



The Compassionate Friends Newsletter



TCF Marietta Butterfly Picnic and Balloon Release

Don't forget our Butterfly Picnic is Sunday, June 14 and will be held at the Marietta Camp Meeting Campgrounds at 2301 Roswell Road, Marietta from 3-6 PM. There will be music, food, sharing and a balloon release. We will have barbeque from Williamson Brothers and cake by Publix. If you like, bring one of your child's favorite side dish, snack or dessert to share. Please label it with your child's name. We will have memory boards set up, one for children and one for siblings, so bring a photo (5x7 or smaller) with the child or sibling's name, and if you wish, a few words, a paragraph, or short poem to display. The admission of \$10 for adults, \$5 for teens (no charge for children under 12) will help to defer costs for food, site rental and supplies. Please register by June 10 so that we can plan on how much food to order.

For more information contact Lorna Kennedy or Kathy Kelcourse. Please come out to support one another and memorialize your loved one at this special chapter event.



New Members

It is always hard to "welcome" parents coming to Compassionate Friends meetings for the first time because we are very sorry for the reason you have found us. However, we are glad you found the courage to reach out for help and we hope you find new friends who truly understand your grief.

Contact and Chapter Information

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Marietta Chapter Meetings

Our meetings are held on the
First Tuesday of each month
First Baptist Church of Marietta
148 Church Street, Marietta
Main Building on the third floor

7:00 - 9:30 PM

June - July Birthdays

Birthdays are given special recognition at our monthly meetings. We have a birthday table set up where parents and siblings are invited to bring in photos and other memorabilia to share with the group. There is also an opportunity to share a short story or memory of your child with the group before breaking up into our smaller sessions. Many also like to bring in a cake or other favorite snack to celebrate the birthday of their child or sibling.

We also invite you to share a special story, picture, or both for the Birthday Tribute section below if your child's birthday is in the upcoming months. If you would like to place a birthday tribute to your child in the newsletter, you may do so by emailing it to Louise Hoefler at tcfmarietta.louise@hotmail.com.

June Birthdays

Webber Bennett Broach	Renee Elise McGinnis
Pamela Barnett Buck	Corey Andre McKenzie
Grace Clay	Luther Griffith Mills III
Lauren Careen Cooper	Corey Andre McKenzie
Matthew Shawn Corley	Vicki Lynn Oxford
DyKeith Ennis-Williams	Jeffrey Armstrong Patterson
Thomas Free	Michael Todd Roberds
Brian Glenn	Karen Delia Robertson
Rebecca Lynn Grigs	Baby Rowan
Jennifer Nicole Hower	Frankie Wayne Stricklin
Laurie Jane King	Robert Tufts
Christopher Ray Lumpkin	Paula Wandell
Felipe Machado	Kristi Leigh Ziegler



July Birthdays

Paul Badger
 Ronald Henry Boyd, Jr. "Hank"
 Penny Marie Hall Collins
 Scott Robert Cummins
 Brian Alan Daniell
 Chris Hunter
 Mark Alan Lee
 Matthew David Reed
 Christofer Michael Schultz
 Quentin Scott Smith-Sopousek
 Nathan White

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 and siblings receive the understanding and support of others who have "been there."

Through the years, the hope for the future that is provided through these sharing sessions has been more helpful than anything else in resolving the grief of bereaved parents. Siblings, grandparents and other adult family members are also welcome at Compassionate Friends meetings.

The death of a child of any age, from any cause, is a shattering experience for a family. When a child dies, to whom does a family turn for the emotional support it will need during the grief journey that lies ahead? 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.

TO MY NEW COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Our stories may be different
 But inside we're all the same
 Struggling to find new meaning
 Trying to ease our pain.
 With courage we face tomorrow
 and try to understand
 Though death has left its sorrow
 We honor our children's' memories
 By learning to live again

*Debbie Dickinson
 TCF Naperville, IL*





My Birthday Tribute to Mark Alan Lee

July 20, 1982 – October 5, 2004



Just on returning from a special Wedding in Canada, my focus turns to Mark, who would have turned 27 this year. My nephew married his sweetheart on May 16th and what a beautiful wedding it was. For me, going home is always happy and sad. The happiness is always seeing family, my one and only brother and his family, my sisters and theirs. I feel so lucky I still have my parents, and seeing them always brings joy! Seeing my nephew getting married brought happiness for him and my sister. I could not help tearing through the ceremony though.. Actually I was to the point of sobbing, my sister handed me a small tissue, thinking it would help, but laughter came when she kept handing me small tissues and noticing my sobbing handed me a few huge napkins!!! My only thought was I would never see this happen to Mark. (There might be hope for my younger son Darren, but I am sure not for a while!) I can wait.

We got through the ceremony - being with family helped. I think everyone knew what I was thinking. They are all understanding. Then came the reception. I was lucky to be seated with my brother and his family. Darren was also seated with us. Being with my nieces and nephews brought tons of laughter, they are all in Mark's age group, and truly a wonderful bunch of young adults.

The reception was in full swing, then it was time for my sister to have her dance with her son. Well you know the tears flowed again heavier this time and I had to hit the washroom. While walking there I noticed no one else was in tears, just sobbing old me. I thought to myself I could stay here and hide forever, but I planted my two feet on the ground and out I went. I finally got back to the table after sitting in the washroom for a time and felt this is the place I need to be. With family! My brother and my sisters and my parents are so wonderful, they might not know but they do help me, they let me be sad when I need to be, they let me cry and release my emotions, which we all know helps heal our hearts.

After saying tearful goodbyes to Canada I am back in Georgia. Mark's Birthday is coming up and I am planning a BBQ for him. I think this is the most powerful thing I can do for him. I realized this year, I will never see my Mark married, or grandchildren or anything that is relevant, but I am blessed to have my family and all my TCF friends, and I can remember Mark and honour him on his 27th Birthday. Mark always liked birthday parties so I am giving him one.

I am inviting everyone to my place on July 25th 2009. Time 3 -6 (see social calendar PLEASE RSVP). Even though it is Mark's birthday I am sure there is room for everyone to honour their own child any way they wish. Lets have a birthday party for all our children!

We are leaving for Canada in June to see my younger son graduate University, how time flies. Mark would have been so proud of his brother. I know he is looking down and smiling!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARK! WE ALL LOVE YOU TONS!

Lorna Kennedy, Marks mom

TCF Marietta

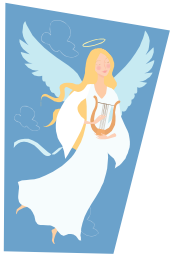


We encourage you to participate in our chapter **Newsletter** by submitting articles, poems, or book reviews. Please help to keep us up to date by letting us know if there is someone who would like to receive our newsletter, if your address or email address has changed, or if you currently receive a hard copy of the newsletter and would prefer to receive it by email. Contact Louise at tcfmarietta.louise@hotmail.com. Visit our chapter website www.tcfmarietta.com for chapter updates and current and past newsletters.

Lending Library



Our chapter offers a lending library with a variety of books on grief and bereavement. We encourage you to browse our library and feel free to check out a book or CD to take home with you. We only ask that you sign out the books and return them in a timely manner so others can have the benefit of them as well. If you have read a book that was helpful to you and would like to share it with others, donating that book in your child's name is a wonderful way to honor them. Stickers are placed in these books to note whose memory they are given in.



June - July Angel Dates

Our Children Loved and Remembered

June Angel Dates

Brad Goodson	Steven Gerard Smith
Danielle Adams	Laurie Jane King
Amber Bower	Matthew Shawn Corley
William Michael Inman	Kristi Leigh Ziegler
Morgan Keith Farris	Kerry Michael Suglia
April Nesmith	Jessica Bedingfield
Jimmy Mitchell	Kimberly Nicole Andrews
Rusty Kohler	Ryan Moressa
Livia Elaine O'Connor	Kasey Marie Vanek
Corbin Blain	Cloey L Herring
Michele Laura Reno	Jacob Martin Drollinger
Ashley Nicole Plunkett	Ian Donald Renton
	Mathew Donald Seavers

July Angel Dates

Andrea Lynne Cardwell	Christofer Michael Schultz
Lilli Kathryn Goss	Andres H. Cardenas
Martin Oldrich Holubar	Ashley Margaret Sabbatino
Alex "Brett" Powell	Anna Elizabeth Chambers
Nathan White	Alexis Nicole Grubbs
Timothy Adam Zercher	Gary Ryle Minor
Joshua Bradley McGuirt	Terry Lebron Cates
Cheryl Joy Rojek	Mia Marie Dowling
Timmy de St. Aubin	Luke Deavers
Chad Brown	Mia Marie Dowling
Jacob Noah Beachy	Sydney Brooke Pollock
Joshua Karlya Runyan	Christopher Wade Tyler
Thomas Free	



Love Gifts

A love gift is a donation to help carry on the work of our chapter. There are no dues to be a member of TCF but we are always appreciative for any contributions.

THANK YOU to those of you who make donations at our monthly meetings. Your contributions help in such a wonderful way to continue the efforts of our chapter.

We would like to extend our gratitude to all who donate for their generous gifts, which allow us to reach out to the newly bereaved and give needed support to the bereaved parents and siblings in our community.

Thank you to Karl Jahn and Omni International for donating their services for printing our newsletters and thanks to Theo Furber and TBF Computing for their help with other computing needs.

Would you like to honor your child by making a donation to the Marietta Chapter of the Compassionate Friends in his or her memory?

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

Marietta Chapter TCF P.O. Box 1892, Marietta, GA 30061

Please make checks payable to Marietta TCF.

Name _____

Address _____ **City** _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

In memory of: _____

Please specify if you would like your donation added to the Library account or the General account.

Thanks to Glen Cummins for making the photo buttons for our chapter. If you would like a photo button made of your child, you may submit a photo by email to Glen at georgiaglen@hotmail.com or bring one with you to the meeting.

~~~~~ Father's Day ~~~~~

I just finished watching another miserable cologne commercial on TV. For some reason these are the first signs of the upcoming holiday, commercials that are only shown at Christmas and Father's Day to give wives and kids some idea of what to get Dad to celebrate a gift-oriented holiday.

Like the other fathers who read this newsletter, I know the gift I'd like to get this Father's Day, just as I know there is no way that it will happen. My son's life. An opportunity not to hurt when I see boys who are the age my son should be now. A chance to dream those dreams for that little boy again. But that's not going to happen. Instead, I will get up on that day, having called and wished my father a happy day the night before, and go to the florist for the flowers I will place on my son's grave. I will stand alone and cry for a time, then return home to my wife and our infant son. This year will have a greater measure of peace due to young Dan's arrival, but I shall always have that Alex-sized hole in my soul, a longing that I know I will have until I too die.

Like many bereaved fathers I have felt the lack of understanding of the non-bereaved on how a father should mourn his child's death, and for how long. I do not understand how a society can have such belief in the strength of maternal love, and do such a good job of ignoring the intensity of paternal love. From the people whose only question at Alex's memorial service was on how my wife was dealing with this tragedy, to the long-time friend who didn't understand my choking up after watching a Hallmark Card commercial last year, the majority of people around us seem to have difficulty with the thought that a father may need to grieve for his deceased child just as much as a mother might.

So that is where some support and love is needed, and needed badly. Of course we have Compassionate Friends, but something more personal and closer to home is needed. In a recent newsletter there was a note from a bereaved mother from New Jersey asking fathers and siblings to be understanding of a grieving mother's needs on Mother's Day. I agree, but I would also hope that you ladies will not forget your husbands this Father's Day as well. It is frequently said that we males don't often talk of our emotional needs, and are reluctant to show our pain, but we need love and 'warm fuzzies' when we hurt also. Please remember us on Fathers Day, and please remember also that those cute little sentimental commercials that hurt you in May, take their toll on us in June. There are definitely times when I can do without Old Spice, McDonalds, Hallmark, and AT&T.

Brothers, I wish you peace, comfort, and love.

Doug Hughes TCF ~ Cincinnati, Ohio



As a grieving dad and former TCF chapter leader, the intense anguish and sense of hopelessness of newly-bereaved parents always worries me when they leave that first TCF meeting. I hope that they found comfort and support during our session, so they are willing to return. Yet I always wished that I could recommend a grief support book that acknowledges their pain, prepares them for the future, and plants seeds of hope that they can enjoy life again. With this in mind, I devoted the last year to writing **Holding Onto Love: Searching for Hope When a Child Dies**, as a support guide for grieving parents. The book is available online at a reduced price via www.holdingontolove.com, as well as through traditional on-line book distributors. **Author royalties over production costs will be donated to TCF.** I invite you to visit my website at www.holdingontolove.com to view the front and back covers, and the table of contents. If you have any questions, feel free to email me at tiffaniesdad@holdingontolove.com.

Chuck Collins

(Author, retired police commander, attorney, & TCF regional coordinator for VA & D.C.)

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME !

If you would like to give of your time to our chapter, we warmly welcome volunteers. Volunteer opportunities range from helping to set up a meeting, facilitating meetings, maintaining the library, making phone calls and helping with special events. This is a great way to give back in memory of your child after you have found hope, encouragement and strength from TCF. Making the change from needing and finding help to giving help and support to new parents is another healing milestone. Please contact Kathy Kelcourse at tcfmaretta.kathy@hotmail.com or 770-579-3512 if you would like to help or have any questions.

A Word About Closure

I don't use the word "closure" anymore. For years I thought it was a good way to express what happens to us at various times during our grief journey. I would often tell about the importance of viewing the loved one by saying viewing gives reality and closure.

I live in Oklahoma City. The general feeling here was that the survivors of the bombing would find closure when the trial was over. The ending of the trial was supposed to be some kind of magical day that would bring relief to the pain. The survivors walked out of the courtroom saying, "Don't mention the word closure to us. This does not close anything."

Closure conjures up the idea of healing or moving past. It sounds like some magic moment that happens and the grieving is over. A moment that closes the door to a bad time in our lives and we do not have to think about it anymore. I no longer think there are any magic moments in grief. Grief is a process—a long slow process. There are events that are memorable, but they don't take the pain away. There are times of healing, but the process must still go on.

Closure also sounds like getting well. We do not "get well." A chunk has been bitten out of our hearts and it is not going to grow back. We do not get well. We move toward turning the corner in the way we cope. We live again, but we live again because we learn to cope with the chunk of our hearts that is gone.

We don't have closure. We have times of growing reality. Reality does not come all at once. We must gradually come to grips with our loss. We go through a time of "real but not real." We know it has happened, but we still think it is a dream and we will soon awaken. Reality develops gradually through many experiences.

It grows in those times when we face a little bit more of our loss, and reality becomes more vivid. Viewing a loved one, the funeral, the first visit to the cemetery, cleaning out the closets, cleaning out the room, all of these are steps toward reality and toward coping.

They are not some final step. They are not the closing of a door nor opening of a new door. They are just tiny steps toward deciding to live again and learning to cope.

Doug Manning, Author of "Please Don't Take my Grief Away"

Wish You Were Here

By Steve Tutt ~ TCF, Tyler, TX

You'd be nineteen if you were here
But why you're gone still isn't clear.
Your things are still all in your room
As if you'd be returning soon.
Spongebob waits there by the door.
Your shoes are still there on the floor.
Your friends are all young women now.
They're working jobs or college bound.
Sometimes we see them and they say
We miss her so, wish she had stayed.
Your boyfriend's in the Army too
And by the way, he still loves you.
You thought his love was not so true
And that some other girl he'd choose.
But near two years have passed on by
Still to your grave he goes to cry.
Your niece and nephews miss you too,
And talk of the things you used to do.
Your Mother's going to be alright
And doesn't cry so much at night.
She puts the flowers on your grave,
And scrapbook pictures tries to save.
And me, I'm still the same old Dad,
The same old routine like I had.
I work real hard to make a way
To pay some bills and pass the day.
I'm not as funny as before
My world's not happy anymore.
I don't let on the pain I feel
But deep inside the hurt is real.
Time passes by year after year,
Life goes on with seldom a tear.
One wish I have, a wish so clear
My wish most of all, I wish you were here.
~Dad

*And if I go while you're still here
Know that I live on,
Vibrating to a different measure
Behind a thin veil that you cannot see through.
You will not see me so you must have faith.
I wait for the time when we can soar together again,
Both aware of each other.
Until then, live your life to the fullest
And when you need me,
Just whisper in your heart
...and I will be there.
Emily Dickinson
Forever Remembered*

*When someone you love
becomes a memory,
The memory becomes a
treasure*



Events

Each month we plan a social outing in addition to our monthly meeting in an effort to get together with our TCF friends in an informal setting, to do something active, talk, and usually share a meal. We encourage these socials as another means of group support with other bereaved parents and their families and a chance to get out and enjoy some healthy activities.

Etowah Indian Mounds

Saturday, June 27



Come join us for an exciting day at the Etowah Indian Mounds in Cartersville.

This is a great social for the young and not so young.

If you'd like to carpool, meet at the church at 9:00 AM, otherwise meet us at the park entrance at 10:00 AM.

Cherokee artist Tommy Wildcat will perform a flute concert. Dancers and drummers will provide entertainment throughout the day while inviting participation from the public. Wear your dancing shoes. \$2.50-\$5.

More info about Etowah Indian Mounds at www.gastateparks.org/info/etowah 770-387-3747

We hope to see many of you there.



BBQ at Lorna and Ian Kennedy's

Saturday, July 25 3-6 PM

675 Harmony Road, Temple GA 30179

RSVP to Lorna at 770-722-4688 or

Email: tcfmarietta.lorna@hotmail.com



Calendar of Events

- June 27 - Indian Mounds, Cartersville
(Indian flute/dance)
- July 25 - BBQ at Lorna Kennedy's
- August 23 - Bowling at Marietta Lanes
- September 19 - Hike Amicalola Falls
- October 17 - New Echota (Frontier Day)
- November 21 - Harvest Festival
- December 19 - Christmas in Helen



Atlanta Botanical Gardens

We picked a beautiful day for our trip to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens in April. The orchids on display in the greenhouse were exquisite. It's a peaceful setting to walk and enjoy the outdoors and the beauties of nature. In addition to the gardens, there were sculptures and drawings on display by Henry Moore, with the theme of *Mother and Child*. There was even a big metal butterfly to remind us that our children were with us, too, as we know they always are.

2009 National Conference and Walk to Remember

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. The walk is held at 8 a.m. Sunday, August 9th, the final day of the national conference. There is an air of excitement and anticipation as everyone gathers in preparation for the start of the Walk. Finally the Walk begins and people walk hand- in-hand 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 participate. 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.

If you are not able to attend the conference and participate in the Walk, your child can still be remembered during this event. Last year the names of more than 10,000 special children being remembered by our friends across the country were carried by volunteers during the Walk. This is a special act of love freely given by those participating in the Walk. If you have a child whose name you'd like carried during the Walk, there is no charge. For more information and to submit a child's name, visit the Walk to Remember website at www.tcfwalktoremember.org or contact Erica Beltz at (678) 891-7479, email tcfmarietta.eric@hotma.com.



TCF CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.

We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.

We are young and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is a 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©2009



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

**The Compassionate Friends
Marietta Chapter Newsletter**

c/o

Marietta TCF

P. O. Box 1892

Marietta, GA 30061

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