



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

LAWRENCEVILLE, GEORGIA GWINNETT CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

Meg Avery, Editor

SUMMER 2015

June, July & August

A non-denominational self-help support group offering friendship, understanding and hope to bereaved families who have experienced the death of a child at any age, from any cause.

“When a child dies at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or daughter, brother or sister, or grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.”

CHAPTER MEETING AND CONTACT INFO:

Gwinnett Chapter- 7:30 PM on the 3rd Thursday of every month. **next meetings: June 18, July 16 and August 20.**

Trinity Christian Fellowship, 1985 Old Fountain Road, Lawrenceville, 30043.

We meet in the 100 Building, the first building on your left.

For TCF Gwinnett: contact June Cooper by phone 770-757-4927, or email jc30044@flash.net or tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com

TCF Atlanta website: www.tcfatlanta.org

GA Regional Coordinator: Earnest Stewart

The Compassionate Friends National Office:

1-877-969-0010

www.thecompassionatefriends.org

Dear Friends,

The Gwinnett Newsletter is available both in print and by e-mail. If you have received this issue in print and would prefer to receive e-mail instead, please notify us at tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com. This will help keep our postage and printing costs down. We welcome your suggestions to improve our chapter newsletter.

We would love your input for the newsletter, Poetry, articles and comments submitted by parents, siblings and grandparents are an import part of each issue. Our next issue, Autumn 2015 will cover the months of September, October & November. We will also continue to recognize birthday and anniversary dates as times of special remembrance within our TCF family. Please communicate these important dates to us if you have not already done so.



The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship, understanding and hope to bereaved families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child of any age, from any cause, is welcome. Our meetings give parents an opportunity to talk about their child and about their feelings as they walk the grief journey. There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership dues. The purpose of this support group is not to focus on the cause of death or the age of the child, as it is to focus on being a bereaved parent, along with the feelings and issues that evolve around the death experience of a child.

Our 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 become 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 other 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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WE REMEMBER BIRTHDAYS

*The light of life never goes out, and so we remember
their birthdays*

June

Justin Todd Stephens... June 1st
Aaron Stallfus... June 5th
Xavier Hayes... June 6th
Natascha Roebuck.... June 6th
Jamie Ann Quillen.... June 7th
Julie Cabezas Boyd... June 10th
Emanuel Mitchell... June 10th
Scott Michael Malone.... June 17th
Britney Knoch.... June 17th
Matthew Jones.... June 19th
Mitchell Dean Orr.... June 19th
Christopher Reed.... June 22nd
Josiah Murphy... June 23rd
Christian Nicolae Moise... June 24th
Stephen Varzaly... June 24th
Joseph Beatty.... June 25th
Nathan Self.... June 25th
Ryan Michael Sharp.... June 26th
Adam Lee Jones.... June 27th
Chris Neaves... June 29th
Jessica Rose Riley.... June 29th



July

Monta Hunt-Ramsey "Tay" ... July 1st
Adyson Claire Smith.... July 1st
Amanda Lynn Harned... July 6th
Raleigh-Jacqueline Clebert.... July 7th
Bristol Kempton... July 8th
Amanda Heath.... July 8th
Bailey Amanda Kempton... July 9th
Robert Stefan Heard... July 12th
Justin Cates.... July 12th
James R. Avery, III.... July 15th
Johnathan England.... July 17th
Christopher Gabriel Patton.... July 17th
Austin Coker.... July 21st
Fara "Nicole" Choate.... July 27th
Adam Sawyer... July 28th
Michael Clayborne Montgomery..... July 29th
Noreen Keenan.... July 29th
Monique Marlowe.... July 29th
Genna Watson.... July 30th
Arnesa Darlene Royster.... July 31st



August

Calvin Joel Duda.... Aug. 3
Jessica & Von Justin Windsor... Aug. 3rd
Daniel Green.... Aug. 5th
Gabrielle Pierre Louis.... Aug. 6th
Chris Morrow.... Aug. 6th
Clint Price.... Aug. 6th
Ronald Bruce West.... Aug. 6th
Jacob Meadows.... Aug. 10th
Ray Back.... Aug. 13th
Amanda Sullivan.... Aug. 14th
Stephen Owens.... Aug. 14th
Wendy McMain.... Aug. 18th
Justin Evans.... Aug. 19th
Matthew Jones.... Aug. 19th
Ryan Gilbride Aug. 19th
Jarod Robert Wills.... Aug. 22nd
Todd Wehunt.... Aug. 23rd
Edward Leonard Stempien... Aug. 24th
Gavin Burke.... Aug. 24th
Justin Street.... Aug. 24th
Jeremy James White.... Aug. 25th
Rachael Fouquet.... Aug. 25th
Michael LaVierge.... Aug. 27th
Brittany Hopkins ... Aug. 28th
Wesley Jenkins.... Aug. 29th
Brian Hatchett... Aug. 29th
Tommy McDonald.... Aug. 31st

Birthday Invitation

Every month we have a Birthday Table and you are warmly invited to please come share your child's birthday with us when his/her birthday is that month. This is your chance to tell us a favorite story, or share a poem or thoughts that either you or your child wrote or whatever remembrance you choose in memory of your child. Our child's or grandchild's or sibling's birthday will forever be a very special day and we at TCF know how important that day is and how helpful and healing it can be to share with others.



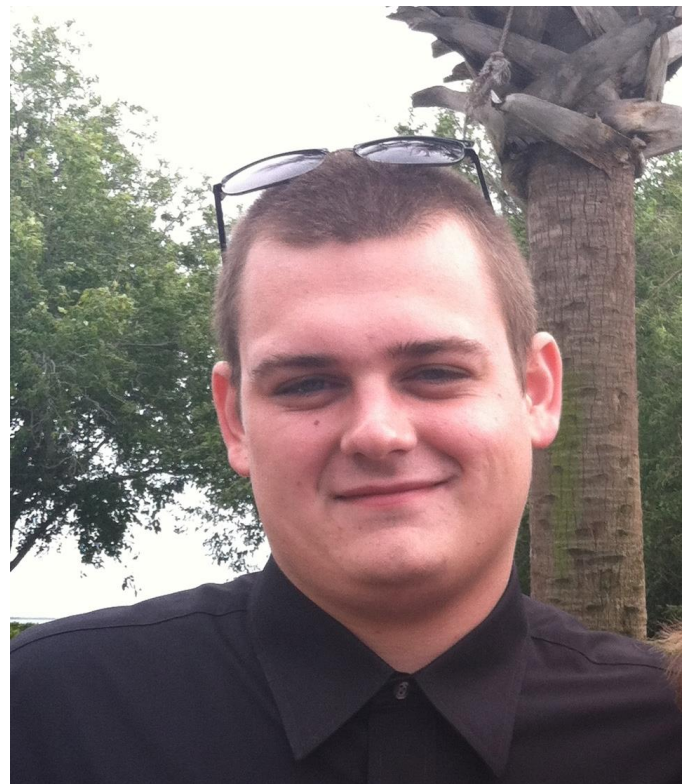
Please plan on attending the meeting of your child's birthday and filling our Birthday Table with pictures and/or mementos. You are also more than welcome to bring his/her favorite snacks.



This newsletter was sponsored with a donation by Mina & Quintin Ramsey, parents of Monta Hunt-Ramsey for his birthday on July 1st. Happy Birthday, Monta! Love, Mom & Dad

Mina has created a memorial fund in memory of her son. Donations are being accepted for the Monta Stop the Violence Fund. Her mission is to bring awareness to senseless violence and what it does to those left behind: saving one life at a time. Donations from the fundraising, which will be open until the end of June, will be given to TCF Gwinnett and the Boys & Girls Club of Baltimore. Monta's parents plan to have an event in honor of his 30th birthday this July. They thank you in advance for your time, cooperation, donations, and prayers, which are greatly appreciated. God bless you.

www.gofundme.com/teamtayforever



This newsletter was sponsored with a donation by Nancy Coker, Mom of Austin Coker, for his birthday on July 21st. Happy Birthday, Austin! You are loved & missed always!

For Both Of Us

As long as I can
I will look at this world
for both of us.
As long as I can
I will laugh with the birds,
I will sing with the flowers,
I will pray to the stars,
for both of us.
As long as I can
I will remember
How many things
On this earth
were your joy.
And I will live
as well as you would want me to live
As long as I can.

By Sascha Wagner

BROKEN SEASHELLS – BROKEN HEARTS

By Pamela Leonhardt



Recently while on a trip visiting my sister in Oregon I came across a lovely and heartfelt book entitled “My Beautiful Broken Shell” written by Carol Hamblet Adams and illustrated by one of my favorite seascape artists, D. Morgan. The words of the tender reflections in this book resonated with my heart as I walked along the sandy shores of the Oregon coast collecting seashells.

Adams shares the brokenness of her heart and spirit as she struggled through a difficult time. In her book, she describes her experience walking along the sandy seashore searching for perfect seashells to add to her collection. As she gazes at the sea of broken shells, she comes to realize that the broken ones reflect her own broken heart. In each shell, Adams sees those who are hurting and who have lost loved ones; those who are frightened or alone; and those who are living with unfulfilled dreams. Like all of us, each shell in the vast sea is tremendously resilient after fighting so hard to keep from being totally crushed by the pounding surf. We, too, come to realize that it takes courage to remain on the shore after being “tossed by the storms of life and worn down by the sands of time” despite the unrelenting pain and suffering in your hearts. Like each of us, broken seashells represent our tears, deepest sorrows and pain from the loss of our precious child. The turbulent crashing waves of the sea, followed by the calm waves, teaches us about the true meaning of strength, courage and faith. The brokenness of each shell comes to remind us that when our hearts are shattered beyond belief, we can survive even the most horrific storm in our own lives. As each beautiful broken shell doesn’t pretend to be perfect or whole, it allows for its brokenness to be seen, knowing that within the center of the shell lays immense beauty.

Broken seashells don’t exist alone but are surrounded by a vast number of seashells, each broken in their own unique way. Like all of humanity, when you truly look around, you see that we are all wounded in one way or another. As rare as it is to find a perfect shell in the midst of hundreds of shells lying on the beach, it’s equally rare to find any one of us who has not experienced deep pain and sorrow. As the broken shells lie close to one another, we are reminded that we, too, live in community with each other and when we draw upon the strength and courage of others it helps us through the most difficult times.

After reading this tender and heartfelt book, I walked the sandy Oregon shore, no longer in search for the perfect seashell for my collection but rather recognizing the strength, courage and beauty of all the broken shells that lay scattered along the shore. With

each broken seashell I picked up and placed in my hand, I admired its own uniqueness and strength. It was through gazing at them I was reminded of my own brokenness and the tremendous courage it has taken me to survive the most turbulent storm in my life. Through my brokenness I have emerged stronger, more compassionate and loving and able to recognize and embrace my own internal beauty from that struggle. Like many others, I find my deepest peace and serenity by the seashore, mesmerized by the crashing waves followed by the slow, gentle retreat of the water back into the sea. As one of my favorite quotes so profoundly states, “nowhere on earth are heartaches better tended,” I feel the sadness in my heart soothed and my soul restored and nourished as I experience all the beauty that the sea offers. As I prepare to leave next week for another retreat to the sea, I will notice and cherish each broken shell knowing the strength and courage it took for each of them to survive the turbulent storms of the sea and be reminded of my own healing journey. Next time you find yourself walking along the shore’s edge, pick up a broken seashell that speaks to you and see yourself reflected in the broken edges. Recognize the strength of the shell to survive being tossed through the crashing waves just as your heart has survived and grown stronger after the most horrific and tumultuous storm.

Pamela is a Licensed Psychologist in private practice in Boulder, CO and bereaved mother to angel child, Michael, 12/2/76 – 7/14/98.

Reprinted from TCF Denver Metro Area Newsletter

My Beautiful Broken Shell, 1998, by Carol Hamblet Adams, Harvest House Publishers, Eugene, OR – to order online go to

www.tcfatlanta.org/MyBeautifulBrokenShell.html

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It takes time to see and feel the beauty around us after experiencing the death of a child, grandchild or sibling. You may wonder if you will ever hear the birds sing again, see the colors in the rainbow, smile or find joy again. Our lives have been changed forever in an instant. We can't put a time limit on our grief and others around us need to give us as long as we need. It is up to us, when we are able, to invest the love we have for our children in keeping their memory alive. Perhaps some day joy will come again, it will be different, but it is possible.-

Karen Cantrell, Frankfort, KY-TCF



June, July & August Anniversaries

So that their lives may always shine, our children are remembered. As long as we live, they too shall live for they are part of us in our memories

June 1 st	Richie Petzel
June 2 nd	Nathanael Tate
June 6 th	Xavier Hayes
June 8 th	Billy Foulke
June 10 th	Mia Penoyer
June 12 th	Heather Helms
June 13 th	Bailey Amanda Kempton
June 14 th	Linda Strauss
June 16 th	Matthew Hinson
June 16 th	Richie Yee
June 18 th	Scott Michael Malone
June 20 th	Cory Bute
June 23 rd	Josiah Murphy
June 28 th	Angelo Larocca "Al"

July 3 rd	Aaron Stephens
July 4 th	Jennifer Hardy
July 4 th	Jeremy James White
July 5 th	Kyle Harrison
July 12 th	Stephen Varzaly
July 12 th	Genna Watson
July 13 th	Jonathan Ayers
July 14 th	Michael Dunn
July 19 th	Misty Autumn Dubose
July 20 th	Bristol Kimpton
July 23 rd	Christopher Boyd
July 23 rd	Amanda Heath
July 28 th	Noreen Keenan
July 28 th	Melissa Morrow
July 30 th	Ronald "Scott" Long



August

The summer runs to harvest - do you ask
How could a harvest be without my child?
Friend, some day soon
The harvest in your life
Will bring you hope and wealth
From love remembered.
By Sascha Wagner

August 1 st	David Arthur Braund
August 1 st	Brett Lykins
August 3 rd	Jessica & Von Justin Windsor
August 5 th	Michael Clayborne Montgomery
August 8 th	Melissa McDonald Weber
August 9 th	Blake Hinson
August 9 th	Calvin Joel Duda
August 11 th	Clint Price
August 13 th	Chris Morrow
August 19 th	John Andrew Sims
August 20 th	Emanuel Mitchell
August 21 st	Jenny Gryzinski
August 22 nd	Jeffrey Lopilato
August 24 th	Jessica Norwood
August 27 th	Trevor Aaron Jones
August 28 th	Ryan Michael Sharp
August 30 th	Amanda Lynn Harned
August 31 st	Todd Wehunt
August 2012	Chelsea Hutchinson

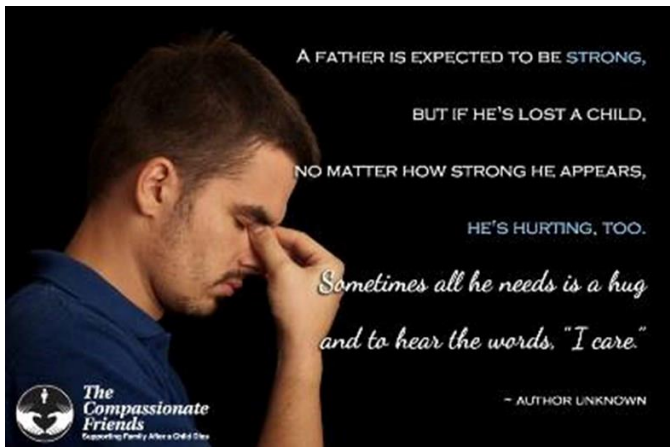
The Music is Forever

One life,
Like the song strummed softly
on the strings,
Makes music to the ears
of those who hear it sing.
Discordant notes and harmony,
together make the sounds,
But the space between the notes
is where the meaning may be found.
A life,
May be as brief as a note on a page,
or as long as a symphony
with all the movements played.
But long or short,
the melody has its meaning
though unfinished,
And for those with ears to hear it,
the meaning's not diminished.
Somewhere the song
continues its sweetly singing phrase,
The music is forever,
not just for those days.
ONE LIFE,
LIKE A SONG,
STRUMMED SOFTLY ON THE
STRINGS,
MAKES MUSIC TO THE EARS
OF THOSE WHO HEAR IT SING.
Karen Howard TCF, Miami, FL

"I Can Only Imagine"

I can only imagine
What our hearts would feel
If that day had never happened
If your death had not been real
I can only imagine
What our eyes would see
If they hadn't shed a million tears
Pleading, Why you? Why not me?
I can only imagine
A happier life
One where all your dreams came true
You fell in love and took a wife
I can only imagine
What a wonderful father you'd be
What names you'd give your children
Would you be anything like me?
I can only imagine
If I'll live to see the day
When the mere thought of you
No longer takes my breath away
I can only imagine
If things had ended differently
A family of four, now a family of three
But the one that's missing should have been me
When our work is done
And our time to go has come
Our arms at last again will hold
Brennan, our beloved son
I can only imagine....

Tom Murphy
Greater Cincinnati TCF~E.. Chapter, OH
In memory of my son, Brennan Murphy



Fireworks Are Like the Love In Our Hearts

July brings Central Oregonians lingering blue skies, lazy afternoons and the Fourth of July celebration, complete with the grand fireworks finale bolting from the top of Pilot Butte. This was one of my son's favorite holidays. When he was six I asked him why fireworks were so special to him. He said, "The lights explode in the dark and make the whole sky light up!" That was obvious. I said "Hum?" He gave me one of his "Oh mom" looks, then went on to say, "The fireworks are like the love in our hearts, we should always try to spread our love out to others." I knew then and I still am aware today that profound wisdom comes from the lips of our children. From that summer on, in my mind, fireworks have been a triumphant testament of love's enduring power and wonder. I miss my son, Joshua, terribly. I comfort myself knowing that his wisdom and kindness were precious gifts in my life. Wherever you are on the Fourth of July, I hope that the splendor of sparkling fireworks might comfort as you acknowledge that the love you hold dear for your child is the light that is able to shine through you. We all have known grief well, yet as compassionate friends we need not walk alone in the darkness. We can lighten the path for others.

Grief can cripple and destroy us, but as we gather to share each other's burden, we are able to gain strength. Love for our children is our common flame; sharing and caring keep the flames afire. I look forward to our next meeting and the opportunity to hug and listen to my comrades.

~written by Jane Oja, TCF, Central Oregon Chapter



Grief Support For Siblings

When a child has died, siblings are often referred to as “the forgotten mourners.” While parents usually receive much support, siblings usually receive little—often being asked “How are your parents doing?” The Compassionate Friends is an organization that is not just for bereaved parents. It’s also for bereaved siblings (and grandparents).

All TCF National Conferences & many regional conferences offer workshops and other activities specifically geared for bereaved siblings.

Online Support Community (live chats) allows you to talk with other bereaved siblings from across the country during the Online Support Community sessions held every week. These sessions are limited in number of participants and have trained monitors who are also siblings. Check out www.compassionatefriends.org and go to Resources/Siblings.

Siblings Walking Together *(Formerly the 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

CYCLES

In 1983, my youngest brother Mitchell died unexpectedly from an asthma attack; he was twelve years old and the youngest of six children. Most of us were grown and living on our own by then and Mitch was truly the jewel of our family. He was an incredible child of tenderness and deep spirituality at his young age.

Mom and Dad were beyond devastated, they were blank with grief. We all suffered in our own way the pain of his loss, our little baby brother who was the sunshine of our large family.

Mom would come to visit me for weeks at a time in Oregon, her heart so shattered, so lost. There is no doubt she loved us all, but Mitch was special in his own precious way. My heart grieved to see Mom so hurt, I felt so helpless to ease her pain.

I understand now the intensity of that hurt, the depth of the loss and the darkness it brought to her life. And how I wish I had been a better ‘listener’ in her grief. You see, I tried to cheer her up when she would cry. Mom died in 2000, but just weeks before that, tears flowed when we were talking about Mitch; so much love seventeen years later. When it was her time, I know she was torn between Dad and us kids and the son she knew she would soon be with again.

The cycle of life and death in our lives is an eternal one; there will forever be life and it will just as surely end some day. I think it’s the time between the two that we must not take for granted.

Love is an incredible force: it is both gentle and kind as it is indestructible and strong. This gift our children shared and taught us, lives forever in our heart & soul. It is this force of love that will help guide us to days where our step will be lighter, our hearts open again to new seasons.

Those that are here need our love, too. Let us remember to tend our love for those around us as we also tend our wounds and work towards recovery.

~Diane
From TCF Wake County, NC



The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Dallas, Texas will be the site of the 38th TCF National Conference on **July 10-12, 2015**. "Hope Shines Bright...Deep in the Heart" is the theme of next year's event, which promises more of this year's great national conference experience. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas. Details are available on the national website www.thecompassionatefriends.org

If you're seeking a way to remember and grieve for your child, sibling, or grandchild with people who understand and don't expect you to be "back to normal," give yourself a gift of hope and healing this summer by attending the 38th Compassionate Friends National Conference. This is a unique opportunity to be surrounded by a safe-haven that comes along only once a year. See old friends and make new ones while learning coping mechanisms and skills that will help you and surviving family members through the rough times.

The Compassionate Friends Walk to Remember® is a highlight of every TCF National Conference. It was created as a symbolic way to show the love we carry for the children we mourn. Held at 8 a.m. Sunday on the final day of the national conference it starts at the host hotel of the conference. There is an air of anticipation and excitement as everyone gathers in preparation for the start of the Walk. Finally the Walk begins and, hand-in-hand everyone walks, meditating on a much different time in their lives. Since its inception in 2000, the Walk to Remember has taken on many distinctive facets. There is the main Walk to Remember where those attending the conference join with local bereaved families and others who fly in from across the country just for the Walk. As many as 1400 have participated. Some go the full distance while others only walk a short way knowing that in participating, they are remembering. Special Walk to Remember T-shirts are given to all who register, as well as "walk bibs" where

the names of the children being remembered can be written. **Please note:** Registration is *required* to participate in TCF national Walks to Remember. Those under 9 are not required to register but still must have a waiver of liability signed for them by a participating parent or guardian.

For more information on the National Conference or the Walk to Remember, visit www.thecompassionatefriends.org and go to the "News and Events" tab. The Walk to Remember is listed under Special Events and the conference is listed under Conferences.

The Compassionate Friends of Atlanta has a Facebook Group. We invite you to join.

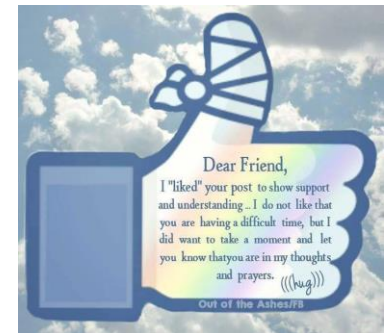


For more information, Click the following link

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=43057397614>

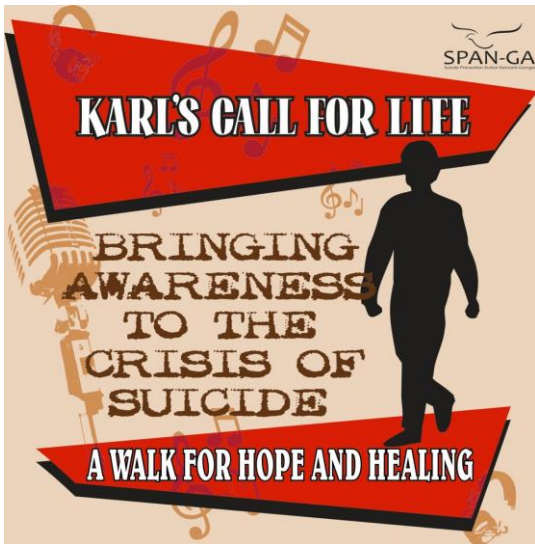
You will need to log into Facebook to join the group. You will also need a Facebook account (they are free). Our hope is that you will be able to connect to someone to help you in your grief journey.

Remember "We Need Not Walk Alone" .



Justin's Heart Grief Group

A place for the bereaved to gather to support each other in times of loss. Meets the third Tuesday of each month from 6:30 – 8:30 at Loganville Ministry Village. Contact Kathy Ellington at 770-826-4339. This support group was organized by Kayleigh Ellington, in memory of her brother Justin. Their mom, Kathy Ellington, belongs to TCF Gwinnett.



Karl's Call for Life – A Walk For Hope & Healing

Saturday, July 18, 2015 - Central Park, Cumming
9 am to 11 am

Come together with friends & families of those we love & lost while breaking the stigma around the issue of suicide, depression & mental illness.

Register individually, or as a team, or be a sponsor.

Come and help us create a PSA that will share a positive message, a CALL FOR LIFE, by offering 100 Reasons To Stay. Come out and support the cause while creating awareness, offering hope, and enjoying a walk with your friends and neighbors.

Assisting the community has never been so easy or fun. Set your own personal goal and show your commitment to suicide prevention, intervention and aftercare efforts in GEORGIA! Central Park is at 2300 Keith Bridge Road in Cumming. All funds go to SPAN-GA (Suicide Prevention Action Network-GA) Contact Sherry Unwala,

sherryunwala@yahoo.com, phone 404-660-0907

SPAN-GA is a Georgia non-profit 501c3 organization working in communities all throughout the state. Our focus is on supporting survivors of a loss by suicide, but our work includes suicide prevention, intervention and aftercare.

Kate's Club

Kate's Club is a non-profit organization that empowers children and teens facing life after the death of a parent or sibling. By creating friendships with kids and young adults that share the experience, Kate's Club guides children through their grief journey in a comfortable, safe & uplifting setting. For information, contact Debra Brook, Program Manager, at debra@katesclub.org or phone 404-347-7619.

SURVIVORS OF SUICIDE SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the first Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm at The Warehouse at Family Festival, 5095 Post Rd, Cumming, 30040. The Meeting Room is located past The Land of 1000 Hills Coffee Bar, down the hall, first door on the right. For info contact Sherry 404-660-0907, sherryunwala@yahoo.com

Cry for Me...No More Grief Support Group

Meets the first Saturday of every month from 10 am to 12 pm at the First Methodist Church on Thompson Bridge Road. Deana Martin, TCF member and mom to angels Amanda & Logan helps coordinate and organize this group. You may also contact Deana at dean@cryformenomore.com or call Deana at 770-296-3807

Teen Victim Impact Program and It Won't Happen To Me

will be having their

Annual
**Memory Walk
2015 on
Saturday,
October 10th**
at Tribble Mill
Park in
Lawrenceville.



This is an event where we provide an opportunity for families and friends to walk on behalf of their sons, daughters or friends that have died in a teen driven related car crash. Everyone who registers and walks will get a tee shirt, a meal, as well as a lanyard with the picture of the person they are walking in memory of. Anyone that has lost a teen in a tragic car crash and would like to participate and/or have their teen represented along the Memory Walk please contact Bill Richardson at Bill@tvip.org For more information about our organization you can go to www.itwonthappentome.org

TCF Gwinnett Small Sharing Groups

Monthly support group meetings are the heart of The Compassionate Friends. These gatherings provide a safe and caring environment in which bereaved parents and siblings can talk freely about the emotions and experiences they are enduring. Parents receive the understanding and support of others who have "been there".

We are here to provide hope and encouragement, understanding & friendship as we all travel the grief journey. Our lives have been turned inside out & upside down and we are the walking wounded who must now figure out where to go from here, how to put our lives back together to some degree, and share coping skills and survival techniques. Together we can share our ideas and emotions, the questions and trials and tribulations that we have found ourselves in the very unwelcome world of bereaved parents.

THANK YOU! Many parents give back to TCF through volunteer opportunities as a means of honoring their child. Without volunteers our group would not exist. We are grateful to these volunteers: **Terry Sparks**, Co-Leader & provides newly bereaved packet info & as group facilitator, in memory of his daughter, **Natalie Sparks**; **June Cooper**, Parent Phone Contact, in memory of her daughter, **Wendy McMMain** & in memory of her sister, **Noreen Keenan**; **Meg Avery**, Co-Leader & Newsletter Editor in memory of her son **James Avery**; **Barbara Dwyer**, Chapter Treasurer in memory of her son **Matthew Dwyer**; **Diane Wolcott**, Memorial Garden Committee Chair in memory of her son, **Jeffrey Wolcott**; **Gary Fox**, facilitator, in memory of his son, **G.W. Fox**; **Nancy Coker**, email account volunteer, & facilitator, in memory of her son, **Austin Coker**; **Patty Key**, database maintenance & facilitator in memory of her son **Ryan Morton**; **Claudine Nickens**, Steering Committee Member & facilitator in memory of her son **David Whitley** and **Clare Norwood**, creating Remembrance Cards in memory of her daughter **Jessica Norwood**.

TCF Gwinnett Welcomes Laurie Hyatt Speaker for our June Meeting

Laurie Hyatt, Ph.D., LPC, will speak at the June 18 meeting. She is a psychologist, licensed professional counselor, public speaker and author. Her mission as stated on her website is to inspire adolescents and adults to use the power of choice to experience an empowered life full of passion, connectedness and meaning. Choose life. Living is for everyone.

Her book, "Silent Decision: Awareness out of Tragedy" (2011), is a memoir of personal experiences since her gifted and creative son, Trey, took his life at age 13 in 1999 combined with her research findings on youth suicide. The intent is to help the healing of survivors, educate parents of gifted children, and add to the body of knowledge of researchers to help prevent youth suicide.

She is forming a Women's Group for support, connection and inspiration. The group is open so you can join anytime. When she gets to 8 women, she will start another group. Email Laurie at hyatt0105@gmail.com if you are interested.

Laurie graduated from UGA and was the Chair, Psychology Department at Barton College in Wilson, NC.

Many Thanks!

To Claudine Nickens, Terry Sparks, Nancy Coker and Patty Key for reorganizing the TCF Gwinnett Library in April. Your time & efforts are greatly appreciated!

TCF Picnic

Our annual picnic was held on Saturday, May 16 at Tribble Mill Park. We had a wonderful Memory Walk as well as a Memorial Balloon Release.



It was a great day to spend with each other & remember our children. A very special thanks to: Michael Lippman, Terry Sparks & Gary Fox for cooking, donating drinks & food; Claudine Nickens, Patty Key and Nancy Coker for telephoning parents; and our steering committee to help make our picnic a success. Claudine was our Picnic Chairperson & she did a super job! Our chapter could not exist without the help & support of our parents.

Gifts of Love

A love gift is a financial donation to The Compassionate Friends Gwinnett Chapter. It is usually in honor of a child who has died, but it can also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help in the work of our chapter. Love gifts are acknowledged in each quarterly issue.

In Loving Memory of:

Natalie Sparks, from her parents,
Terry & Evelyn Sparks

Robert Coltman & Eve Greenstein from their dad, Barnet Coltman in memory of their April birthdays

Ryan Morton, from his mom,
Patty Key

G.W. Fox, from his dad, Gary Fox

David Whitley, from his mom,
Claudine Nickens

Baby Brayden, from his mom, Georgia McNeil

Jenny Gryzinski, from her grandmother, Dolores Gryzinski

Stamps for Remembrance Cards donated by
Marvin Choate
in memory of his daughter, *Fara Nicole*

Remembrance Cards were donated by Joyce Bradley, in memory of her son, Jeff.

If you make a monetary donation to TCF Gwinnett, (which is tax-deductible) you may specify whether you would like your contribution to go toward the memorial garden account or general account. You may also choose to donate a book to our Lending Library, or cards to be used for our Remembrance Cards. If you would like to donate cards, please bring them to a meeting and labels will be added to the back of the card "card donated in memory of _____ (your child's name).

\$\$\$ Where does the money go? \$\$\$

Our chapter is self-supporting and donations fund our chapter activities. We pay \$300 annually to Trinity Christian Fellowship Church for the use of our meeting space and \$100 annually to TCF National Office for yearly dues. Funds from the general account pay for: remembrance cards, postage, labels, printing, postage & labels for our newsletter, picnic pavilion rental, supplies for monthly meetings and for information packets for newly bereaved parents. **We do not receive funds from The Compassionate Friends National Office** and we are always extremely appreciative for any contributions. Please be assured, however, that there are no financial dues to be a member of TCF or to receive this newsletter.

Please fill out the information below, clip and mail with your tax deductible donation to:

Barbara Dwyer
TCF Gwinnett Treasurer
4905 Pond Ridge Lane,
Cumming, GA 30041.
(Please make checks payable to **TCF Gwinnett.**)

Name _____

Address: _____

In Memory
of: _____