



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**

Bluegrass Chapter Newsletter

**"We need not walk alone."
www.tcfbluegrass.org**

P.O. Box 647, Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340

November 2010

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Bluegrass Chapter The Compassionate Friends Regional Coordinator

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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

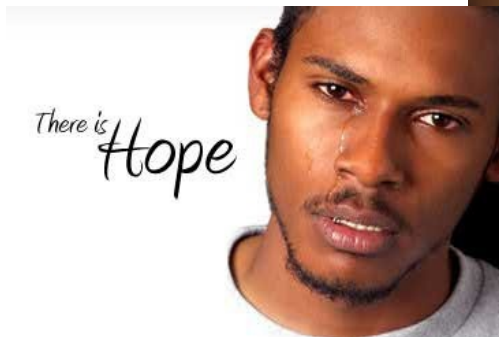
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The death of a child of any age, from any cause, is a shattering experience for a family. When a child dies, a family needs emotional support for the long grief journey that lays ahead.



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.

Our Mission & Purpose is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age by any cause and to provide information to help others be supportive.



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.

New to Lexington Meeting:

Jim and Tammy Lynch, parents of Scott Lynch
Sharon Bellows, mother of Dusty and Ashley Riggs
Barbara Wright mother of Matthew Herrington
Terry Herrington, brother of Matthew Herrington

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

November Birth Dates

11/1 **Daryl Clinton Barnes 4/16** Son of Vada and Mike Barnes
11/1 **Kimberly Ann Holder 5/23** Daughter of David and Sondra Holder
11/2 **Ash Coffey** Son of Stacy Coffey
11/3 **Taiann Nicole** Daughter of Sue Wilson
11/4 **Brian Staats** Son of Juanita Staats
11/8 **Ralph Winton Wesley** Son of Gen Wesley
11/8 **Randy Blake Johnson** Son of Randy and Doris Johnson
11/11 **Patrick McDonnell** Son of Bob and Ann McDonnell
11/13 **Joseph Carl Richardson** Son of Jim and Jean Richardson
11/20 **Ruth Ann Proutey** Daughter of George and Sarah Hudgins
11/22 **Isaiah Thomas Stewart** Son of Connie Stewart
11/23 **Debra Cay Stinson** Daughter of Bill and Letha Stinson
11/23 **Amanda Williams** Daughter of Donna Riley
11/24 **John Thomas Parks** Son of Rosemary Parks
11/24 **Marcie Reynold Thomason** Daughter of Barbara and Bill Thomason
11/27 **Bobby Lee Grimm** Son of Brenda and Peter Grimm

November Remembrance Dates

11/1 **Brian Alan Frith** Son of Larry & Rowena Frith
11/2 **Jason Randall Johnson** Son of Sundae and Brad Park
11/2 **Christy Weldon** Daughter of Connie Weldon
11/2 **Zane Gregory Brown** Son of Gale and Joe Brown
11/8 **Colleen Christine Owen** Daughter of Diane and Andrew Owen
11/12 **Becky Fister** Daughter of David and Meriam Fister
11/12 **Lonnie Gene Centers** Son of Oneida Centers
11/14 **Sherilyn Annette Adams** Granddaughter of Ann Milton Adams
11/16 **Jonathan Walker Mayberry** Son of Jonathan & Stephanie Mayberry
11/19 **Jennifer Lee Guenther** Daughter of Helen Burch
11/21 **Paul Travis Hickey** Son of Al and Sandy Hickey
11/21 **Allyson Mailfald** Daughter of Bill and Carole Mailfald
11/21 **Joseph William Minor** Son of Pat and Joseph S. Minor

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.

Coming Soon to Your Area

By: Janie Fields

The days are shorter, the leaves have fallen from the trees, and snow is possible anytime. Every retail store, office building and neighborhoods are adorned with beautiful Christmas decorations. We can't escape from the holidays any more than we can escape the loss of our child.

Well friends what are we going to do about the holidays this year? Hide out at home? Complete change of scenery? Join the family/friends to celebrate the season? Can't make a decision? Then don't! Please remember be kind to yourself. Give yourself permission to feel your loss, as well as give yourself permission to feel some joy.

This is the seventh holiday season without Missy. David and I have not tried the first two options (not that we didn't think

about them- *a lot*). We felt the need to try to keep things as "normal" as possible for our family. There is no right or wrong way to celebrate the holiday just as there is no right or wrong way to grieve.

I wish I could say that I had no anxiety about the coming holidays, but that would not be true. However, I have decided that this year I am going to try my best to decorate the house just as I did eight plus Christmas' ago! I want my grandson to be able to remember at least once that Grandma's house was filled with the joy of Christmas!

Well that is my plan, but as we all know things don't always go according to plan. Now as far as going to the *e x t e n d e d* family celebration, I have no plan. I will go and do the best I can taking one moment at a

time. As usual I will be taking a lot of deep breaths to ease my anxiety and pain.

Without a doubt I will be tossing some eggs in the coming weeks more often than usual! Who would have ever thought how something as simple as tossing an egg and hearing it splat would relieve tension from my body and mind! Try it, feel the frustrations leave your body as that egg sails through the air and hits the ground. Whatever you find to help you relieve some of the grief, anger, sadness and all the other feelings that intensify during this time of the year do it for yourself and your loved ones.

Glad that I have so many wonderful Compassionate Friends,

Janie

Love Gifts

In memory of Sherlyn Adams, by her grandmother, Ann Milton
In memory of Jonathan Hepburn by his mother, Jo Hepburn

Hope...

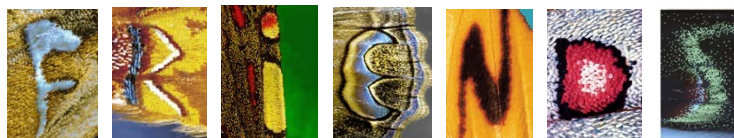
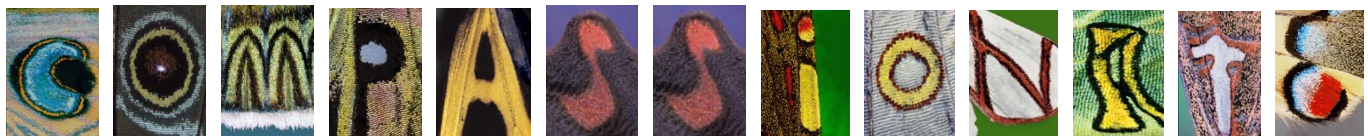
There are a lot of quotes to be found on the subject of hope. It has been described as a winged creature, is perceived as light, it is something that comes from others or something that is always safe within you. It is something you look for in the first crack of dawn the morning after a long dark night. Most of all hope can be something you create for yourself and others.


The amazing story of Kjell Sandved who has spent much of his life travelling the world, discovering 'letters' in nature, for example on the wings of butterflies....

Back in 1960, a young Norwegian called Kjell Sandved came to the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History to conduct research on animal behaviour.

One day, hidden away on a dusty shelf, Kjell found, inside an old cigar box, a butterfly that had a perfect letter 'F' on its wing. He was so impressed with the perfection of the way the letter appeared that he wondered if he could find other letters of the alphabet as part of the pattern on the wings of other butterflies.

This became an all consuming passion, and he has travelled the world, photographing butterflies, and creating the 'Butterfly Alphabet'. He has now created a small business, selling posters of these images, and he has also created other alphabets consisting entirely of images he has found in nature.





HOLIDAY HOPE

Program & Candlelight Ceremony
7-8:30 pm TUE NOV 16, 2010
Anchor Baptist Church

Mark your calendars to attend Holiday Hope (sponsored by Hospice & Milwards Funeral Home) at Anchor Baptist Church, Tuesday, November 16th 7-8:30pm. This program helps with practical ideas for coping with the holidays and special days during the first year of bereavement. The program will include a candle-lighting presentation ceremony in honor of loved ones who have died. A program will be available to children ages 6-12 that will include activities to help them explore grief through art therapy and group interaction. I am a repeat attendee to this program and it helps me every time!

Worldwide Candle Lighting December 12, 2010



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age from any cause. As candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual wave of light, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 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. 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.

The Compassionate Friends of the Bluegrass
Celebrate the Worldwide Candle Lighting Service
December 12, 2010 6:00pm
South Elkhorn Christian Church
4343 Harrodsburg Road
Lexington, KY

Enjoy fellowship and light refreshments before the candle lighting service. Family and friends are invited.

My Heart Full of Compassion By Aleasa

*I cannot ease your aching heart,
Nor take the pain away.
But let me stay and take your hand
And walk with you today.
I'll listen when you need to talk,
I'll wipe your tears away.
I'll share your worries when they come,
I'll help you face your fears.
I'm here and I will stand by you,
Each hill you have to climb.
So take my hand let's face the world,
Live one day at a time.
You're not alone for I'm still here.
I'll go that extra mile,
And when your grief is easier,
I'll help you learn to smile.*

*Hope lights a candle rather than
cursing the darkness*
~ Keith Todd



SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

By: Betty Ewart, Bereaved Mother, Lewisburg, WV



We had a small group at our *Bereaved Parents* group recently so we just sat and talked about anything anyone brought up. We talked about how, before our children died we might have thought some people's conversations about experiences they had a bit weird, but now we understand and have our own stories to tell.

I have thought more about that in the days since. I think there is something to be said to grieving parents, grandparents and siblings about signs and symbols. How often has a newly bereaved parent told us, "I think I'm losing my mind" or "I just can't concentrate like I used to" and how relieved they are when we tell them that they are **NORMAL** –we have all felt that way and experienced that. Maybe some of them – and some of you—have had "signs" too and just haven't said anything for fear someone will think we have "really gone over the edge."

An old catechism I had to memorize as a child said that a miracle is an "outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." As children we used to be taught allegories and to think deeply about things to find a meaning. There was a Santa Claus, an Easter Bunny, Angels, etc. Lucky is the child who is still taught this way!

In the June 16 issue of *TIME*, in the report about the first anniversary of the tragedy at Oklahoma City, the story of the Memorial to be built there was told and every design offered includes what they call the Survivor Tree, in this case an elm tree, that is the only thing in the lot surviving the bombing. One father, who met his daughter there at the tree for lunch, still goes there each day since her death in the bombing and remembers her and talks to those who pass by. This is his sign and continued communication with his daughter.

When we were in England recently, we went into Westminster Cathedral and looked at the memorials to kings, queens, poets, warriors, etc. We lit a candle at the bank of candles for Ruthie and, as we left, I couldn't help but have a tear in my eyes as I thought of that candle

burning there in the great cathedral as a sign to Ruthie that we haven't forgotten and love her always. The next day we took Chunnel to Paris. As we returned to London and emerged from the Chunnel, we found that it had rained in England. And there in the sky was – not a single rainbow – but a double, beautiful rainbow. In that we saw a sign from Ruthie that she remembers and loves us still too! As our group talked we found we had things that had happen or that we had seen that we knew we couldn't mention these things to some because they wouldn't understand.

We wouldn't have before! But now we do understand and we can tell each other about these signs and what they symbolize to us. So if you have a sign or a symbol, treasure it and don't let anyone tell you it has no meaning. It has meaning to you! And these signs and symbols are of a deep grace and peace that means much to us all. Share your Survivor Tree, your candle, your rainbow, your butterfly and don't doubt for a minute that there is a reason for the happening or sign even though you may not know exactly what it is right now.

When we are in the deepest throes of our grief, when our beloved child has just recently been snatched from life by a tragic accident or succumbed to a fatal illness, or died in some other way, can we believe we can ever be happy again? When to simply get up in the morning is a major accomplishment, can we believe that we will ever be able to function with enthusiasm or purpose?

When every thought of our children brings excruciating pain, can we believe that we will someday be able to think of him/her and smile? I know it is hard to believe that this will ever happen, but it will.

Words used in defining HOPE are expect, trust, anticipate, wish, desire and confident. These are the key words.

If we expect, trust and anticipate feeling better, we will in time.

If we wish it and are confident, the day will come when we will feel better. Of course, it doesn't just happen. It takes long hard grief work. It takes many painful hours of allowing ourselves to go through our grief.

It takes patience and it takes time. But know you will come to the light at the end of the tunnel. Know that there is hope. Know that many, many bereaved parents who have been in the same painful place that you are now have found life meaningful again.

.....Know that you will too

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.

November Meeting

November 15th

Doors open at 6:00 meeting begins at 6:30.

Come and share as we help one another cope with our loss.

Mary Camp will share tips on “Surviving the Holidays”

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.

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The TCF Sibling Credo

We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.
 We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters.
 Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us.
 Sometimes we will need the support of our friends.
 At other times we need our families to be there.
 Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us,
 continuing to become the individuals we want to be.
 We cannot be our dead brother or sister;
 however, a special part of them lives on with us.
 When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed.
 We are living a life very different from what we envisioned,
 and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak.
 Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others
 the value of family and the precious gift of life.
 Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are,
 but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of
 The Compassionate Friends.

“The Compassionate Friends is about transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope. It takes people out of the isolation society imposes on the bereaved and lets them express their grief naturally. With the shedding of tears, healing comes. And the newly bereaved get to see people who have survived and are learning to live and love again.”

—Simon Stephens, founder of The Compassionate Friends