



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Bluegrass Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Bluegrass Chapter Newsletter

“We need not walk alone.”

www.tcfbluegrass.org

P.O. Box 647, Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340

September/October

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Bluegrass Chapter

The Compassionate Friends

Regional Coordinators

Suzie McDonald

(859) 576-7680

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

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.

Love Gifts

A Thoughtful Way to Remember

Love Gifts are a beautiful and loving way to remember a loved one. Through Love Gifts, we are able to reach out to others with our brochures and newsletters as well as obtain books and other information for our library. We truly appreciate every Love Gift, donation and sponsorship. Our Chapter work is done by volunteers and these donations help us reach out in many ways, including the preparation and mailing of the newsletter.

Love Gift

In memory of their daughter Keeley Hollingsworth,

Given by: Berkeley and Patty Hollingsworth

Refreshments

Some of us like to remember our child’s birthday or the anniversary of his or her death by bringing a cake or cookies to the meeting that month. We would appreciate having you bring a special treat to any meeting. You may also want to bring and share a picture of your child.

Thank you!

Meeting Information

Lexington

First Tuesday of Every Month

6:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

Hospice of the Bluegrass

2321 Alexandria Drive

Lexington, Kentucky

Winchester

Third Tuesday of Every Month

7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.

Hospice East

417 Shoppers Drive

Winchester, Kentucky

**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

September Birthdates

- 9/1 William Henry Sanders Son of Barbara Sanders
- 9/3 Todd Jeffries Son of Jim and Terry Jefferies
- 9/4 Stuart Shields Son of Steven Shields
- 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
- 9/18 Kasey Lund Daughter of Robin Jenerou
- 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
- 9/18 Charles Planchage Son of Peggy Campbell
- 9/19 Tim Sizemore Son of T. C. Sizemore
- 9/20 Jennifer Laughlin Daughter of Ernie & Brenda Laughlin
- 9/20 Stuart Shields Son of Steven Shields
- 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

Our Children Forever Loved and Remembered

October Birthdates

- 10/1 Imani & Kirk Children of Dawn Stoepker
- 10/6 Jan Cecile Richardson Daughter of Jim and Jean Richardson
- 10/7 Renee Peterson Daughter of Roy and Juanita Peterson
- 10/8 Fred "Lance" L. Murphy III Son of Patty Murphy
- 10/8 Clay Warren Burton Son of Jim and Dottie Burton
- 10/12 Tiffany Creech Daughter of Jim and Karen Rice
- 10/13 Nathan Winston Crim Son of Becky & Keith LaVey & Howard B. Crim
- 10/14 John Blair Potter Son of Susan and James Potter
- 10/15 Addison Elise "Addie" Koch Daughter of Charles and Katie Koch
- 10/23 Brandon James Moore Son of Jane Moore
- 10/25 Joe Collins Hisle IV Son of Barbara and Joe Hisle
- 10/28 Colleen Christine Owen Daughter of Diane and Andrew Owen
- 10/29 Shawn Wade Kirby Son of Tommy and Teresa Kirby
- 10/29 Joseph Willliam Minor Son of Pat and Joseph S. Minor
- 10/30 Joe Frank Banks Son of Barbara Kinne
- 10/31 Jennifer Podgorski Daughter of Monique Podgorski

October Remembrance Dates

- 10/1 Imani & Kirk Children of Dawn Stoepker
- 10/1 Taran Ray Thomas Son of John and Keila Thomas
- 10/2 Brian J. Bergin Son of Robert and Sherry Lowry
- 10/2 Victor Paul Basil Son of Lorena Basil
- 10/5 Jeffrey Todd Sims Son of Jim & Sharon Sims and Priscilla Sims
- 10/7 Larry Crawford, Jr. Son of Evelyn Dee Crawford
- 10/8 Cameron Jordan Christopher Son of Angelika Traiforos
- 10/9 David Davis Son of Curt Davis
- 10/11 Jeffrey Lynn Spradling Son of Wilma Cracraft
- 10/11 Christopher James Mink Son of Janice and James Mink
- 10/17 Bobby Lee Grimm Son of Brenda and Peter Grimm
- 10/17 Ivy Britton Freeman Daughter of Kevin and Cindy Freeman
- 10/19 Kristi Mildred Wainscott Daughter of Robert and Janet Smith
- 10/21 Chad Hammons Son of Dottie and Walter Hammons
- 10/26 Donald Duncan Son of Donald and Diane Duncan
- 10/26 Christopher Perry Adkins Son of Linda Brooks
- 10/29 Bessie Renee Root Daughter of Patricia Root
- 10/30 Gary James Travis Burke Son of Bonnie Burke, Nephew of Addie Waugh

Correction to July/August Newsletter

- 8/1 Daniel Wyatt Gruber, son of Bill and Pat Gruber



Fall's transformations are remarkable. Trees change into a symphony of color and movement. The transition from summer to autumn is stunning and obvious. The transitions in grief are less obvious but equally stunning.

As leaves tumble down, branches are left empty. People in grief may feel this emptiness in every level of their being. The empty chair, the unheard laughter, and the absence of touch are painful reminders of loss. An array of feelings from fear, loneliness and anger to guilt, shock, and relief may move through us like a powerful wind.

It takes great strength to turn into

this gale, facing these feelings of loss and bending with them until they begin to subside. This storm of emotion may leave us feeling exhausted, but ultimately clearer about what brings meaning to the present.

Autumn is a time of balance, when light and dark and heat and cold find equilibrium. We, too, can find balance in fullness and emptiness, pain and appreciation, work and rest. We gradually begin to see the possibilities of a life with meaning and hope.

The other side of grief is seeing what it is to live.

Honoring Children

Bereaved parents find various ways to honor and remember their children.

Many parents setup scholarships in memory of their children.

Gardens are created to honor and memorialize their children. Gardens can provide a place of reflection and peace.

Books and toys provided within hospitals for children while in the hospital or visits to the emergency room.

There are many, many ways to keep your child's legacy alive, be creative find something that brings you peace and joy!

One of the ways to think about your grief is to look at some of the markers that indicate you are moving forward. Some examples are below. This list is entitled, “I Know I’m Moving on a bit When…….”

- I want to do more with my life than “just survive”.
- I can laugh without feeling guilty.
- I’m not afraid anymore of losing the memory of my loved one.
 - I know it will always be with me
- I come to realize that doing little things for myself is OK
- I’m not as much afraid of the future.
- I don’t find myself “searching” for my loved one as much as before.
- I’m not as sad or depressed as I used to be.
- I feel I don’t have to do a ritual.
- I can get through the holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries a little easier.
- I can reach out to help other people.
- I can engage in some of the activities I had given up after the death.
- It doesn’t hurt as much as it used to.
- I can talk to others about him/her without getting upset.
- I can see the memory of my loved one as “less saintly” i.e. not perfect.
- The emotional roller coaster ride isn’t as bad as it used to be.
- Sometimes a whole day has slipped by without my feeling overwhelmed.
- I now know both truths:
 - I am moving on with my life, BUT
 - I will never forget and moving on does not mean that I love him/her any less.
- I can experience the reminders as more positive than negative.
- I can look back and see my progress.
- I realize that it really happened and that my life has forever changed.
- When another loss occurs I now understand more the effect it has on me (and others).
- I realize that I will always carry my loved one in my heart and that I am a better person for having had this person in my life for however long or short it was.
- And I’ve come to realize that some things in life – just don’t matter.

"The reality is that we don't forget, move on, and have closure, but rather we honor, we remember, and incorporate our deceased children and siblings into our lives in a new way. In fact, keeping memories of your loved one alive in your mind and heart is an important part of your healing journey." ~ Harriet Schiff, author of The Bereaved Parent

If we have omitted your child, misspelled your child's name, or listed incorrect dates, please accept our apologies and call Janie Fields at (859) 881-1991 to correct the information. Call any of our telephone friends if you are having a hard time on these days. We truly understand your pain; for we, too, remember our own children.



Grief and the Change of Seasons

By: Linda Lehmann

The first year following the death of a loved one you may reflect on the significant and insignificant events of your life from the previous year. You may catch yourself thinking, “Last year, at this time, we were...” Your memories of those seasons of life include your loved one and you may be painfully aware that when the season comes again, you will have lived a whole year without him or her. This reality confirms what you may already have known - that the physical presence of your loved one is lost forever, just like the last hint of snow that melts into the ground. And with that realization come a new sense of how time and the seasons pass.

The change of seasons signifies the many roles that your loved one played in each of the seasons of your life. These role losses may trigger your grief all over again. The subtle changes that signal the approach of a new season observed by others may be overshadowed by the grief that looms over each passing day for you. And then, before you know it, time has continued to tick off minutes, hours, days, weeks, and months as you are confronted with a new season that brings with it more loss and grief.

As each season arrives, ask yourself:

- What roles did my loved one play in this season?
- Who will fill that role now?

What role did I play in my loved one’s life that is now gone?

If no one can fill that role, you may need to ask for help from others who may be waiting for that opportunity. You will need to allow yourself to grieve the unique role your loved one played in your life, as well as the role you played in his or hers.

With each new time of year, you may find that your mood does not fit the season.

- As spring arrives, you may feel like you are in the winter of your grief, only to be surrounded by new growth, new beginnings and people who talk about things like hope and anticipation of warmer weather.
- Summer months are often spent doing family and outdoor activities that may heighten your sense of loss. The days full of despair may be longer than you would like them to be. It may be a beautiful day, but you may feel stone cold inside.
- As the leaves fall from the trees in the fall and the growing season ends, you are reminded of the dullness and drabness of your life. Your grief may be in its fallow time, where everyday looks pretty much the same.

As the weather gets colder and forces you indoors, you may feel even more alone and isolated in your grief. The shorter days may amplify the night you feel in your soul.

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Grief and the Change of Seasons
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It is important to surround yourself with the beauty of each new season in order to remind yourself that while you may be in the depths of your grief, you are in the midst of life.



- Surround yourself with living things in order to reassure yourself that your grief will change like the seasons.
- When you go outdoors, breathe in fresh air deeply to replace the stagnant air of grief.
- Take a moment to feel the breeze against your face or the warmth of the sun against your skin. Remind yourself that you are still alive, even though your loved one has died.
- Plant flowers to reassure you that plants grow with care. Remind yourself often, that your grief will ease if you honor it and take care of it. Indeed, you may find yourself growing in ways you could have never imagined.
- If you have no seeds of hope, let someone else plant them for you. Surround yourself with others who will tend to you, encourage you, and provide an environment where you can do your work.

Remember, time alone will not heal your grief; it's what you do with your time that heals your grief. Trust in the rhythm of your grief. Trust that someday in a new season you will find your way back to life just like the daffodil that breaks through the frozen ground back into the sunlight.

When your child dies, the immensity of still being alive strikes at your core. Your focus shifts back and forth between the grief you have and the gift you had. You are overwhelmed by sorrow and loss and a sense of what might have been. At the same time, you are thunderstruck by the joy and beauty and richness your child brought into the world. You are awash with the deepest-aching pain. And yet you long to celebrate your child's brief, brilliant time on this planet. That moment-to-moment tension, the never-ending whiplash to-and-fro between these two powerful instincts — the grief and the gift — drives you mad. Some parents in deep grief have found a way to tamp down the madness a little, to go on living within this gut-wrenching dichotomy. They have discovered ways to redirect some of the grief toward the gift — by creating a memorial that celebrates the memory of the child, and, at the same time, sustains and propels the child's spirit and hopes and dreams into the future. It is a paradox, says Kenneth J. Doka, a professor of gerontology at the graduate school of The College of New Rochelle. By creating memorial funds or foundations, says Doka, the author of a shelf-full of grief books, including *Living with Grief: At Work, At School, At Worship*, parents "are creating a bond with their children that goes beyond death."



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 p.m. local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 17th annual 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. Started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are con-

ducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

The Compassionate Friends and allied organizations are joined by local bereavement groups, churches, funeral homes, hospitals, hospices, children's gardens, schools, cemeteries, and community centers. Services have ranged in size from just a few people to nearly a thousand.

Every year you are invited to post a message in the Remembrance Book which will be available, during the event, at TCF's national website.

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.