



P.O. Box 647, Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340

September 2010

**Chapter Co-Leaders**

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David Fields

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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 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.

**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.

**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

### September Birth Dates

- 9/1 **William Henry Sanders** Son of Barbara Sanders  
9/3 **Todd Jeffries** Son of Jim and Terry Jefferies  
9/10 **Matthew Robert Fritz** Son of Beth and Richard Fritz  
9/13 **"Star" Edward Wilson** Son of Edward Wilson & Kathryn Garner  
9/16 **Garrett Witt** Son of David and Linda Witt  
9/17 **Bradley Johnson** Son of Don and Sharon Johnson  
9/18 **Jeffrey Todd Sims** Son of Jim and Sharon Sims & Priscilla Sims  
9/19 **Dale Patrick Haight** Son of Pat and John Haight  
9/19 **Foqrul Majumder** Son of Sharifa and Serajul Majumder  
9/22 **Lydia Hodson Copeland** Daughter of Mildred Cox Hodson  
9/22 **Lonnie Gene Centers** Son of Nita Centers  
9/22 **Thomas Monroe Routt** Son of Stephanie Routt  
9/24 **William Elliott Sommer** Son of Tim and Rita Sommer  
9/25 **Shari Eldot** Daughter of Rosalyn Eldot  
9/25 **Jonathan Derek Perdue** Son of Donna Perdue  
9/28 **Hannah Meagan Landers** Son of Michelle and Richard Landers  
9/30 **Keeley Knuteson Hollingsworth** Daughter of Berkeley and Patty Hollinsworth  
9/30 **Chris Rudnick** Son of Julia Rudnick-Woodall

### September Remembrance Dates

- 9/1 **Ralph Winton Wesley** Son of Genevieve Wesley  
9/2 **John Richard Roe** Son of Ray and Marilyn Roe  
9/2 **McKenna Brooke Hatchett** daughter of Tim and Melissa Hatchett  
9/5 **Coy Tedd Cosby** Son of Shirley and Jess Cosby  
9/6 **J. Randall Rogers "Rand"** Son of Ron and Virginia Atwood  
9/7 **Jim Albright** Son of J. M. and Erna Albright  
9/10 **Matthew Robert Fritz** Son of Beth and Richard Fritz  
9/12 **Christopher Thomas Miller** Son of Tim and Colleen Miller  
9/14 **Thomas E. Masters, II** Son of Bess Masters  
9/17 **Robin Grace Dixon** Daughter of Lenna and Letch Dixon  
9/19 **Tim Sizemore** Son of T. C. Sizemore  
9/20 **Melanie Kaye Laughlin** Daughter of Ernie & Brenda Laughlin  
9/21 **Dale Patrick Haight** Son of Pat and John Haight  
9/25 **Michael Varnell Norton** Son of Mike & Vada Barnes & Varnell Norton  
9/27 **Hank Butler Scolf** Son of Michael and Doretta Scolf  
9/27 **Matthew "Beau" Salsman** Son of Ray and Vicki Salsman

## The Gap...

The gap between those of us who have lost children and those who have not is profoundly difficult to bridge. No one, whose children are well and intact, can be expected to understand what parents who have lost children have absorbed and what they bear. Our children come to us through every blade of grass, every crack in the sidewalk, every bowl of breakfast cereal. We seek contact with their atoms, their hairbrush, their toothbrush, their clothing. We reach for what was integrally woven into the fabric of our lives, now torn and shredded.

A black hole has been blown through our souls and, indeed, it often does not allow the light to escape. It is a difficult place. For us to enter there is to be cut deeply, and torn anew, each time we go there, by the jagged edges of our loss. Yet we return, again and again, for that is where our children now reside. This will be so for years to come and it will change us profoundly. At some point in the distant future, the edges of that hole will have tempered and softened but the empty space will remain - a life sentence.

Our friends will change through this. There is no avoiding it. We grieve for our

Children, in part, through talking about them and our feelings for having lost them. Some go there with us; others cannot and through their denial add a further measure, however unwittingly, to an already heavy burden.

Assuming that we may be feeling "better" six months later is simply "do not get it". The excruciating and isolating reality that bereaved parents feel is hermetically sealed from the nature of any other human experience. Thus it is a trap - those whose compassion and insight we most need are those for whom we harbor the experience that would allow them that sensitivity and capacity. And yet, somehow there are those, each in their own fashion, who have found a way to reach us and stay, to our comfort. They have understood, again each in their own way, that our children remain our children through our memory of them. Their memory is sustained through speaking about them and our feelings about their death. Deny this and you deny their life. Deny their life and you no longer have a place in ours. We recognize that we have moved to an emotional place where it is often very difficult to reach us. Our attempts to be normal

are painful and the day-to-day carries a silent, screaming anguish that accompanies us, sometimes from moment to moment. Were we to give it its own voice we fear we would become truly unreachable, and so we remain "strong" for a host of reasons even as the strength saps our energy and drains our will. Were we to act out our true feelings we would be impossible to be with. We resent having to act normal, yet we dare not do otherwise. People who understand this dynamic are our gold standard. Working our way through this over the years will change us, as does every experience - and extreme experience changes one extremely. We know we will have recovered when, as we have read, it is no longer so painful to be normal. We do not know who we will be at that point or who will still be with us.

We have read that the gap is so difficult that, often, bereaved parents must attempt to reach out to friends and relatives or risk losing them. This is our attempt. For those untarnished by such events, who wish to know in some way what they, thankfully, do not know, read this. It may provide a window that is helpful for people on both sides of the gap.

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

[thecamps@roadrunner.com](mailto:thecamps@roadrunner.com).

Corrections to Birth Dates or Remembrances should be sent to Lisa at [garandsmom@yahoo.com](mailto:garandsmom@yahoo.com).

**If Only They Knew...****By: Jan McNess, TCF– Victoria, Australia**

If only they knew that when I sometimes weep quietly, it's not in self pity for what I have lost; I weep for what he has lost, for the life he loved, for the music which filled his very being, ... for the poetry which moved him to tears, for the beauty about him that daily fed his soul, for the exhilaration and excitement of flying the skies, of searching for his God in the vast space of the universe.

For all that, he loved and lost, I cry.

If only they knew the feeling of deep grief, the emptiness, the dull pain, the endlessness of death, if only they understood the insanity of the platitudes so freely spoken: "time heals... you'll get over it," "it was for the best... God takes only the best," and realized that these are more an insult than a comfort, that the warm and compassionate touch of another means so much more. If only they knew that, we will not find true peace and tranquility until we try to stand in the shoes of others. If only they knew that we will not be understood until we learn to understand compassionately, and we will not be heard until we learn to listen with hearts as well as minds.

If only they knew that when I speak of him, I am not being morbid. I am not denying his death, I am proclaiming his life. I am learning to live with his absence. For 26 years, he was a part of my life, born, nurtured, molded, and loved; this cannot be put aside to please those who are uncomfortable with my grief. If only they knew that when I sit quietly, apparently content with my own company, I am not self-indulgently unhappy, dwelling on things which cannot be changed; I am with him, I am seeing his face, hearing his voice, remembering his laughter, recalling his excitement and joy in life. Please allow me this time with him, as I do not begrudge you your time with your children.



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.*

## Worldwide Candle Lighting

Held annually the second Sunday in December, this year 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.

TCF of the Bluegrass will hold a candle lighting, details to follow in the coming months.

### 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](mailto:butterflymom@windstream.net) ) or Suzie ([CATHOLIC20@WINDSTREAM.NET](mailto: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.

### Love Gifts

**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 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 best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless,  
unremembered acts of kindness and love.

William Wordsworth 1770-1850