



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS LEXINGTON—BLUEGRASS CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

P. O. Box 647  
NICHOLASVILLE, KY 40340

"We need not walk alone "

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

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SEPTEMBER 2008

**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

SUZIE McDONALD: (859)  
576-7680

MONIQUE PODGORSKI:  
(859) 381-8256

**Note**—we encourage our members to write and share their experiences and memories. If you would like to submit original poems or articles to be included in the newsletter, please email them to: [rwoloch@insightbb.com](mailto:rwoloch@insightbb.com) and put **SUBMISSION** in the subject line.



## CHAPTER CO-LEADERS:

Treasurer and Newsletter Mailings:  
Newsletter Editor:  
Hospitality:

**JIM SIMS & STEPHANIE M.**

David & Janie Fields  
Rebecca Woloch  
Karla S.

## • WELCOME •

The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings. The primary purpose is to assist them in the positive resolution of the grief experience upon the death of a child and to support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health. The secondary purpose is to provide information and education about bereaved parents and siblings. The objective is to help those in their community, including family, friends, employers, and co-workers and professionals, to be supportive.

## MEETING INFORMATION

Third Monday of Every Month — 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p. m.  
Hospice of the Bluegrass ▪ 2321 Alexandria Drive ▪ Lexington, KY

## MEETING FORMAT

6:00 p.m.—Doors Open. This is a good time to visit with old friends and acknowledge new ones. Be sure to check out the library.  
6:30 p.m.—Meeting Begins. Please plan to arrive early so the meeting can begin on time.

## MEETING TOPICS

SEPTEMBER — Jim Sims, Topic: "Will I feel this way forever?"  
OCTOBER—Screening of the movie "Space Between Breaths" during our regular meeting. Due to length of film, please be seated by 6:30pm.

**STEERING COMMITTEE**— meets on the first Monday of each month at 6:30pm at Hospice. All are welcome to attend and participate.

## Bluegrass Chapter of The Compassionate Friends Regional Coordinator:

Karen Cantrell  
(502) 320-6438

## The Compassionate Friends National Office

▪ P.O. Box 3696 ▪ Oak  
Brook, IL 60522 ▪  
(877) 969-0010

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

## WE WELCOME YOU WITH COMPASSION, LOVE, & 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.

Larry and Gayle Gay, parents of **Anthony Eugene Gay** (7/2/08)

Mark Cave and Krystal Landers, parents of **Adam Harold Cave** (7/18/08)

Beverly Jo Baker, mother of **Harlen Baker** (7/1/08)

There is no pain so great as the memory of joy in present grief. Joseph Addison



## National News and Notes

We in The Compassionate Friends have heard many stories from our members about how their grief was handled in the workplace. Some of these stories have been heartwarming and reassuring, depicting employers that provided a caring, understanding environment for employees grieving the death of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Others, however, have reminded us that much progress remains to be made.

Through its Compassionate Employer Recognition (CER) Program, The Compassionate Friends seeks to recognize those caring companies and other organizations whose workplace

policies and practices go above and beyond the norm in providing a caring workplace for employees who have suffered the death of a child, sibling or grandchild.

The Compassionate Friends will begin taking nominations for 2009 on Monday, September 4, 2008. Online nomination, as well as printable 2009 nomination forms, will become available at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org).

Examples of company policies and management practices that would qualify an employer for recognition include, but are not limited to:

- Allowing additional time off without loss of benefits.
- Providing flexible work schedules and assignments.
- Allowing leeway in job performance standards.
- Fostering an environment of mutual support among co-workers.
- Providing professional grief counseling, human resources support, or information regarding self-help bereavement support organizations.
- Other policies and practices that go beyond what is normal in your community

## Local News and Notes



The date for the **TCF BLUEGRASS YARD SALE** has been changed due to a scheduling conflict and will now be held on **October 18th** from 9am to 2pm at South Elkhorn Christian Church. We encourage your friends and family to pitch in to help.

Please contact Suzie McDonald by email at [catholic20@msn.com](mailto:catholic20@msn.com) or by phone at 576-7680 with donated items or to help with this event. Remember, proceeds help us reach out to help other families as well as to maintain our current programs!

Please mark your calendars and help spread the word to make this a successful event!

## TCF Bluegrass—Our Children

The Bluegrass Chapter's website includes loving tributes to our children. Pages are created and posted online and linked through the "Our Children" listing. If you would like a web page designed for your child, please contact Rebecca Woloch at [rwolochxxx@gmail.com](mailto:rwolochxxx@gmail.com) or call 254-3148. This service is free of charge—remit up to three photos and the text and you will be able to proof and edit the page prior to it being posted.

## Walk to Remember—Lexington Cemetery

On Sunday, October 12th at 2pm the annual "Walk to Remember" will be held. Parents are asked to meet at the Henry Clay Memorial for an opening ceremony at 1:30pm and then the group will walk to the Babyland Section of the Cemetery for reading of poetry, music and sharing. Babies' names will be called individually and a memorial ornament is given to the family. RSVP's are necessary. Please contact Deborah Mueller, Perinatal Bereavement Coordinator at Central Baptist Hospital for additional information. She can be reached at 260-6904 .

## Camp Echo (Encouraging Children's Healing Opportunities)

Hospice of the Bluegrass' fall session of Camp Echo will be held September 19-21, 2008. Camp Echo is a special weekend camp for children, ages 6 to 12, who are grieving the death of a loved one. At Camp Echo Hospice grief counselors with experience & training in helping children provide the children with a safe place to share experiences, understand their grief feelings, and develop skills to cope with their grief in healthy ways. For more information, contact Whitney Clay or Laura Caudill Hospice of the Bluegrass (859) 277-2700 or (800) 876-6005 or online at [www.hospicebg.org](http://www.hospicebg.org).

## From our Chapter Leader by Co-chapter leader, Stephanie

I am sure that you have heard about the goings-on of the Democratic National Convention. I am not a political person, and I haven't even thought to take much of a glance. However one morning on the way to work, I heard something interesting on the radio. The person was talking about Joe Biden. Joe Biden is a U.S. Senator and current vice presidential candidate. Thirty years ago, Biden lost his wife and 18-month old daughter in a car accident. It was a horrible tragedy that we all can relate to, but that was not what completely caught me. I continued to listen and the radio personality went on to say that since that day whenever a member of Biden's family calls him at work in Washington, they have to first say, "It's not important." I can definitely relate to that.

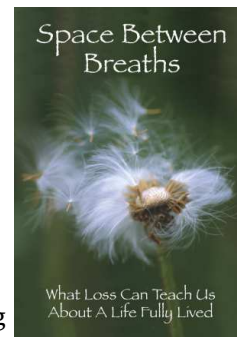
Chills still go up my spine nearly four years later when I think about that phone call about Jonathan. And, I absolutely hate when I pick up my phone at work or at home and someone says my name with a sense of urgency. It takes me right back, and I immediately think someone has died. Can you relate?

I believe that I am going to start the "It's not important" rule. It seems like it would work. Too many times my heart has gone from 0 to 900 from those "urgent" phone calls. I realize that the person on the other line doesn't know what I am going through in those moments, and they really believe that it is an emergency. I don't want to offend anyone either, because the issue may be important. But, not as important as losing your child... so from now on, the "It's not important" rule will be in effect.

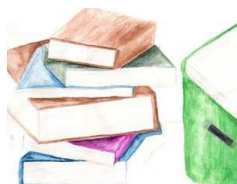
Hospice of the Bluegrass invites you to participate in **Grief Support Night**. This free program offers support groups for those who have experienced the death of a loved one. Children's groups are divided by age. These groups provide a safe place for children and adolescents to share their feelings with peers, come to understand that their grief reactions are normal, and develop healthy skills to cope with their grief. Adult groups include child loss, young widowed persons, and a general loss group. Dinner is provided at 6 p.m. with groups running from 6:30-8 p.m. Sessions run for eight weeks and are offered several times each year. The next session will begin **October 2, 2008**. For more information, or to register for this session, please contact the Center for Grief and Education at 859-277-2700 or 800-876-6005 or e-mail [testep@hospicebg.org](mailto:testep@hospicebg.org).

The Compassionate Friends of Frankfort invites you to attend a screening of the documentary "Space Between Breaths" on Saturday, October 11, 2008 at 5:30pm at Franklin County High school in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Who are we? What really matters? Is it possible to find true happiness after a great loss? The answers to some of life's most important questions are explored in SPACE BETWEEN BREATHS, a film, which looks at the potential in grief and to the ways it can become a motivational, transformational force in our lives. Featuring conversations with parents who have lost a child, including those whose loved ones died at Columbine, on September 11th, and a mother whose son was one of the first U.S. soldiers to die in Iraq, SPACE BETWEEN BREATHS offers an inspired and healing perspective on loss which will transform the way you live and love. The TCF Bluegrass Chapter will also be showing the film at its October 20th meeting at 6:30pm!



**Our Newsletter is going green!** The TCF Bluegrass Newsletter is moving towards a more environmentally friendly and cost effective delivery. Each month we post our newsletter online at [www.tcfbluegrass.org/newsletter.html](http://www.tcfbluegrass.org/newsletter.html). If you have internet access PLEASE unsubscribe from the printed edition of our newsletter by emailing a note to Janie at [Butterflymom@alltel.net](mailto:Butterflymom@alltel.net) and "cc" the request to Jim at [KyWildcat1@alltel.net](mailto:KyWildcat1@alltel.net) so that he can add you to the email notification list. The newsletter is posted the first of each month on our website.



**LIBRARY BOOKS**—Please remember to return all borrowed books. Many books were donated in memory of a child. If you can't come to the meetings to return the books, please call or email Jim or Mary at (859) 858-8288, (859) 797-2168, or [TheCamps@adelphia.net](mailto:TheCamps@adelphia.net). Put **Library Books** in the subject line, and include the book name and author, your name and phone number. 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 and contact Mary with your donations.

**SEPTEMBER Birth Dates**

9/1/58 <i>William Henry Sanders</i>	4/17/06	Son of Barbara Sanders
9/3/71 <i>Todd Jeffries</i>	8/16/95	Son of Jim and Terry Jefferies
9/10/80 <i>Matthew Robert Fritz</i>	9/10/80	Son of Beth and Richard Fritz
9/13/58 <i>“Star” Edward Wilson</i>	4/5/06	Son of Kathryn Garner & Edward Wilson
9/16/84 <i>Garrett Witt</i>	5/28/94	Son of David and Linda Witt
9/17/77 <i>Bradley Johnson</i>	7/19/95	Son of Don and Sharon Johnson
9/18/64 <i>Jeffrey Todd Sims</i>	10/5/01	Son of Jim and Sharon Sims & Priscilla Sims
9/22/55 <i>Lydia Hodson Copeland</i>	10/28/91	Daughter of Mildred Cox Hodson
9/22/73 <i>Lonnie Gene Centers</i>	11/12/00	Son of Nita Centers
9/24/80 <i>William Elliott Sommer</i>	5/4/04	Son of Tim and Rita Sommer
9/25/62 <i>Shari Eldot</i>	4/21/86	Daughter of Rosalyn Eldot
9/25/72 <i>Jonathan Derek Perdue</i>	3/2/90	Son of Donna Perdue
9/30/70 <i>Chris Rudnick</i>	2/27/95	Son of Julia Rudnick-Woodall

**SEPTEMBER Remembrances**

9/1/83 <i>Ralph Winton Wesley</i>	(Born) 11/8/59	Son of Genevieve Wesley
9/2/99 <i>John Richard Roe</i>	(Born) 9/18/65	Son of Ray and Marilyn Roe
9/5/83 <i>Coy Tedd Cosby</i>	(Born) 8/8/64	Son of Shirley and Jess Cosby
9/6/89 <i>J. Randall Rogers “Rand”</i>	(Born) 1/10/58	Son of Ron and Virginia Atwood
9/7/87 <i>Jim Albright</i>	(Born) 1/2/53	Son of J. M. and Erna Albright
9/10/80 <i>Matthew Robert Fritz</i>	(Born) 9/10/80	Son of Beth and Richard Fritz
9/12/99 <i>Christopher Thomas Miller</i>	(Born) 2/18/93	Son of Tim and Colleen Miller
9/14/95 <i>Thomas E. Masters, II</i>	(Born) 6/24/70	Son of Bess Masters
9/17/86 <i>Robin Grace Dixon</i>	(Born) 1/21/66	Daughter of Lenna and Letch Dixon
9/19/83 <i>Tim Sizemore</i>	(Born) 6/14/65	Son of T. C. Sizemore
9/25/97 <i>Michael Varnell Norton</i>	(Born) 12/2/70	Son of Mike & Vada Barnes & Varnell Norton
9/27/86 <i>Hank Butler Scolf</i>	(Born) 12/24/69	Son of Michael and Doretta Scolf
9/27/03 <i>Matthew “Beau” Salsman</i>	(Born) 5/31/79	Son of Ray and Vicki Salsman

The act of living is different all through. Her absence is  
like the sky spread over everything.

A Grief Observed, C. S. Lewis

## What Jesse taught me: ping by Rebecca Woloch, TCF Bluegrass

In the world of Jesse's beloved technology the term "ping" is defined as a way to test whether a signal is being received from one network to another. An echo request is sent for an echo response, get it? Well, neither do I.

Bouncing signals is how I guess I best understand the concept. When Jesse was 6 or 7 years old and we were driving home from a visit with my parents, traveling the Bluegrass Parkway in the dusk he woke up just as we neared Versailles. "Those are microwave relay stations" he told me pointing at the blinking lights atop towers in the distance. Then he taught me how they worked.

Ping.

We spent many hours traveling that highway between Lexington and Shepherdsville. Mostly he slept. I can see little Jesse with his soft blond hair curled up in a ball. Then I see my big Jesse all arms and legs, this gangly teenager catching a nap and barely squeezing into the space next to me. Maybe one day I'll be able to remember those days without all these tears. I'm not so sure that will ever happen but people keep telling me it might.

In April of 2006 Jesse created my Gmail account so that I would be able to "ping" with him, it was the term he also used for sending instant messages to me. "I'll ping you later" he'd say. I'd say something like "ok, I'll pong you back."

And like everything else in this life now, even my pings have changed. Instead of "yooohooo... anybody home???" or "mom, can you pick me up after STLP today?" it's become the ping of one sad mom to another. We use email, gmail and Facebook. Text messages and cards in the mail. But we ping – we bounce our sad signals off of each other trying to make sense of things, connecting, crying, and sometimes even laughing. We share our children's stories, share our grief, share our love. We tell each other how thankful we are to have each other. We tell each other how much we wish we had never met.

Jesse's friends ping me - they need advice or someone to talk to, they want to recount a story or they just need someone to know that sometimes they are awfully sad and miss their friend. I wish more of their parents were better able to help them, were less likely to dis-

count their feelings. I wish more adults in our society would simply stop for 2 minutes and consider what it would be like to lose a child and how that might hurt everyone. I wish more adults wouldn't respond with "just don't think about it" because that feels like they are taking a giant eraser to Jesse's life. I wish more of these parents could understand that at 17 years old, on the brink of adulthood, these "kids" deserve to be treated like more than just children. And that even children deserve the right to grieve for their loved ones.

I've never wished as much as I have in these past 16 months. I wish for us all every day.

This awful place we are in now really requires a lot of pings. I look at my network of sad moms and dads and have found that it is in this "echo request" that we find small measures of comfort. Sometimes.

I ping a lot these days, I'd much prefer it was with Jesse.

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**TO OUR LONG TIME MEMBERS:** We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting new parents arrive with a fresh hurt and frightened eyes. I remember how we felt at our first meeting. Think back...what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "your pain will not always be this bad: it really does get softer". They were the ones who wanted to really listen when you talked about your child. Can you be an "oldie" for someone else? By helping someone else, you help yourself and share your child with someone who never got to know them. Come out and share with newly bereaved parents to help them help each other. Our own healing happens when we are reaching out to others.

Sometimes in life, our spirits are nearly gone . . . sometimes we feel so crushed and broken and overwhelmed . . . that we do not even see where we are going.

We are just out there walking to keep the heart beating . . . and the circulation moving.

but . . . if that is all we can do . . . and we are doing it . . .

that is still being faithful . . . not quitting . . . giving it our best.

— ann kiemel

## Jottings from Jo (originally published in the TCF Bluegrass Newsletter of September 1981)

I so well remember my first TCF meeting. It was in January 1979 at the home of Grace Manske in Louisville. I had talked on the phone briefly with Grace earlier and wild horses wouldn't have kept me away. I walked into a room full of strangers (to me) and felt instant friendship, instant compassion. These guys knew how I felt. And I felt LOUSY. My grief had about taken over my life—there didn't seem to be much else. I yearned to die and go with Jon. I longed to lose my mind, the thread I clung to was very thin. I found help. The friends I made that night are still my friends, so very, very

precious to me. Come, let us be that to you.

There will be many here who have had all the feelings you are having. We understand the need to talk, and the need not to talk. Someone laughs and someone cries; both are welcome here. Personally I feel sharing your pain helps mine. I hope you'll share mine too.

If you have worked through your grief we need you too. You can surely be a help to the rest of us. We can safely promise you will be glad you came.



### Helpful websites:

[www.griefnet.org](http://www.griefnet.org)  
[www.goodgriefresources.com](http://www.goodgriefresources.com)  
[www.thebereavementjourney.com](http://www.thebereavementjourney.com)  
[www.nationalshareoffice.com](http://www.nationalshareoffice.com)  
[www.survivorsofsuicide.com](http://www.survivorsofsuicide.com)  
[www.thecompassionatefriends.org](http://www.thecompassionatefriends.org)  
[www.griefwatch.com](http://www.griefwatch.com)  
[www.journeyofhearts.org](http://www.journeyofhearts.org)  
[www.lexinfertility.com](http://www.lexinfertility.com)  
[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)  
[www.healingheart.net](http://www.healingheart.net)  
[www.missfoundation.org](http://www.missfoundation.org)  
[www.growthhouse.org](http://www.growthhouse.org)  
[www.childrenofdome.com](http://www.childrenofdome.com)  
[www.spacebetweenbreaths.com](http://www.spacebetweenbreaths.com)

*Please let us know if you've found a helpful website you'd like to share.*

## Gerard's Presence By Patty Jackson - Gerard's mom, TCF Orlando

It has been five years since we lost our son Gerard, but he continues to remind us of his everlasting presence in our family's lives.

On the morning of our daughter Nina's wedding day, she placed a flower arrangement along with her wedding invitation on the tomb of her brother Gerard. That invitation read: "To my brother, please hold my hand on this special day and give me a sign that I know you are with me. My wedding will be far from complete without you beside me, but I know you will be in my heart." Later that day, after the wedding mass had ended, everyone was given a butterfly to release in memory of my son. As each lovely butterfly escaped into Heaven's sky, only one unique butterfly remained on the front of Nina's wedding gown. Nina waited patiently for that butterfly to follow the rest, but it did not. She began to brush the butterfly away, and with great determination the butterfly just fluttered at her feet. Yes, Gerard was at her side that day making a special moment with his graceful spirit.

At our home, Gerard's picture is always kept on our kitchen table along with a dry rose. One day, as I returned home from work, my husband greeted me with a curious question, "how were you able to keep that rose attached?" Looking across the room, I noticed

Gerard's rose resting on the handle of our coffee pot, which was located on the other side of the kitchen. Realizing that no one had been at our home that day, I knew it was just another one of his beautiful hello's to let us know that he is with us.

It has been five years, but everyday is like the first. Time has not healed our hearts. Our lives remain so lonely, but we continue to cherish every memory of our happy times.

Our letter to Gerard,

Until we get together again, maybe you can do a special favor for Dad and me? While we are apart, I want you to keep us in your heart and in your mind. Just close your eyes and imagine us here. Imagine us smiling and thinking such thankful thoughts of you, for we spend so many quiet moments missing you and knowing how hard it is to be apart. Imagine us saying how wonderful it is that you're always with us and how much we look forward to feeling your warm touch. Gerard, you are cherished in our hearts.

We love you and miss you,

Mom and Dad



In the night of death, hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing. ~Robert Ingersoll

### Blue Island by Mary Treadway, TCF Bluegrass

A couple of decades ago I heard a song by the Bee Gees titled "Blue Island." I have to admit at the time the meaning of the song just went over my head. In the past two years sometime during my rapid thoughts and day dreaming the song resurfaced. I realized what the lyrics were about: Blue Island is a place where those who die now reside.

I was talking to Jesse's Mom one day and told her that we needed a Blue Island for grieving parents. I don't consider myself really living since Robbie's accident just somewhat going through the motions, sometimes better than others. In visualizing the Blue Island it had to be close by because I don't want to be away from my familiar surroundings at night. Although, my sleep is horrible, at least if I am at home there's a better chance I might have a dream about Robbie than if in another place.

Another requirement would be no phones, no music, no outside world coming in to intrude asking questions about how your day is going, or gee you don't look happy what's the matter. Or

remarks like it will get easier and life will go on, your child wouldn't want you to live like this. Your passport to the island would be that of someone who has "lost" their child. I hesitate to use the word "lost" because that is when you can't find something but if you look long enough it usually surfaces like a pair of glasses or your favorite bracelet. If my son Robbie is just lost I haven't found him yet and it has been two years, six months and twelve days. I have found my glasses from time to time and all of the other things that I loose in my state of confusion and distraction. Let us be real and say dead because our children are dead and only their memories live on and that is because all of us work at it so very hard. Okay, now that we have established these guidelines for the Blue Island imagine going to this really safe place where if you want to cry it is okay, you can wear the button with your child's picture on it 24/7 and no one will think it is too much. You can talk to others that share memories with you and don't think they are going to make you worse off than you already are.

Most importantly everyone can grieve in their own way. If you want to go home at night a boat would be waiting to take you back to the parking area to get your car. Blue Island would be open around the clock and unfortunately there would always be new members with new children to keep their memories alive.

When I am really overwhelmed I go to the Blue Island in my own way: I just pick up the phone and call one of my new friends. You see they meet all the requirements for a passport to the island. When you are having one of those times when you just want to run away because this cannot be real, close your eyes and think of the Blue Island.

In loving memory of Robbie, Jesse, Tevis, David and Jamie who brought the sad sisters together.



Mary's son Robbie Joseph died at the age of 34 on 12/14/05 from injuries sustained in a single vehicle car crash due to driving under the influence.

### Adele Shares by Adele Shearer, TCF Septempera, Georgia

I noticed very soon after David's death that, when I spoke his name, everyone around me seemed very uncomfortable. A friend said to me one day, "Don't you think it would be easier if you didn't talk about David so much?" I suppose she didn't realize I included his name only where it would normally be. After all, he was a special part of our family for 17 years.

I tried to explain to my family and friends that it really hurt me when they deliberately avoided David's name in a conversation that had always included him before his death. Remembering a child and "trying to keep him alive" are two different things. It was, and always will be, very important to me to remember my beloved David.

Iris Bolton, leader of an Atlanta Chapter of TCF, said it so beautifully: "To speak not of him tends to deny his existence; to speak freely of him tends to affirm his life."

Most people know how to say nothing, but few people know when. -unknown

## Through My Eyes by Zachary Landers

Through my eyes the loss of my 17 year old cousin, Hannah, is still surreal. Even three months later I can easily see it will be long before the edge eases and the tears subside. My big cousin is one of a kind and truly amazing, she readily helps anyone in need without being prompted. Helping was her passion here on Earth and will undoubtedly remain that way for eternity in Heaven. She carried out her passion in the hallways of her high school, a day care and countless other places, and of course her mission trip to Kenya. I know I just have to cope and move on through and know that she is happy and without pain, and also that maybe one day the edge will ease and the tears will subside. I miss her more than I can verbalize and love her more than counting is possible. Holidays will be hard without her illuminating smile and her freckled face, and how she goofs around and causes my family to crack a smile and laugh. Life in general will be hard without my beautiful Hannah Banana. She is beauty within life. The purest definition. I feel her warming presence,

see her incredible smile, and hear her kind, comforting words everywhere I go. I gain comfort in knowing I'll see her one day. Though it angers me to the core when I think of how she was taken right before things in her life really kicked off. When I say this yes I do mean college but I am also implying the help Hannah was soon to give the world through the Peace Corps and mission trips. Through my eyes, I see.

"Winter" by Bayside  
I'm calling all my oldest friends,  
Saying sorry for this mess we're in.  
And I'm waiting, waiting,  
For the sun to come and melt this snow,  
Wash away the pain and give me  
back control, control.

An angel got his wings and we'll  
hold our heads up,  
Knowing that he's fine.  
We'd all be lucky to have a love  
like that in a lifetime.

Should we still set his plate?  
Should we still save his chair?

Should we still buy him gifts?  
And if we don't did we not care?

It makes you think about the life  
you've led,  
The stuff you've done, the things  
you've said,  
And its grounding, grounding.  
I've been feeling 3 feet tall this  
month, hardly indestructible,  
But the snow melts and the rhythm  
still goes on.

An angel got his wings and we'll  
hold our heads up,  
Knowing that he's fine.  
We'd all be lucky to have a love  
like that in a lifetime.



Zach's cousin Hannah Landers was a senior at Dunbar High School in Lexington. She was in a fatal auto accident on May 5, 2008.

## September Song TCF Portland, OR (from the September 1983 TCF Bluegrass newsletter)

I wonder how many people think about what it's like for a parent not to have to pack a Snoopy lunch paid for their child ever again. September marks the reentry of kids into the world of academia...but for some parents it's the reminder that the excitement of the children that electrifies the air won't be the same in their homes this year. So many hopes and dreams...and memories are wrapped up in what occupies a major part of a child's life...school time. Summer cushions us from having to be painfully aware that our child won't be walking to school with the other kids, or won't

be trying out for the lead part in the school play, or won't need new school clothes, or won't fall in love with the girl he sits behind in math class.

Parents who never had the pleasure of "Letting them go" to school for the first time know what they missed. They remember their own "first time" and would like to have relieved it with their child. They would have liked to have made it really special and asked all the questions that their own parents asked them when they arrived home from school. Hopes and dreams for

their child's future will never be realized. I wonder if my neighbor remembers that if my baby had lived, this is the year he would have started kindergarten. I wanted him to have a Snoopy lunch box just like the other kids.





## And Then There Were None... by Sandra J. Brown TCF Enid, Oklahoma

The happiest day of our lives was on February 19, 1970 at 6:01 am when our beautiful Joyce Lynn was born.

Then one beautiful fall day on October 8, 1986, our world as we knew it ended. At 4:00 pm that same day a mile from our home our beloved daughter Joyce Lynn, died in a one vehicle accident at the age of sixteen and one half.

No child can ever replace another and every precious child is special and unique, but at least when there are other children in the family, they can give you somewhere to channel the love that belonged to the deceased child. But that certainly does not mean you stop loving the deceased child. You don't; you'll love the deceased child forever and more with each passing day. But somehow there is this river of love that was for them only, that aches to go somewhere and if you have another child you can channel that emotion to them and feel you

have a reason to go on living. Your remaining children lift you up and help you through the grieving process. But when you are left with nothing but empty arms and a huge black hole in your heart where your deceased child used to live, you are left with nothing.

Everywhere you turn there are reminders your ONLY CHILD is gone, and now there is none. The empty chair at the dining table, the deafening silence in their empty room, no stereo or TV blaring, no sight of her favorite clothes she like to wear.

You can't seem to go into a business without one of her favorite songs coming over the music system. You'll see a dress hanging in a window and you think it looks just like her and that she would love it. You start to go inside and buy it for her, with a big smile on your face at the thought of surprising her. Then the smile turns to hysterical tears when you're brought up short by

the realization that she's no longer here to buy anything for. So the tears start again and you cry till you get sick and throw-up, then you cry some more. The pain in your heart and the tears keep on and on and on in an endless cycle you feel will never, never end and will surely destroy your very soul.

So please don't assume that losing any child is the same as losing an ONLY CHILD because it is not! And please don't give me the old cliché of "I know just how you feel!" Until you have actually lost an only child you have no idea, none whatsoever, so unless you have walked in my shoes, don't say it. But please, please pray for me and love me through my terrible pain or I too shall be no more, for I shall die.



### Hear What I Am Not Saying

Don't be fooled by me; don't be fooled by the face I wear,  
For I wear a mask, I wear a thousand masks,  
Masks that I am afraid to take off, and none of them are me.  
Pretending is an art that's second nature with me,  
Don't be fooled; for God's sake don't be fooled.  
I give you the impression that I'm secure, that all is sunny and unruffled with me.  
Within as well as without, that confidence is my name and coolness my game,  
That the water is calm and I'm in command, and that I need no-one,  
But don't believe me. Please. My surface may seem smooth  
But my surface is my mask, my ever varying and ever concealing mask.  
Beneath lies no smugness, no complacency. Beneath dwells the real me in confusion.

In fear, in aloneness. But I hide this.  
I don't want anyone to know it.  
I panic at the thought of my fear and my weakness being exposed.  
That's why I frantically create a mask to hide behind.  
A nonchalant, sophisticated façade to help me pretend.  
To shield me from the glance that knows.  
But such a glance is precisely my salvation. My only salvation.  
And I know it.  
That is, if it's followed by acceptance, if it's followed by love.  
It's the only thing that can liberate me from myself,  
From my own self built prison wall,  
From the barriers that I so painstakingly erect.  
It's the only thing that will assure me of what I can't assure myself - that I'm really worth something.  
But I don't tell you this. I don't dare.  
I'm afraid to.  
I'm afraid your glance will not be fol-

lowed by acceptance and love.  
I'm afraid you'll think less of me, that you'll laugh  
And your laugh would kill me  
I'm afraid that deep down I'm nothing, that I'm just no good, and that you will see this and reject me.  
So I play my game, my desperate pretending game  
With a façade of assurance without and a trembling child within.  
And so begins the parade of masks, The glittering but empty parade of masks,  
And my life becomes a front.  
I idly chatter to you in the suave tones of surface talk,  
I tell you everything that is really nothing,  
And nothing of what's everything, or what's crying within me  
So when I am going through my routine,  
Don't be fooled by what I'm saying  
Please listen carefully and try to hear what I am not saying.  
Author Unknown

**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, KY 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 love gifts to the basket during monthly meetings. We greatly appreciate your support!



**REMEMBER:** To have your child included on “Our Children” webpage, or to send corrections or additions to Birth Dates or Remembrances, please contact our webmaster Rebecca Woloch at [rwolochxxx@gmail.com](mailto:rwolochxxx@gmail.com).

### A Change to the TCF Bluegrass Newsletter

Our monthly newsletter is sent to members and friends via email and posted online at our website at [www.tcfbluegrass.org](http://www.tcfbluegrass.org). A quarterly newsletter containing excerpts from the monthly editions will be mailed to any member who would like to receive it in print. We strongly encourage those with internet access to unsubscribe from the mailed edition saving resources and funds as well as being ecologically minded. To unsubscribe from the print edition, please send an email to Janie at [Butterflymom@alltel.net](mailto:Butterflymom@alltel.net).



To sign up for the email edition, drop a note to Jim at [KyWildcat1@alltel.net](mailto:KyWildcat1@alltel.net). Additionally, if you know of someone who would appreciate receiving our online newsletter, please let Jim know.

Our “**Book Review**” column is open to any member who’d like to contribute. If you would like to submit a review on a book you found helpful or informative for publication in our newsletter, please email Rebecca at [rwolochxxx@gmail.com](mailto:rwolochxxx@gmail.com) or call 254-3148.



## The Cure

We think we get over things.  
 We don't get over things.  
 Or say, we get over the measles  
 but not a broken heart.  
 We need to make that distinction.  
 The things that become part of our experience  
 Never become less a part of our experience.  
 How can I say it?  
 The way to get over a life is to die,  
 Short of that, you move with it,  
 let the pain be pain,  
 not in the hope that it will vanish  
 but in the faith that it will fit in,  
 find its place in the shape of things,

and be then not any less pain  
 but true to form.  
 Because anything natural has an  
 inherent shame and will flow towards it.  
 And a life is as natural as a leaf.  
 That's what we're looking for:  
 not the end of a thing  
 but the shape of it.  
 Wisdom is seeing the shape of your life  
 without  
 obliterating, getting over, a  
 single instant of it.

— Albert Huffstickler, from  
 “Wanda” *Walking Wounded*



Seeing death as the end of life is like seeing the horizon as the end of the ocean.

-David Searls