



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

## LAWRENCEVILLE, GEORGIA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

Meg Avery, Editor      AUTUMN 2012  
September, October & November

**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 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month. **next meetings: Sept. 20, Oct. 18 and Nov. 15.**

**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](mailto:jc30044@flash.net) or [tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com](mailto:tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com)

TCF Atlanta website: [www.tcfatlanta.org](http://www.tcfatlanta.org)

GA Regional Coordinator Sandra Stinson, [sandrastinsontcf@yahoo.com](mailto:sandrastinsontcf@yahoo.com)

The Compassionate Friends National Office:  
1-877-969-0010

[www.thecompassionatefriends.org](http://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](mailto: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, Winter 2012/13 will cover the months of Dec., Jan. & Feb..

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.*

*Copyright 2007*

## HERE I AM

Here I am. I came. It was as if by rote. They told me to go so I did. All of those friends and family who are at a loss and don't know what to say themselves. They all told me to come here...come to grieve with these others. This will help me. Who are these others? I don't know them. I don't even know if I want to know them. I don't belong here. There are sad faces all around me. Someone is softly crying. I look in their eyes and see the same blank look I see staring back at me in the mirror. But I'm not like them. I couldn't possibly be.

It will be of some comfort to you to be with those who have gone before or just starting their journey, they say. I don't want their comfort. They are broken. What do they have for me? I certainly have nothing for them. I can't even comprehend their grief. I haven't even confronted my own yet. It's too new. It hasn't sunk in. I don't want to be associated with this group. I don't want to "talk" about my dead son. I don't want to cry and mourn with them. I don't know them. Who are they?

Yet, over and over I am drawn to this group. Why? What is it they have that I seem to want or need? Compassion? No, I get plenty of that from my own circle. Commonality? I'm so different from them. I wouldn't even be bothered to know them outside of this place. Words of wisdom? I doubt it. Most don't have any words at all – just tears. I have nothing in common with these people. Oh, but I do don't I? I keep forgetting.

Ah, understanding. That's it - isn't it. A profound, deep, wordless, understanding. A comprehension that defies all reasoning and prior knowledge. They don't need to communicate their compassion, or wisdom or commonality. It is there on their faces, in their eyes, as they look back at me. We are breathing the same air, crying the same tears, looking around with the same hopeful eyes, questioning the same things. We are looking to the outside for answers, recognition, peace. It's not there. I come to understand these people. They see me. No one questions how deep is my grief or when it will end. No one here asks the question, "when will you get on with your life"? No one

asks how long it has been with some kind of expectation that "time" has anything to do with it. If I spew with anger and intensity, no one says I'm being "dramatic". They know that soul deep, like a wounded animal, kind of uninhibited release of grief that can come over you like a wave. There is no timing, no good place, no right circumstances. It comes of its own will and can almost devour you.

Who, but they, can pull you from the grasp of that darkness? Who need only to take your hand, put their arms about you or softly say "just cry"? I feel the rages of war, like we have come through a horrific battle only to see our comrades succumb to their fate. Like we are a "band of brothers" who have waged the war and can only find peace and understanding in the eyes of our like brethren who were also in the pit. They know – they were there. You can speak of your child with the knowledge that no one there will ask you "isn't it time"? They set no boundaries, no time limits for your grief. None of us want to go under so we have all made an unspoken pact to hold each other up. We all walk the same path of survival and if one of us goes down, all of us may follow. So each of us looks to the other, with no judgment, no guilt and no expectations. If you start to sink, I will pull you up.

So, I quietly sit as we go around the room. And when it comes to my turn, I simply say, I am Deborah and I lost my son Adam. No need for words, just nods. They get it. I am like them and I have found a safe place. I do belong here.

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From the Poems & Prose of Deborah Passero Streb  
In Memory of My Son, Adam Vincent Marano  
6/9/80 – 1/18/09



## NEWS FROM 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." *Our small sharing groups would like to focus more on the issues and topics that bereaved parents face each day, from what to do on a birthday, how to handle tough questions, how to find the will to go on, what works and what doesn't work during the grieving journey & why or why not, to ideas on how to reinvest in living, how to rediscover joy & how to carry our child's memory and legacy through our daily lives.*

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. The death of a child of any age, from any cause, is a shattering experience for a family. The Compassionate Friends understands that grief for a child lasts longer and is more intense than society commonly recognizes. Other grieving parents can offer empathy and understanding of this loss, while also recognizing that each person's grief is unique.

**There are opportunities to give back and to help out with the "behind the scenes" efforts for our local chapter.** We need new volunteers to successfully continue the efforts begun when the Gwinnett Chapter was created in 1994. Volunteer opportunities range from helping to set up a meeting, becoming a facilitator, and making phone calls. Most especially, we need a new co-leader to help out with the organization, details and paperwork involved with our chapter.

Effective January 2013, Meg Avery will be stepping down after 10 years as Chapter Leader and co-leader. *"TCF Gwinnett has been a life saver to me, at first giving me the support, friendship, hope & comforts I desperately needed after losing my son James in 1997. TCF created a bridge of understanding that I could not find elsewhere. Eventually my grief journey gave me the strength to serve TCF as chapter leader to help those who seek this group for support & understanding. It has been a huge stepping stone in my healing to give back to TCF in memory of James. Now my journey must start another chapter as I step down as chapter leader. I will continue as Newsletter Editor and TCF member, but I recognize the need personally, and for the growth of TCF Gwinnett, to step down as of January 2013."*

Therefore, TCF Gwinnett is in need of a new chapter leader or two co-leaders to keep TCF Gwinnett as an active chapter. There will be a steering committee meeting early January 2013. Please contact Meg Avery at [tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com](mailto:tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com) or by phone at 770-932-5862 if you are interested in helping TCF Gwinnett as chapter leader or co-leader as of January.



This is a great way to give back in memory of your child after you have found hope, encouragement and strength from TCF to survive & thrive in spite of life's worst tragedy. Making the change from needing help & finding help to giving help & support to new parents is another healing milestone. **Please call or e-mail June Cooper, 770- 757-4927, [jc30044@flash.net](mailto:jc30044@flash.net), or Meg Avery, 770-932-5862, [tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com](mailto:tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com)**

11:11

At night before I fall asleep  
I lay in bed and pray.  
Thankful to have made it through another day  
but there's an ache that will not go away.  
It's a feeling of both loss and pain  
there are still times when I sit and stare.

My happiness seems to have been misplaced,  
I can't find it anywhere  
For most of your life,  
those numbers were there  
what was the meaning of those elevens?  
Since you are gone, I've found the answer.  
It's your way of saying "hello" from heaven.

It continues to be sad and incredibly unfair  
to have buried a son of twenty seven.  
But what more could we want as parents  
than to know our child has gone to heaven.  
For some time after you died,  
those numbers brought pain.

Now I can't wait to see them again.  
When I'm lucky enough to see those elevens  
I place my hand to my heart,  
my eyes to the heavens.

For Brennan 8/11/\*\*-11/05/\*\* By Tom Murphy  
From the TCF East Cincinnati TCF Newsletter

### Halloween Magic

Halloween has always been a special time. I regret that our son only had a one-time experience at this magical time of year. I remember – as though it were yesterday – the wonder in his face, how he tried to eat the candy through his mask, how he said thank you without coaxing. Then I think of all the parents whose child never had the opportunity and I am grateful for that one time. It's hard watching all the children trick-or-treating, and yet there is something special about this season that comforts me. As I watch the trees around me, I am reminded that there is a beauty even in their dying leaves. There's a special aroma, a breathtaking color scheme, and if you listen, a rustling in the air. I believe there is a message in fall. I believe God wants us to know that death is like a change of seasons, that our child now knows far more beauty than we can ever imagine, like the tree that lives on through the barren winter and comes alive again in spring, our children are not gone. They live!

**Nancy Cassell, TCF Monmouth Co, NJ**



### Enough of the Best

We became empty nesters  
Long before it was the right time  
Our son James gave us the best years of his life,  
But he couldn't give himself the rest of his life.  
We won't be helping him set up his dorm at college,  
He won't be telling us about dating  
and experiences with relationships  
We won't be reading his facebook status updates.

There won't be any more candles on his birthday cake,  
No more Christmases or Thanksgivings  
with either a visit, phone call, cards or emails.  
We take part in family festivities & milestone events  
And wish he could be there celebrating too.

We see grandchildren and great-grandchildren,  
Nieces and nephews added to the family,  
Generations continuing for other family members,  
And we wonder if James would have married  
and had children,  
We wish we could have been grandparents too.  
James gave us the best years of his life,  
If only he could have seen the possibilities  
for the rest of his life.

All four of his grandparents are still living,  
How we wish he could be here  
to share their golden years,  
Perhaps even to help & make life a little easier for them,  
Continue to make them laugh, show them card tricks,  
Have discussions about life, religion, politics, technology,  
James gave them the best years of his life,  
If only he could have been around  
for the rest of their lives.

Sometimes the best has to be good enough,  
Even though we didn't have enough time, enough  
memories, enough hugs,  
Not enough laughter, not nearly enough pictures,  
So for the rest of our life,  
We have to be content  
to make the best of the years ahead.

James gave us the best years of his life,  
Even though he didn't give himself the rest of his life,  
We have the remainder of our lives to show him,  
And to give each other,

Love, hugs, and hopefully, enough.....

By Meg Avery, in memory of my son James on his  
15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Heaven, 7/15/83 – 9/22/97



## WE REMEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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

### September

Franklin Lewis "Shane" Martin Sept. 1  
Andrea Nicole King Sept. 2  
Karen Hendler Sept. 7  
Drake Michaud Sept. 7  
Joshua Stulick Sept. 10  
Daniel Monk Sept. 11  
Kimberly Dawn Marshall Sept. 11  
Tom Waters Sept. 16  
Melissa Hermanns Sept. 16  
Jayla Cook Sept. 16  
Darryl Reed Sept. 19  
Shawn Lippman Sept. 19  
Hope McKenzie Sept. 20  
Johnathon David Solar Sept. 23  
Quavonte Combs Sept. 24  
Angelo Larocca Sept. 25  
Julie Lyn Donaldson Sept. 26  
Catherine Amiss Sept. 26  
Blake Hinson Sept. 29  
Charlie Whittington Sept. 30

### October

Kapri Bradley Oct. 1  
Scott Tarbell Oct. 6  
Adrian Ortiz Oct. 7  
Richard Parrish Mayberry Oct. 10  
Joseph Oliver Oct. 10  
Alan Parish Oct. 11  
Jennifer Hardy Oct. 13  
Olivia Rodriguez Oct. 17  
Jeffrey LoPilato Oct. 17  
Christopher Gordon Oct. 19  
Chase Benton Oct. 19  
Hayden Navarrete Oct. 24  
Evelyn Marie Kunkel Oct. 29



## 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.

### November

Tyler Durden Nov. 1  
Danny Gilbride Nov. 1  
Virginia Leigh Phillips Nov. 3  
Heather Helms Nov. 3  
Misty Autumn Dubose Nov. 5  
Robert David Parsons Nov. 7  
Matthew Dwyer Nov. 7  
True Hewitt IV Nov. 7  
Brannon Springer Nov. 10  
Jeffrey Wolcott Nov. 12  
Melissa Dennis Nov. 12  
Amanda Christine Warnock Nov. 13  
Pamela Leigh Thompson Nov. 15  
Dawann Wright Nov. 17  
Frankie Ortiz Nov. 26  
Iza Morris Nov. 28  
Daniel Hager Nov. 29  
Clayton Olvey Nov. 30

### **Small Angels of Hope -**

by Linda Weinstein  
Abington Chapter, TCF

One day our feet are on the ground...  
Like a caterpillar that we have found!  
Living life in this way...  
Hoping all our steps will be ok!  
And then, that life...  
That we once knew...  
changes with colors of every hue!  
Things that seemed to be earth bound...  
Have very much...  
Lifted off the ground!  
And now, this insect...  
Changes into something graceful and free...  
Living a new life...  
Beautifully!  
Reborn into something new...  
Free from all that they once knew..  
Come and visit for a while...  
For us, you represent our child!  
Fly away...  
Small angels of hope...  
Showing us...  
The miracle of change...  
Fly away, as you came!  
Come and visit another day...  
As we look in wonderment...  
With a smile on our face and say...  
Something amazing was sent here...  
  
For a moment, today!



### **As We Near The Special Season**



As we near the special season that stirs up feelings of heritage, patriotism, thanksgiving, and our relationship with God, we are instantly reminded that it doesn't seem to fit together for us; our personal sense of well-being is suffering. Our hearts and spirits are undergoing the trauma of painfully fresh wounds in some cases, while other are coping with the scar tissue of older grief that refuses to heal or restore comfort to their lives. This season reminds me we are living with extra stress that must be resolved. I offer a few thoughts to each of you, along with my love, in hope that feelings of peace and purpose will return to bring you comfort.

First, be careful in agreeing to take on the traditional extra work that goes with holidays. You are coping with grief that will take much of your useable energy.

Second, be especially kind and patient with yourself. The need for physiological rest is vital at this time; regular sleep and rest hours will help.

Third, be aware that holidays and alcohol have become traditional companions; extra caution may be necessary to prevent the depressant effects of alcohol from further aggravating your grief anxiety.

Fourth, it's okay to change past practices that are especially painful reminders of what can be no more; do something different if you have to. Finally, allow yourself private time as you need to, but also remember it's important to allow others to try to bring you comfort and give you extra help during the holidays. Loved ones need feedback that says: "I'm trying to recover, and I appreciate your help."

Peace be with you.

By Ann Frost, TCF Middle  
Georgia Chapter



## HOW DO YOU TRANSFER LEADERSHIP OF A TCF CHAPTER?

*John and Maureen Sheehan*

Former Co- Facilitators of The Compassionate Friends, Springfield, MA.

Like everyone else in Compassionate Friends, our lives were turned upside down when our daughter, Tara, died on February 25, 2002. Tara struggled with anorexia for 10 years. We knew she had a severe case of anorexia and that she could die, but deep down, we never believed it. Tara always landed on her feet. She was beautiful, intelligent, and determined. Consequently, when she died at the young age of 25, we couldn't believe it.

We did not want to believe it. We received an invitation to join Compassionate Friends, but we were not interested.

It was almost a year before we could go to a meeting. A very dedicated couple ran the meeting. But they had been leading the group for years and said they could no longer continue. A member volunteered to take their place, but after a few meetings she changed jobs and could no longer lead the meetings. She was also the newsletter editor and had to resign from that also. Although we were new to the group, we volunteered to lead it because no one else volunteered. It took almost one year to find a newsletter editor. He also took over without any transitional help, but he is doing a wonderful job. Then, our secretary/treasurer became ill and had to step down from doing those jobs. We had become dependent on her, because she had done both jobs for years. She was so efficient and diligent about keeping membership records, bank records etc., that we took her for granted. Maureen stepped in as treasurer and recruited some women to help with the secretarial functions. It was after all these crises that we decided to organize a steering committee. There was a lot of talent among the participants, but no one had ever asked them to take on responsibilities. Little by little, we delegated small tasks out to various members of the steering committee. It fostered a feeling of ownership.

That is how we functioned for the next three years. In that time, we had some very capable people come to the meetings and then move on. We felt that this was a loss for both the group and for the individuals who moved on without becoming involved.

Consequently, we announced at a steering committee meeting that we would be stepping down in six months and the steering committee should be thinking about who would lead the group. We also asked the newsletter editor to try to recruit an assistant editor to help with the newsletter, so that there would be someone in place when he steps down.

The steering committee was wonderful. After working together for the six months, two of the members agreed to be co-facilitators. They led our last meeting with the group. It was a smooth six month transition. We turned over all the files and annual reports to the new leaders and offered to help them in any way we could during the transition.

We always compared the grieving process to a journey. At the beginning of the journey, no one wants to be there because of the sharp pain of just losing a child. After awhile, people are able to do more as they experience the safety and support from the group. We believe it is at this point in the journey that people should be invited to help the group in whatever way they can.

We've all heard about how geese handle the trials and tribulations of their journeys. We can learn from them. Like the geese, when we stay together on our journey, we are stronger than we are on our own and we are more willing to accept the help of others in the group and, in turn, to give our support to others. When the lead goose becomes tired, it rotates back into formation, and another goose flies to the point position. So it is with us in Compassionate Friends,

***It is sensible to take turns doing the hard and demanding tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent of each others skills, capabilities.***

When a goose becomes sick, wounded, or is shot down, two other geese will drop out of formation with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with their fallen companion until it dies or is able to fly again. Then, they launch out on their own, or with another formation to catch up with their flock.



***If we learn from the geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as in good times because when we help someone else, we help ourselves.***

## *September, October & November 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



Chase Benton	Sept. 1
Christopher Gabriel Patton	Sept. 1
Chad Gordon	Sept. 3
Kyle Copija	Sept. 4
Shane Miller	Sept. 4
Charlie Smallen	Sept. 8
Daniel Monk	Sept. 10
G.W. Fox	Sept. 11
Ryan Pilgrim	Sept. 11
Madison Young	Sept. 11
Jeffrey Wolcott	Sept. 13
Quintin Jones	Sept. 13
Drake Michaud	Sept. 19
Justin Evans	Sept. 20
Natascha Roebuck	Sept. 20
Matthew Dwyer	Sept. 21
Adam Lee Jones	Sept. 21
Karen Hendler	Sept. 21
James R. Avery, III	Sept. 22
Johnny Harof	Sept. 22
Tommy McDonald	Sept. 22
Amanda Sullivan	Sept. 22
Scott Tarbell	Sept. 26
Brittany Hopkins	Sept. 27
Johnathon David Solar	Sept. 27
Brenden Elbaz	Sept. 28
True Hewitt IV	Oct. 3
Richard Parrish Mayberry	Oct. 4
Ross Creel	Oct. 9
Wyatt Fons	Oct. 9
Johnathan England	Oct. 10
Franklin Lewis "Shane" Martin	Oct. 14
Rileigh-Jacqueline Clebert	Oct. 14
Elizabeth "Beth" Wood	Oct. 15
Drew Adams	Oct. 15
Jacob Meadows	Oct. 19
Cristina Jane Vargas Howerton	Oct. 19
Christopher Reed	Oct. 20
Bo Tuggle	Oct. 22
Joey Robinson	Oct. 23
Monta Hunt	Oct. 23
Ashley Lauren Hull	Oct. 27
Jarod Robert Wills	Oct. 28
Jared Chambers	Oct. 28
Evelyn Marie Kunkel	Oct. 29
Jack Fons	Oct. 31

Iza Morris	Nov. 10
Kevin Hamilton	Nov. 12
Lindsey Marie Townsend	Nov. 14
Daniel Hager	Nov. 14
Robert David Parsons	Nov. 24
Ronald "Bruce" West	Nov. 24
Robert Coltman	Nov. 28
Mark William Evans, Jr.	Nov. 29

### **The Second Year**

Yesterday was a year since I buried my son,  
That's when I thought my pain had begun.  
How naive I was not to fear,  
The hell awaiting in the second year.

Memories have dimmed, desolation's increased  
The world doesn't give a damn that my child is  
deceased.  
The phony face and smile I'm compelled  
Conceal my silent scream, "It's just not fair!"

At bereavement groups, though I weep and moan,  
I find solace in the credo,  
"We Need not Walk Alone."  
I beseech all "civilians" with families intact,  
Don't judge my grief, don't tell me how to act!

Time has stripped away the shock  
but my wounds are raw, I wish I could die, too –  
I live because I'm blessed  
with Compassionate Friends.

By Madelaine Perri Kasden  
From the TCF Abington, PA Newsletter



## 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). Some chapters have sibling subgroups while many welcome adult siblings to their meetings. Contact your local chapter to find out their policies on siblings and their meetings. On The Compassionate Friends national website, you will find support in a number of different ways.

[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](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) and go to Resources/Siblings.

## I Saw You

### A tribute to my sister, Lori Lee Smith

I saw you today in the morning dew  
As brilliant as a sea of shimmering diamonds  
I shared the most amazing sunrise with you today  
A million shades of red so random in their perfection  
I heard you today in the laugh of my children  
An enchanting melody a thousand angels strong  
I walked with you today and we talked about  
Everything.....and nothing all at once.  
I saw you today in the changing of the leaves  
The colors of your life, the close of one season,  
And the ushering in of another,  
I sat beside a stream with you today  
The peaceful flow, steady and constant...  
I saw you today.....and you were perfect  
And rest assured.... I will see you again.

By Avery Smith, TCF Ada Chapter

## A Grandparents Point of View

The death of a child is the most tragic thing that can happen to anyone. It affects so many lives—family, friends, and even strangers. I lost my grandchild through death, and only a grandparent can understand the love a grandparent has for a grandchild and the loss that is felt when the child dies. For a grandparent, it is a double loss. Not only is your grandchild gone, but you also watch your child die each day. The hurt is so deep and the questions so many. You feel helpless as a parent. You can’t kiss the hurt away as you did when she was a child. You have no answers for her questions, for you don’t understand the many feelings that you are experiencing yourself. Each day you hope and pray for a little ray of sunshine to show on her face. You search for a little something to say or do that will comfort her. It seems that there is no end to suffering. As time goes slowly by, the healing process begins. In time, a ray of hope will show on her face and a smile will make her eyes light up again. She will turn to you for what little comfort you can give her. There will always be a part of you that is gone but in time you can learn to live with the part that is still here.

*Ruth Eaton, TCF Savannah, GA*

Would you like to order a quilt made of your child's tee shirts? Deana Martin, Amanda & Logan's mom, had a beautiful quilt made and is sharing the information with us. Elizabeth Longbrake makes these wonderful high quality quilts. She can be contacted by telephone at 678-377-9404 or by e-mail at [elizlongbrake@aol.com](mailto:elizlongbrake@aol.com) The cost for the T shirt quilts are \$150-\$400 depending on size and style desired.



### GAINESVILLE SUPPORT GROUP

The Northeast Georgia Medical Center has a grief support group for parents. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month from 5:15 – 6:45 pm. The meeting is held at 2150 Limestone Parkway, Suite 222, Gainesville. Contact Jennifer Sorrells at 770-219-8528 or [Jennifer.sorrells@nghs.com](mailto:Jennifer.sorrells@nghs.com) for more information.

### 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](mailto:sherryunwala@yahoo.com) or Karen, 770-355-1024, [Karen\\_copija@att.net](mailto:Karen_copija@att.net)

### Support Group in Gainesville Rock Goodbye Angel

We are a family of bereaved parents who have come together to provide an organization serving and assisting those who have experienced a loss due to miscarriage, stillbirth, perinatal loss or neonatal loss. If you or someone you know needs support during this time, please contact us. The group meets every Monday at 7 pm at Lanier Park Campus, 675 White Sulphur Road, Gainesville. For info, contact Angela at [angela@rockgoodbyeangel.com](mailto:angela@rockgoodbyeangel.com). [www.rockgoodbyeangel.org](http://www.rockgoodbyeangel.org)



**Teen Victim Impact Program and It Won't Happen To Me** will be having their 6th Annual Memory Walk **October 6th** 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. Anyone that has lost a teen in a tragic car crash and would like to participate and or have their teen represented along the Walk please contact Bill Richardson at [Bill@tvip.org](mailto:Bill@tvip.org) For more information about our organization you can go to [www.itwonthappentome.org](http://www.itwonthappentome.org)

**TCF Johns Creek** meets the first Tuesday of each month at the Johns Creek United Methodist Church, 11180 Medlock Bridge Road, Johns Creek at 7 pm. For information contact Margy Nelson by email, [support@tcfjohnscreek.org](mailto:support@tcfjohnscreek.org) or phone 770-598-5556, or call Gail Beard at 678-787-8967

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**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: **June Cooper**, Chapter Co-Leader, in memory of her daughter, **Wendy McMMain** & in memory of her sister, **Noreen Keenan**; **Meg Avery**, Chapter Co-Leader & Newsletter Editor in memory of her son **James Avery**; **Barbara Dwyer**, Chapter Treasurer and group facilitator and **Leo Dwyer**, group facilitator and community outreach, in memory of their son **Matthew Dwyer**; **Terry Sparks**, provides newly bereaved packet info & as group facilitator, in memory of his daughter, **Natalie Sparks**; **Trina Yearby**, creating & mailing Birthday & Anniversary Remembrance Cards in memory of her children, **Gabrielle, Xavier & Malachai**; ; **Diane Wolcott**, Memorial Garden Committee Chair in memory of her son, **Jeffrey**; **Gary Fox**, facilitator, in memory of his son, **G.W. Fox**; **Joy Crowe**, Steering Committee Member in memory of her son **Brenden Elbaz**; **Claudine Nickens**, Steering Committee Member in memory of her son **David Whitley**; and **Sandy Lavender**, organizing & setting up the library in memory of her daughter **Ashley Lauren Hull**.

### 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:*

Adam Lee Jones, from his mom, Linda Jones

Amanda Lynn "Mandy" Harned,  
from her dad, Mikey Harned

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



## National Children's Memorial Day

Sunday, December 9, 2012

Last year we had a small informal gathering on National Children's Memorial Day, which is always the second Sunday in December. The Compassionate Friends has a World Wide Candle Lighting Ceremony on this day at 7 pm in every time zone for one hour, creating a continuous wave of light around the world in memory of our loved one. TCF Gwinnett met last year at the Lawrenceville Historic Courthouse Gazebo at 7 pm. Depending on the weather, we will try to have a "Gathering at the Gazebo" at 7 pm on Dec. 9 for one hour. There is electricity in the gazebo so we were able to have music last year and will plan on the same this year. Hopefully the weather will cooperate so we may gather together and light candles in memory of the love & spirit of our child, children, siblings and/or grandchildren whom we love, miss and remember, especially during the holiday season.

Information will be shared via email as it gets closer to Dec. 9. If you have not ever received an email from TCF Gwinnett, then you are not on that mailing list. Please send an email to [tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com](mailto:tcfgwinnett@yahoo.com) to be included on chapter email monthly reminders and announcements.

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, newsletter account or general account. Funds from the general account pay for remembrance cards, postage, labels, the annual picnic, expenses associated with 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.

*Please fill out the information below, clip and mail with your tax deductible donation to: **Gwinnett TCF, Barbara Dwyer, 4905 Pond Ridge Lane, Cumming, GA 30041.***  
(Please make checks payable to TCF Gwinnett.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify if you would like your donation added to the Children's Memorial Account, Newsletter Account, or General Account.

### Candle Lighting

A small, close circle of candles,  
A larger circle of love –  
this is the scene at Christmas  
that brightens my heart and soul.  
Fathers and mothers and siblings –  
all come to this circle as one;  
each of us lights a candle or two –  
sharing our wonderful memories,  
sharing lost hopes and dreams,  
sharing our joys as well as our tears,  
sharing our faith as well as our fears,  
but most of all sharing a timeless love  
aglow and alive in the candles beams.  
Shirley Ottman, BP/USA Denton, TX