longer crying at family events. I now realize that I will not have an empty chair at my wedding, if I can ever bring myself to get married without Alan being there. The loss I feel will always be there but it's much worse seeing an empty chair.

## Thanksgiving by Edie Kaplan, TCF, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

You may ask, "What do I have to be thankful for now that my child is dead?" After the death of a child, where is the joy in a day off from work? What pleasure can we derive from sitting around a table when someone is missing, and an uttered prayer of thanksgiving echoes hollow in our hearts?

Maybe we have been concentrating on the loss which has brought the overwhelming sorrow of death, and have forgotten the complete joy of life. When I remember laughing brown eyes, a mischievous grin, a scraped knee that Mommy could fix, a new word learned, even the memory of the

realization that I had a baby boy, I have a great deal to be thankful for. I had 1 1/2 years of a dream come true, and I'm truly thankful I had my child.

Sure, the agony of grief, the anguish of losing my precious child to death, the torture of wanting to see that child grow and mature and the pain of never knowing, rips me up.

There is no Thanksgiving in entertaining these thoughts, so this month I am going to concentrate on the Living of my child, The Life that brought me so much joy. In this I am thankful that Evan was born, thankful that he lived, thankful that even for those short 30 months—I lived them too. Even

so, as he lived once, I live now and want a productive life.

I am thankful I have come that far in my grief work to know I want to live and remember the good times without sorrow. And, I am thankful for my husband, who stood by me during the rough times. The husband who is the father of the child of our love. In him I have found my child, in our marriage I have found love, and that love taught us how to love that child. I am also thankful for you, my real friends...

*Compassionate Friends.*

***"Hope is not pretending that troubles do not exist. It is the trust that they will not last forever, that hurts will be healed, and difficulties overcome. It is the faith that a source of strength and renewal lies within us, to lead us through the dark to the sunshine.***

~Anonymous

## Thanksgiving Marks Beginning of Holiday Madness and Sadness

by Annette Mennen Baldwin, In memory of her son, Todd Mennen  
TCF, Katy, TX

In our society we have turned the holidays into a never ending round of parties, shopping, cooking, preparations for guests or travel and stress, lots and lots of stress. It begins in October with the not so subtle reminders from our friendly retail stores. Most of us dread this time of year because as members of Compassionate Friends, we have one more item on our list and it invariably is at the top.....my child is gone.....how can I handle the holidays?

This will be my third Thanksgiving without my son. We had 35 wonderful Thanksgiving celebrations together, and now it's just me. My only child is gone, my grandchildren now live solely in their mother's world. I am not a part of that world.

But I am learning to cope with this reality. I am learning that I can hold on to the traditions that don't cause me sadness and let go of those that do. As bereaved parents we fall into a unique category. As humans we accept that the loss of parents, spouses, aunts, uncles, siblings, friends and acquaintances is inevitable. But never, never, were we taught or conditioned to the idea that our children would or could precede us in death. The very notion of this shook us to our core.

Now we have lost our child to death. Nobody prepared us for this mind numbing loss. The rules have been broken. We

have no coping skills. Our friends usually can't help. Our families try, but until one endures a loss of this magnitude, the ability to fully comprehend the never ending rounds of sadness is simply not there.

We do have a support system.....we can choose to participate or simply be there, in the moment, at our Compassionate Friends meetings. Here we find our most meaningful and helpful connection with other parents.....parents who are walking the road we now walk. These bereaved parents are here to help us on this unfamiliar road. They cannot answer every question because the answers don't exist to most questions. When will this pain end? When will life go back to "normal"? There are different types of pain and new kinds of normal. We gather each month to help each other, to lean on each other, to find hope in each other's ability to function. From this meeting of kindred souls we do derive some solace, some peace and some hope.

I have watched the newly bereaved, raw in their sadness when they first attend a meeting.

As the months move forward, I begin to see a change in these parents. Each changes in a different way, for each experiences their loss and their grief process in a different way. Some changes aren't apparent

for months, even a year or two. Learning that we are not alone in the grievous burden of our loss is comforting. Learning that others have developed ways to cope with the holidays, the birthdays, the death anniversaries and other special occasions gives us the hope that we, too, will one day feel comfortable in our new "normal."

I have chosen to accept this group of gentle, kind and compassionate friends as an integral part of my life. The first holidays were horrible. I learned that I had to do what I felt was right. I learned to let go of the expectations of others and live in the moment. Even if I plan to do something and change my mind, I feel no guilt. I learned that those who truly love me understand. I have found that I am truly becoming myself....my new self. It is a slow process. There are setbacks.

Holidays are extremely difficult for every parent who has lost a child.....it matters not how long ago our child died. The pain is fresh, new and raw at this time of year. This is the season for leaning on our compassionate friends, for asking questions, expressing fears, anxieties, doubts, depression and anger and for finding the comfort, hope and understanding that each of us so desperately seeks.

## Love Gifts

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!*

### Upcoming Meetings

**November 16**

Facilitator: Janie Fields

Topic: Ideas for Handling the Holidays

**December 21**

Facilitator: Jim Sims

Topic: How Are You Coping? (Open Discussion)

HOSPICE OF THE BLUEGRASS

*2009 Holiday Programs*

*Lexington*

Tuesday, November 10, 2009, 7:00pm  
Anchor Baptist Church  
3601 Winthrop Drive  
Lexington, KY 40514

Practical ideas for handling special days during the first year of bereavement  
and a candlelight ceremony to honor those whom we will miss  
(Program for children ages 6-12 included)  
RSVP: Milward Funeral Home (859) 276-1415

### 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.