



# Linked Together



## Newsletter of The Compassionate Friends, Inc. Atlanta Area Chapters

"The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information to help others be supportive."

### **VoiceLink Atlanta Area**

770-491-8784

Email: [TCFAtlanta@tcfatlanta.org](mailto:TCFAtlanta@tcfatlanta.org)

### **Atlanta Area Chapters Web Site**

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National Web Site:

<http://www.compassionatefriends.org>



If you are receiving our newsletter for the first time...everyone within The Compassionate Friends Organization wants to say .... We are very sorry you need to be on our mailing list but we hope our newsletter will be helpful on your journey. Someone may have lovingly sent you the newsletter...and if so and you find it helpful, please complete the data sheet enclosed and return it so that we may add you to our newsletter database for future mailings.

### Old Grief

Older grief is gentler.

It's about sudden tears swept in by a strand of music.

It's about haunting echoes of first pain on anniversaries.

It's about feeling his (her) presence for an instant  
one day while dusting his room.

It's about early pictures that invite me to fold her  
(him) in my arms again.

It's about memories blown on wisps of wood smoke  
and sea scents.

Older grief is about aching in gentler ways,  
rarer longing, less engulfing fire.

Older grief is about searing pain wrought into tenderness.

by Linda Zelenka

### Sand Fleas

by Susan Larson, Lilburn, Ga



The death of a child takes you places you've never been before, not only in terms of emotions, but in terms of awareness of all that is. I liken the experience to playing on the shore with your friends and complaining about an occasional bite from a sand flea. It's painful and annoying, but at least everyone else understands how you feel when you're bitten. Then one day, a wave grabs you and pulls you out into the ocean where you are bitten by a shark. You feel pain you never imagined could exist. And you're alone, in unfamiliar territory. When you get back to shore, you try to explain your pain to your friends, but the worst pain they can imagine is being bitten by 1000 sand fleas. That's all they know. There is no way to explain it to them.

But it's not just the pain you can't explain. While struggling under the water you're suddenly aware that there is infinitely more to life than what we see on the shore. You see the ocean floor with coral reefs and rock formations, things you had never before imagined. You have tapped into the vastness of creation to a higher degree. And again, there is no way to adequately describe this vastness you see and feel. You have nothing to compare it to.

You have a true sense of a greater dimension, and you know that the loved one you miss is out there. You also know your loved one is not lost, but has only gone before you to a place more beautiful and vast than those on the shore could ever imagine.

Yes, you still get annoyed with the sand fleas, but you now realize how trivial they are. And even if your friends don't understand you, you know there is Someone greater out there who does.

~~~~~  
**A loved one from us has gone,  
 A voice we love is stilled,  
 A place is vacant in our home,  
 Which never will be filled.**

-verse from "New Beginnings" by Jan Karon

Missing and forever loving our Jennifer Marie  
 November 9, 1982 - March 12, 1997

Bob, Joanne, and Keith Dailey, Lilburn, Ga

### "Why Be Here Tomorrow?"

I took a long, hard look at my life tonight, with a very critical eye...and wondered why I would want to be here tomorrow.

The damage from recent ice storms has been cleaned up and the back yard is looking good; I have only summer weeds to look forward to. All of the dirty clothes in the house are clean; I did laundry yesterday. The house has been dusted and the vacuum has been run. The dishes are washed and put away, and dinner is ready for when my husband comes home.

I recently corresponded with all of our friends and family-members; I've written notes and sent books, butterflies and support-group information to two newly bereaved families in the community.

My email is up-to-date; I've answered all of my messages. My cats are fed. The plants are watered. Cupcakes are in the oven.

My only child is dead.

Everything is "done".

Why would I want to be around tomorrow? Tonight, I can't think of one possible reason.

So, I'll "invent" a reason. I'll make a reservation for my husband and myself at a resort/arboretum for a weekend three months from now, for his birthday, during azalea season. Perhaps tomorrow, I will meet a new Compassionate Friend. The next day, I may go to watch my son's friends bowl in the youth-league. I just received a recipe from my cousin's son for Italian Beef. I love Italian beef, so I'll try that recipe next Wednesday. I have a pair of slacks to hem, and I want to change the wallpaper in the guest bedroom. I want to put my son's school pictures in a special album.

I think I'll hang around, to see what tomorrow brings....

Teal Snapp, Conyers, Ga  
 In Memory of Billy Snapp 6/23/81 - 2/25/96



Perhaps our children are like the stars in the daytime --

They are still there, but we can't see them right now.

### The Visit

The bone marrow transplant which was intended to cure Natalie of her leukemia had turned on her during the last month. As her life ebbed away in the hospital bed we told her how much we loved her and how proud we were of her. We couldn't know if she heard us. She was assisted by a respirator for the last two weeks of her life and couldn't talk. During the last few days she was mercifully in a deep sleep because of the morphine and other drugs.

We returned from the funeral a day or two before and had since been struggling with the knowledge that she was really gone. My heart ached so badly I could not understand why life itself wouldn't end and at times I wished it would. As I went to bed that night I hoped that sleep would mercifully come.

Somewhere in the night I saw Natalie sitting upright in her bed. I was surprised to see that her hair had grown back and all the cruel reminders of her disease had disappeared. She looked at me and said, "Dad, I'm alright now. You don't need to worry anymore." Then we were outdoors and Natalie was dancing in a meadow in tall green grass. I called and told her that she would have to be careful because it would be easy for her to catch a cold since her immunity was so low. I shouted for her to put on her jacket. She walked up to me and said again, "Dad I'm alright now. I'm not sick any more..." And then she was gone.

I couldn't understand why I was chosen to receive her wonderful message. As the next morning passed, a thought came to me. I had always been what my Daughter called "Practical Dad" and that sometimes caused her much consternation. She was a free spirit and liked to take chances. I on the other hand was cautious and didn't believe anything unless I saw it with my own eyes. I guess Natalie knew that I would need to be convinced.

My Wife and I had just begun an incredibly long and painful journey through the grief and the intense feelings of loss. But now we knew that Natalie was "ok". The memories of and times with our beautiful young Daughter would somehow get us through.

By Terry Sparks, Lawrenceville, Ga  
In Memory of Natalie Sparks  
5/11/75 - 1/22/98



### Missing You

Sitting here thinking of you,  
wondering what to do.  
A hole in my heart as big as the sky,  
wondering why you had to die.

Missing you so terribly much,  
wishing you were here to touch.  
I love you so, don't know what to do,  
who I am or what awaits around the bend.

I hear your laughter, see your smile,  
ache inside for a little while.  
As days go by and one year too,  
I'm getting better but will never forget you.

In everything that I do,  
You're in my thoughts and are my inspiration to.  
My friends have changed, my life has to,  
that's because I have lost you.

I will help others that are like me,  
missing a child that God set free.  
It seems my life is on a mission,  
I will fulfill each step in your memory.

It would be so easy to hide away  
from life as we see it day to day,  
but your memory and love you gave to me  
gives me strength to live each day,  
helping others in need.

I love you Tommy and miss you so,  
at times I wonder where I will go,  
But the answers they come so slow.  
So I will take one day at a time  
with you in my heart that mountain I will climb.

You will forever and always be in my  
heart,  
Love Mom

by Jerri McDonald, Loganville, Ga  
In memory of my son Thomas  
(Tommy) McDonald 8/31/71 -  
9/22/98

## THE VISION

Barbara was driving her six-year-old son, Benjamin, to his piano lesson. They were late, and Barbara was beginning to think she should have canceled it. There was always so much to do, and Barbara, a night duty nurse at the local hospital, had recently worked extra shifts. She was tired. The sleet storm and icy roads added to her tension. Maybe she should turn the car around.

"Mom!" Ben cried. "Look!" Just ahead a car had lost control on a patch of ice. As Barbara tapped the brakes, the other car spun wildly, rolled over, then crashed sideways into a telephone pole.

Barbara pulled over, skidded to a stop and threw open her door. Thank goodness she was a nurse---she might be able to help these unfortunate passengers. Then she paused. What about Ben? She couldn't take him with her---little boys shouldn't see scenes like the one she anticipated. But was it safe to leave him alone? What if their car were hit from behind? For a brief moment Barbara considered going on her way. Someone else was sure to come along. No! "Ben, Honey, promise me you'll stay in the car!"

"I will, Mommy," he said as she ran, slipping and sliding, toward the crash site.

It was worse than she'd feared. Two girls of high school age were in the car. One, the blond on the passenger side, was dead, killed on impact. The driver, however was still breathing. She was unconscious and pinned in the wreckage. Barbara quickly applied pressure to the wound in the teenager's head while her practiced eye cataloged the other injuries. A broken leg, maybe two, along with probable internal bleeding. But if help came soon, the girl would live.

A trucker had pulled up and was calling for help on his cellular phone. Soon Barbara heard the ambulance sirens. A few moments later she surrendered her lonely post to rescue workers. "Good job," one said as he examined the driver's wounds. "You probably saved her life, ma'am."

Perhaps. But as Barbara walked back to her car a feeling of sadness overwhelmed her, especially for the family of the girl who had died. Their lives would never be the same. Oh God, why do such things have to happen?

Slowly Barbara opened her car door. What should she tell Benjamin? He was staring at the crash site, his blue eyes huge. "Mom," he whispered, "did you see it?"

"See what, Honey?" she asked.

"The angel, Mom! He came down from the sky while you were running to the car. And he opened the door, and he took that girl out."

Barbara's eyes were filled with tears. "Which door, Ben?"

"The passenger side. He took the girl's hand, and they floated up to Heaven together."

"What about the driver?"

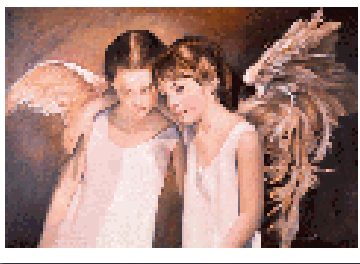
Ben shrugged. "I didn't see anyone else."

Later Barbara was able to meet the families of other victims. They expressed their gratitude for the help she had provided. Barbara was able to give them something more; Ben's vision. There was no way he could have known--- who was in the car or what had happened to either of the passengers. Nor could the passenger door have been opened; Barbara had seen it's tangle of immovable steel herself. Yet Ben's account

brought consolation to a grieving family. Their daughter was safe in Heaven. And they would see her again.

~Author Unknown~

This gives extra credence to the saying that "No one ever dies alone."



## Helping - Reinvesting - Healing

We will be sharing some stories with you about Healing through Helping and Reinvesting...and encourage you to share with us your stories.



Kim Keller lost her only child, Evan, July 24, 1999. Evan drowned accidentally while camping with friends at Lake Lanier. Kim shares:

It is so early in my grief journey that, up until two weeks ago, my healing projects seem to only involve myself and Evan's other family members.

I have taken a pair of Evan's workboots (complete with clumps of red dirt still caked on the side of one of them) and planted ivy in them - I just needed to see something living in them again. They look wonderful and bring me so much joy - you can plant a lot of ivy in size 13 boots!

I have taken pictures of him through the years and started designs of note cards to send out on different occasions. The picture of him at 2 months with Santa will be next year's Xmas card.

I am encouraged by Evan's godparents, Terry and Joy Boddie. Joy lost her sister, Bridget, 7 years ago - a car accident victim by a drunk driver. Terry also lost a brother in a car accident several years ago. They are raising Bridget's only child, Terri Lynn. Bridget was a single parent like me. Joy said she felt dead inside after Bridget died up until Evan's death, then suddenly felt a burst of reinvestment energy. She has now started a Xmas fund for single-parented families. She has an automatic deposit into this account every week and at the end of the year she will chose a family through a local organization to give the money to.

Terry, a truly gifted artist, designed the money card Joy will give the gift in. It has a picture of two angels - Evan and Bridget - on the cover. Evan's Aunt Marva wrote a poem for the inside that states that the gift comes from the love left on this earth by Evan and Bridget. Terry also designed Evan's marker. It has a perfectly etched image of an 'Evan' angel on it and it looks just like him! They have played a major role in helping me along my grief journey!

Two weeks ago I volunteered to work on the planning committee on a project for the American SIDS Foundation. I didn't lose Evan to SIDS, but if I can help the effort to help keep other parents from feeling this horrible pain, I'm for it. They are sponsoring a golf outing sometime later this year. It is my first project since Evan's death and, even though I was afraid prior to the first meeting, once I got there I realized that I needed to be there. I chose this one because I don't think I am yet strong enough to help on projects that deal directly with the fresh pain of loss. Maybe one day I will. I hope to make a direct difference to others, but not yet.

I am sure I will become very involved in remembrance projects both personal and public in the years to come. Evan's love has inspired me to a great degree already. All I am and will be is because of that love and I will make sure the world knows it!

~ lovingly submitted in memory of Evan D. Lowery  
10/18/80 - 7/24/99  
by Kim Keller, Norcross, Ga



### Bumper Sticker Campaign wins Safety Award

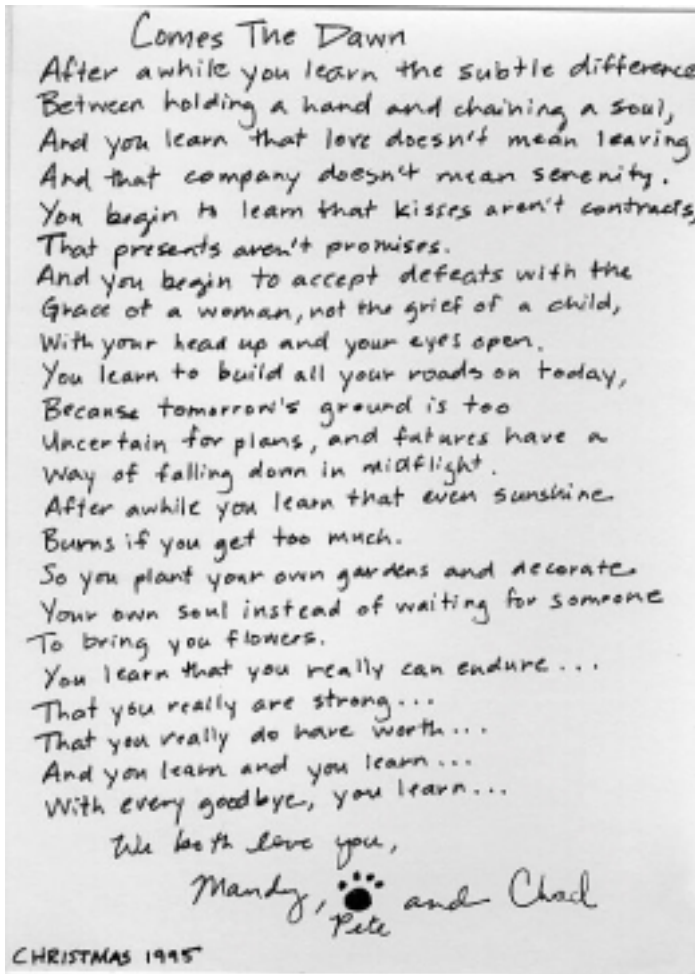
On Saturday March 4<sup>th</sup> the Georgia Department of Public Safety held its Annual Recognition Banquet at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth, GA.

The Motorcycle Safety Program Award was given to Kathy Malone of Snellville for her "**Look Twice. Save a Life. Motorcycles are Everywhere**" bumper sticker campaign. Created as a memorial to her 25 year old son Lance who was killed on May 29, 1995 on his motorcycle, over 100,000 stickers have been distributed free of charge through motorcycle shops, clubs, races, swap meets and rides.

**LOOK TWICE - SAVE A LIFE  
MOTORCYCLES ARE EVERYWHERE**

# Siblings Siblings

The poem below "Comes The Dawn" was given to me by my brother, Chad, Christmas 1995. This was the last Christmas before he died. He was always trying to be a good role model and encourage me. Four Christmases have past and I still miss him terribly.



You learn to treasure the little things.

~Lisa Gordon, Snellville, Ga  
 In Memory of Chad Gordon  
 5/21/72 - 9/3/96

## The Song

For when the overture begins  
 A zest for liveliness is shared  
 Among the musicians and the crowd,  
 The melody was always wonderful.  
 Never missing a beat of the tempo.  
 Like life, she shared her upbeats  
 And her downbeats  
 And all the in-betweens,  
 But her Conductor knew  
 It was her time to go  
 He took her out at her peak,  
 And left all His musicians  
 A place to fill, until their finale Was Over.

That was her song for all to know,  
 No matter good or bad, Joyful or sad,  
 She took it well and has thanked Her Conductor  
 For her chance to plan in His Almighty orchestra.

Moira Durr, TCF Atlanta, Ga  
 In Memory of Kathleen Durr 2/24/65 - 10/28/84

In Celebrate Life: New Attitudes for Living with Chronic Illness Kathleen Lewis discusses the grief of losing the person you once were. This is relevant to grieving the death of a loved one, because we do redefine ourselves and have to come to terms with our new world. She says, "You and your family may go through the grief process at different paces and in different ways. Allow each other to be different but together, separate but connected...the true definition of intimacy." She goes on to discuss "Fantasy Grief" in which we tend to romanticize memories, grieving over the way things used to be, even if they didn't used to be that way. She suggests that Fantasy Grief can make lonely times tougher, especially during the holidays and other times of traditional family gatherings. It makes great sense to me when she writes, "Recognize and label such feelings as fantasy. You'll have enough to grieve without them--and ill or well, it's never too late to create healthier more realistic relationships with your family, or to be a person of worth as you are right now."

~shared by Scott Mastley, Duluth, Ga  
 In Memory of Chris Mastley, 9/2/67 - 12/5/94

## News from the Chapters ~~

### News from the Marietta Chapter



The Marietta Chapter is planning a **Butterfly Banquet** May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m....and have an open invitation to all Metro Atlanta Chapters and any bereaved parent or sibling. The banquet will be at the First Baptist Church of Marietta on Cherokee Street. The event will be catered and they are planning a guest speaker.

They are also preparing a slide show with the children's pictures and special music. If you are interested in having your child's picture included on the slide show, please contact Dean Hunter (770) 428-6882 or email your child's picture (scanned in .jpeg format) [dhunter@mariettafbc.com](mailto:dhunter@mariettafbc.com)

Please complete the attached response form and return it to TCF before April 15th. Seating is limited. If anyone is interested in helping, please contact Marilyn Barton, (770) 424-1548, or Mary Sue Zercher,(770) 924-4913.

**Marietta April Meeting Announcement:** Marietta will be changing their meeting in April to April 11<sup>th</sup>, second Tuesday due to Spring Break and the chapter leaders will be out of town. This is only for the month of April.

**Marietta has added a Birthday Table** at their monthly meeting. There will be a special table set up. If your child's birthday is in the month of a meeting, bring a photo and/or other memento and you will have the opportunity to share some of your special memories of your child. You are also welcome to bring your child's favorite food or a birthday cake or something to share with the group. We hope you will take this opportunity to share your child with us.

**Men's Group:** We are convening a special sharing group "for men only" at our chapter meetings each month. Those who have attended have found comfort and support in having a place to share that's just for them. If this group sounds like it may be for you, come and give it a try.

### News from the Tucker Chapter

**Tucker Chapter:** Tucker wants to encourage veteran TCFer's to return from time to time. Everyone always benefits from those who have survived and are farther down the road. Please consider visiting us occasionally.

## News from the Ben Hill Chapter

**Ben Hill meeting location has changed** from the Annex to the Church. Ben Hill United Methodist Church, 2099 Fairburn Road, SW, Atlanta, Ga., 30331, Room 301.

**Ben Hill has added a Birthday Table** at their monthly meeting. There will be a special table set up. If your child's birthday is in the month of a meeting, bring a photo and/or other memento and you will have the opportunity to share some of your special memories of your child. You are also welcome to bring your child's favorite food or a birthday cake or something to share with the group. We hope you will take this opportunity to share your child with us.

## BIRTHDAY TABLE

**Sandy Springs**

**Lawrenceville**

**Tucker**

*And now*

**Marietta and Ben Hill**

Chapters have a "**Special Birthday Table**" at their monthly meetings. There will be a special table set up. If your child's birthday is in the month of a meeting, bring a photo and/or other memento and you will have the opportunity to share some of your special memories of your child. We hope you will take this opportunity to share your child with us.

## CHAPTER LIBRARIES

Each Chapter maintains a separate lending library. We are always in need and accepting donations of books you would like to donate in Memory of Your Child. If you have books at home and would like to donate them, simply take them to your chapter meeting and give them to the person who maintains the library. If you do not attend a chapter, but have books you would like to donate, please mail them to:

The Compassionate Friends  
P.O. Box 656  
Tucker, GA 30085

**Interested In Volunteering?**

## *Linked Together*

To Subscribe to Linked Together, please complete the attached database form and return it to TCF Atlanta, P.O. Box 656, Tucker, Ga 30085. There is no charge for Linked Together, but a donation In Memory of Your Child would be greatly appreciated.

TCF Atlanta wants to again say Thank you to: The Atlanta Area Chapters owe a great debt of gratitude to **Brett Coltman** and **Direct Technologies, Inc.** for once again printing our newsletter for us - and so much more!



### **Metro Atlanta TCF Speakers Bureau**

We are in the process of putting together a speakers bureau in the metro Atlanta TCF chapters to further the two secondary missions of TCF beyond self-help support for families following the death of a child. Those secondary goals are:

1. Community education regarding grief and
2. Raise the community awareness regarding local TCF chapters.

We are looking for bereaved parents who are two or more years into their personal grief journey who are comfortable with public speaking and are committed to a subject that would be of general community interest. In addition they should be active or retired TCF chapter participants who could weave the TCF story into their story. Following are two presentation summaries and speaker profiles that will provide some examples of what we are looking for in terms of content.

#### **Grief goes to Work**

This presentation will explore the effect of grief in the workplace. How does a grieving employee deal with their grief issues? How do co-workers interact with a grieving employee? How does management react to those situations? These and other questions regarding grief in the workplace will be explored and discussed. Then a series of positive strategies will be presented in order to return the workplace to its productive nature while compassionately assisting a grieving employee with their grief journey.

Speaker: Patrick Malone is a senior partner with an international Atlanta-based consulting and training firm. His third born son Scott died shortly after birth in 1971 and his second born son Lance was killed in a motorcycle accident in 1995. He serves as Gwinnett County chapter co-leader and sits on the national board of directors of The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

#### **Suicide Awareness and Prevention Strategies**

In a short and poignant presentation, a bereaved mom offers her perspective of how parents and educators can look for the signs, ask the appropriate questions and thereby hopefully prevent the ongoing tragedy of death by suicide. Her talk will focus on how we all can help our young people deal with the multitude of issues they face in today's society. She contrasts what life was like when her son James was alive with what today's reality is to drive home the point of the prevention and intervention strategies.

Speaker: Meg Avery is a paraprofessional at Suwanee Elementary, a member of Gwinnett County's Child Abuse Protocol Committee, a Sugar Hill City councilwoman and a suicide survivor. She and her husband were major contributors to The Atlanta Journal's series, "Dying too soon", a guest speaker at Gwinnett County's "Stop the Violence" seminar and the subject of Beth Galvin's FOX5TV special on Teens and Depression. A frequent speaker at civic and school functions, Meg is an active participant in TCF-Atlanta.

If you are interested in becoming part of the TCF Atlanta Speakers Bureau and meet the above mentioned qualifications please submit a similar presentation summary and speaker profile to:

TCF Speaker's Bureau  
P.O. Box 656  
Tucker, GA 30085

Web Site: <http://www.tcfatlanta.org/SpeakersBureau.htm>

### The Compassionate Friends



23<sup>rd</sup> National Conference  
June 30 - July 2, 2000  
Rosemont, Illinois

Online Registration:  
[www.tcfatlanta.org](http://www.tcfatlanta.org)

or Call 630-830-0630 (Warren)



**Web Report:**

About 400 people per day have been visiting the TCF Atlanta web site.

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

Sharing Email List has been a very popular addition....we have over 350 members signed up to receive hopeful and healing messages shared by our members.

~this email was shared by one of the 350 parents/siblings on our email sharing list:

I enjoy your emails so much. Reading all the other letters from parents who have gone through the same ordeal as myself and hearing how TCF has helped them. In the small town that I live there is not any kind of organization or groups to attend. But joining the mailing list from TCF, and reading the letters and the beautiful poems have helped, just knowing your not alone.

Linda

In Memory of Chris Cobb 12/10/74--12/19/96

We have added the following web pages:

Butterfly Workshop - Gainesville, GA (March 25, 2000)

<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/WhiteButterfly.html>

Butterfly Banquet - Marietta, Ga (May 2, 2000)

<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/Butterfly2.html>

Metro Atlanta TCF Speakers Bureau

<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/SpeakersBureau.htm>

**Sibling Web Site**

We are looking for a sibling who would be interested in doing a "**Sibling Web Site**" for the Atlanta Area Chapters.

They would be fully responsible for the site, but we would provide web space as a subdirectory on the tcfatlanta.org site which they can use to upload their pages, email addresses, help if requested, etc. and we would link to each other's sites. This would be a wonderful opportunity for whoever wants to undertake this mission...you will be greatly rewarded many times over and you will certain help fill a void that we now have....and that is "Help for Siblings". Only siblings know how siblings feel....and I think you would get a lot of feedback from other siblings in the area. Please email us if you are interested. This could count as a school or civic project possibly for some of you....

Chapter leaders and parents please check with your children to see if they are interested....we certainly know they know more than we do about computers.

**Telephone Friends**

Sometimes we just need someone to talk to...someone to listen...someone to understand

|                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Carole Babush - 404-231-1965     | Accident        |
| Judy Blumsack - 770-410-9819     | Accident        |
| Paul Fredrickson - 770-992-6391  | Infant Death    |
| Doris Combs - 404-691-7533       | Long Illiness   |
| Jim Dirr - 404-843-8785          | Sibling         |
| Janet Watson - 770-448-1432      | Adult Sibling   |
| Faye Martin - 770-732-9906       | Suicide         |
| Fortune Forrester - 770-937-5789 | Homicide        |
| Donna Sullivan - 770-460-0925    | AIDS            |
| Tricia Simpson - 770-449-5792    | Substance Abuse |

**Butterfly Workshop  
Gainesville (March 25, 2000)**

Invites you to A BUTTERFLY WORKSHOP

SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2000

9:30A.M. - 3:30P.M.

MEMORIAL PARK LAKE HOUSE

GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

The morning session will be led by Donna Moss,LCSW from Hand in Hand Hospice Bereavement Services

The afternoon session will be led by Art Powell,PhD,NMT

Coffee will be served in the morning A buffet lunch will beserved at noon There will be a special balloon-memorial service at the conclusion of the workshop

Donna Moss has conducted a series of parent-bereavement groups through Hand in Hand She holds certifications in bereavement & grief counseling

Art Powell is a former psychotherapist in private practice . Now offers transformative psycho-spiritual seminars, small groups and retreats. He is also a neuromuscular therapist, an intregrative somatic therapist, a poet & sculptor.

\$10.00 per person

Reservations by March 20 - Judy Miller 770-287-1239

Directions to Memorial Park Community Lake House Take Dawsonville Hwy.(Hwy.53) west about 2 miles past bridge. Turn left onto Lynnciff Dr. The Round House is directly across the street. Turn left at stop sign onto Fork Road. Turn left onto Crown Point Drive. Turn right at Stop sign onto Rock Ridge Drive. Turn left at stop sign onto Lake Ridge Place. It is the 3rd house on the right. The address is 3436 Lake Ridge Place. 770-536-0749 (for the lake house).

PLEASE JOIN THE MARIETTA CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

FOR OUR FIRST ANNUAL

## BUTTERFLY BANQUET



**WHO:** Any Bereaved Parent in the Metro Atlanta

**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 2, 2000, 7:00 P.M.

**WHERE:** First Baptist Church, 148 Church Street, Marietta, GA

**WHAT:** A moving tribute to our beloved children, consisting of:

~A SPECIAL SPEECH BY NOTED SPEAKERS, AUTHORS AND BEREAVED PARENTS: **IRIS AND JACK BOLTON**

~A CATERED DINNER

~A "FLOWERING OF THE BUTTERFLY", WITH EACH BEREAVED PARENT ADDING FLOWERS IN HONOR OF HIS/HER CHILD.

~SPECIAL MUSIC COMPOSED ESPECIALLY FOR THE EVENT.

**COST:** \$10.00 Per Person\* (\$5.00 PER CHILD UNDER 12)

**WHAT TO BRING:** Fresh Flower(s) to "Flower the Butterfly"

**TO ATTEND:** Fill in the reservation form and return it (by April 15, 2000), along with your check (payable to the *Marietta Chapter of TCF*), and the decorated butterfly form\*\* , to:

BUTTERFLY BANQUET  
THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS  
P.O. BOX 656  
TUCKER, GA 30085

\*Do not let cost keep you from attending. If you need assistance, or if you have any questions, please call Marilyn Barton (770-424-1548, email [mbar2000@yahoo.com](mailto:mbar2000@yahoo.com)) or Mary Sue Zercher (770-924-4913).

\*\*Whether or not you attend, please decorate the butterfly in honor of your child and send it to the above address.

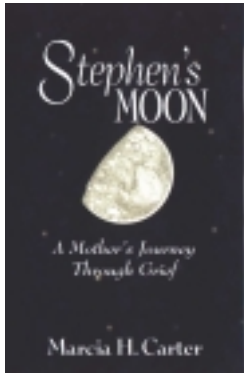
## Love Gifts



A love gift is a gift of money to The Compassionate Friends local chapters. 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, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help in the work of our chapters. Love gifts are acknowledged each month in the newsletter.

Love Gifts are only listed in the hard copy of the newsletter mailed due to privacy issues.

We want to also thank all the volunteers who so lovingly give of their time and talents to make TCF Atlanta successful in our community. We also want to thank our National TCF organization for all they do for the local chapters. Volunteers are the heart and soul of TCF organization...and they also share a secret, too: helping others is sometimes the best way to help yourself. Interested in Volunteering?



### Stephen's Moon

Stephen's Moon began as a journal, a journal my grief counselor encouraged me to write. I usually don't have to be encouraged to write, I usually can't stop writing. But this was different. I had lost my son and my game plan was to simply, somehow, exist

every day until I died and could see him again. My grief counselor kept messing up my plans. He told me that if I would write my feelings down each day, I would slowly see that I was doing better. I didn't think I would. But I was wrong. I wrote about getting the news of the car accident that had taken my son's life, I wrote about the anger of feeling that Stephen's loss was minimized by careless words, I wrote about anger in general and I wrote about guilt.

Forget the journal, the book was born. I shared my writing with two bereaved mothers at the cemetery and they encouraged me to finish, said it voiced the feelings of many. I wrote about people who made me angry and I wrote about people who cared about me. When I was writing about people who cared about me, I realized that these people had thrown lifelines to me all along and I finally took one. The hope I found was so overwhelming that I knew I had to share it with others. The last chapter in my book is called A Year and a Half Later and you wouldn't believe that the person who started the book was the one to end it. I had found hope in a big way. My life is not simply an existence waiting to die and see Stephen. It is a very good life. And I want to share that with others. I do not have a degree in bereavement or grief counseling, there are no letters before or after my name. I just know the material. I wish I didn't. I wish you didn't. But so long as we do, I think we can share our survival tips with each other, something a group called The Compassionate Friends taught me.

-by Marcia Carter, Waleska, GA

In Memory of Stephen E. Beam 7/17/78 - 4/13/97

### Fireflies by David Morrell

Fireflies is author David Morrell's account of the death of his fifteen-year-old son, Matthew from a rare form of bone cancer. Morrell, the suspense novelist who created the Rambo character, has used his creative talents in Fireflies to create a unique blend of truth and fantasy.

The book factually lays out the details of Matt's death and its impact on Morrell and his family. But Morrell also interjects a layer of fiction. The fictional element in Fireflies plays off a fantasy that many bereaved parents have embraced at one point or another: an imagined effort to change the single intolerable fact of your child's death. In the book, Morrell as an old man travels back in time to the final weeks of his son's life. He embarks on a desperate struggle to alert Matt's doctors to the boy's worsening condition. That portion of the book reads as a taut suspense novel, and I found myself hoping against hope that Morrell would succeed in accomplishing the impossible.

Morrell is clearly a gifted writer. The book evokes the pain of parental grief in vivid and wrenching descriptions, including many passages about the disabling physical effects of grief. But perhaps the most important contribution of Morrell's book is its account of the author's own personal journey from despair to acceptance. Central to that journey is Morrell's openness to spiritual signs from his son and his willingness to believe that human life is part of an eternal and universal energy that doesn't stop at death. As Morrell tells it:

One day, about four years after his death, I surrendered. I stopped dwelling on the past. I accepted the present, the after\_Matt present. The day I came to terms with the fact that life would never be as it was, that it had changed and transformed - that was the day I began to heal. Because I came to believe in what Wolfe and Whitman had written about. "All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses and to die is different from what any one supposed."

-book review by Barbara Atwood, TCF, Tucson, AZ

Reminder: If you purchase your books on the TCF Atlanta Web Site through Amazon.com, TCF Atlanta will receive a small commission to be used to support our organization.  
<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/materials.html>

# We Remember You With Love

## MARCH BIRTH DATES

|          |                                                                                                                          |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| March 2  | Chanda Collett, daughter of Kathy Collett, Stockbridge                                                                   |
| March 2  | David Linder, son of Carolyn Linder, Riverdale                                                                           |
| March 3  | Blanca Rosa M. Anson II, daughter of Blanca Rosa Anson, Atlanta                                                          |
| March 3  | Donald Cox, son of Jeannette Avritt, Waleska                                                                             |
| March 3  | Lindsey Elizabeth Fredrickson, daughter of Paul and Linda Fredrickson, Roswell                                           |
| March 3  | David Aldan Harmon, son of Joyanne Fritch, Allenspark, CO                                                                |
| March 3  | Lance Malone, son of Kathy and Patrick Malone, Snellville                                                                |
| March 4  | Seth Elijah "Eli" Henderson, son of Lisa Henderson, Stockbridge                                                          |
| March 4  | Timmy de St. Aubin, son of Sandra and Bill de St. Aubin, Marietta                                                        |
| March 5  | Daniel Scott Brocato, son of Frank Brocato, Snellville                                                                   |
| March 8  | Michelle Dugan, daughter of Dolores and James Hegner, Lawrenceville                                                      |
| March 8  | Philip (Phil) Harris, son of Marilyn and Ron Harris, Marietta                                                            |
| March 9  | Diane Lee Mallory Beard, daughter of Charlotte and Jerry Mallory, Marietta                                               |
| March 11 | Phillip W. Cunnagin, Jr., son of Lenora and Phillip Cunnagin, Palm Harbor, FL and brother of Mary Cunnagin, Glendale, AZ |
| March 11 | Freda Renee Hopkins, daughter of Brenda Fox, Dawsonville                                                                 |
| March 11 | Drew Holder, son of Mike and Paula Holder, Powder Springs                                                                |
| March 11 | "Gent" Gentry, son of Lib and Wayne Gentry, Doraville                                                                    |
| March 11 | Erin Leigh Moody, daughter of Pat and Wayne Moody, Holly Springs                                                         |
| March 12 | Glenn Prather, son of Judy Prather, Ackworth                                                                             |
| March 13 | Adam Philip Frentheway, son of Foye and Neal Frentheway, Tucker                                                          |
| March 14 | Scott Barton, son of Marilyn and Terry Barton, Marietta                                                                  |
| March 14 | Meghan Elizabeth Collins, daughter of Mary T. Collins, Villa Park, IL                                                    |
| March 14 | Bradley Hilderbrand, son of Denise DeFord, Powder Springs                                                                |
| March 14 | Burgandy Moye, daughter of Gregory and Sharon Moye, Stone Mountain                                                       |
| March 15 | Jonathan Tripp, son of Judy and Roger Tripp, Kennesaw                                                                    |
| March 15 | Toby T. Shaw, son of Cynthia Williams, Clarkston                                                                         |
| March 16 | Cecelia Anne Redman, daughter of Robin and Gerald Greene, Hampton                                                        |
| March 17 | Ben J. Strader III, son of Ben J. Strader, Jr., Marietta                                                                 |
| March 18 | Matt Johnston, brother of Julie Johnston, Atlanta                                                                        |
| March 18 | Philip Ganote, son of Kitty Reeve, Berkeley, CA                                                                          |
| March 18 | Chip Swilley, son of Elsie and Reezin Swilley, Atlanta                                                                   |
| March 19 | Sean Wright, son of Sondra and Tom Wright, Tucker; brother of Resa Matheny, Lawrenceville                                |
| March 21 | Jeremy Hill, son of Sandra Hill, Franklin                                                                                |
| March 21 | Jeremy Waters, son of Joanne B. Waters, Buford                                                                           |
| March 21 | Richard Wilson Scott, Jr., son of Rita Goldman, Niceville, FL                                                            |
| March 22 | Benjamin Joseph Lummus, son of Melanie Patillo, Conyers                                                                  |
| March 23 | Allen Harper, grandson of Caroline and Larry Allen, Stone Mountain                                                       |
| March 23 | Benjamin Hutt, son of Chris Hutt and brother of Kimberly Hutt, Lilburn                                                   |
| March 24 | Emily Martin, daughter of MaryBeth and Jerry Martin, Kennesaw                                                            |

# We Remember You With Love

## MARCH BIRTHDAYS (CONTINUED)

- March 24 Steven W. Simmons, son of Shelia Simmons, Dallas  
 March 25 David Josselson, son of Harriet and Jerry Josselson and brother of Brian and Marc Josselson, Alpharetta  
 March 25 Lauren Stanfill, daughter of Tim and Linda Stanfill, Woodstock  
 March 26 Christian Fobas, son of Judy Fobas, Alpharetta  
 March 27 Ricky Palmer, son of Gloria Palmer, Decatur  
 March 27 Lovelle Forbes, son of Velma Vincent, Lithonia  
 March 28 Christy Sutton, daughter of Linda Sutton, Woodstock  
 March 29 Michael Coy, son of Leslie and Steve Coy, Atlanta  
 March 30 Ron Kindler, son of Jackie Kindler, St. Simons  
 March 30 Eliscia Robene Soles, daughter of Katherine and Eddie Roseberry, Decatur  
 March 30 Crawford Masters, son of Melinda and Kevin Masters, Ackworth  
 March 31 Maggie Perkins, daughter of Pat Perkins, Doraville  
 March 31 Alvin W. Stevens III, son of Sally C. Stevens, Birmingham, AL  
 March 31 Steven Jay Steele, son of Ann Sullivan, Cumming



## MARCH DEATH DAYS

- March 2 John Wayne Kennedy, son of Susan and Richard Walker, Lilburn  
 March 2 Roderick Eugene Taylor, son of Martha Taylor, Norcross  
 March 3 John Allen Askins, son of Elaine Askins, Duluth  
 March 3 Jaime Coyier, daughter of Lendell and Mike Vogt, Fairburn  
 March 4 Jacob Jarmusch, grandson of Norma and Albert Jarmusch, Dacula  
 March 4 Tony Visk, Jr., son of Tony and the late Marie Visk, Atlanta  
 March 6 Jason Curtis, son of Sharon Curtis, Lithonia  
 March 7 Allen Titlow, son of Anne Meroney, Atlanta, and George and Diana Titlow, Dalton, brother of Craig, Rusty and Mary-Crait Dimmitt, Kennesaw  
 March 8 Shelly Elliott, daughter of Susie Elliott, Canton  
 March 8 Alan Parish, son of Millie and Woody Parish, Flowery Branch  
 March 8 Danny Tyler, son of Deborah Reddy, Douglasville  
 March 9 Susan Lynn Babush, daughter of Carole Babush, Atlanta  
 March 9 Ray Shawn Grant, son of Cheryl Hose, Atlanta  
 March 10 Shawn Stephens, son of Pat Stephens, Ackworth  
 March 11 Matt Halloran, son of Marti Goldring, Atlanta  
 March 11 Thomas Michael Pattillo, son of Janice and Wayne Pattillo, Lawrenceville  
 March 12 Jennifer Marie Dailey, daughter of Joanne and Bob Dailey, Lilburn  
 March 13 Rodrekus Cox, son of Sylvia Cox, Ellenwood

# We Remember You With Love

## MARCH DEATH DAYS (continued)

- March 13 Amanda Kay Lovett, daughter of Kristi and Gary Lovett, Fayetteville
- March 14 Matthew Cramer, son of Debby and Terry Cramer, Kennesaw
- March 15 Charles Brady James III, son of Brady James, Kennesaw, brother of Laurie James, Athens and Heather Chappell, Marietta
- March 15 Alex Huber, son of Terri and John Huber, Tigard
- March 15 Rachel Diane Trotti, daughter of Joy-Lyn and James Trotti, Decatur
- March 16 Candi Gaye Marshall, daughter of Gena Marshall Holmquist, Tucker
- March 17 Joey Capron, son of Carmen Capron, Chamblee
- March 18 John C. Reeves, son of Bettye and John Reeves, Atlanta
- March 19 Ryan Allan Duffner, son of Lisa and Rorry Duffner, Lawrenceville
- March 19 Anthony Brian Perez, son of Zara Karp, Roswell
- March 19 Eliscia Robene Soles, daughter of Katherine and Eddie Roseberry, Decatur
- March 19 Charles Pilgreen, son of Brenda Shiplet, Birmingham, AL
- March 20 Jonathan Longo, son of Sue Dobos and brother of Danielle Longo, Powder Springs
- March 22 David James Teddlie, son of Anne and Don Teddlie, Decatur
- March 23 Stephen Danley Prince, son of Dan and Linda Prince, Buford
- March 24 Justine Cortney Hunter, daughter of Vikki and Alex Hunter, Norcross
- March 24 Renee Elise McGinnis, daughter of Modree M. Smith, Marietta
- March 24 Walt Prettyman, son of Maryann Prettyman, Philadelphia, PA
- March 25 Michael Coy, son of Leslie and Steve Coy, Atlanta
- March 25 Steve Forrester, son of Nancy and Paul Jordan, Riverdale
- March 26 Jeremy Hill, son of Sandra Hill, Franklin
- March 27 Lauren Tardif, daughter of Jeanne Allen, Marietta
- March 28 Nathan Josel ("Kippy") brother of Laura Josel, Atlanta
- March 28 David Kulp, son of Blanche and Ken Kulp, Marietta
- March 30 John W. Carmichael, son of Rita and Bill Carmichael, Conyers
- March 31 Sean Eubanks, son of Doris Eubanks, Atlanta
- March 31 Dan Steven McConnell, son of Elnora McConnell Borden, Conyers



The death of a child is so painful, both emotionally and spiritually, that I truly wondered if my own heart and spirit would ever heal...I soon learned that I could help myself best by helping others. It wasn't until Robin died that I truly threw myself into volunteer work. That precious little girl left our family a great legacy: I know George and I care more for every living person because of her. We learned firsthand the importance of reaching out to help because others had reached out to us during that crucial time.

By Barbara Bush (Former First Lady) George Bush and his wife Barbara lost their daughter Robin to cancer.

# We Remember You With Love

## APRIL BIRTH DATES

- April 1 Jennifer Reel, daughter of Gail Carter, Stone Mountain
- April 2 Fletcher Smith Hall, son of Karen Smith Hall, Atlanta
- April 3 Molly Feit, daughter of Claire Feit, Duluth
- April 3 Phillip Martin, son of Geraldine Martin, Hampton
- April 3 Kevin Saye, son of Charlotte and Freddie Saye, Stockbridge
- April 4 Joshua James Bearden, son of James C. Bearden, Lithia Springs
- April 4 Tracy McKenna, son of Jeff McKenna, Marietta
- April 4 Spencer Dickson Plott, son of Donna and Alan Plott, Marietta, grandson of Marlene and John Dickson, Smyrna
- April 5 Steve Davol, son of Deloris and Charles Davol, Grayson
- April 5 Kerri Kristen Keith, daughter of Sandra McPeeks, Peachtree City
- April 7 Charles Brady James III, son of Brady James, Kennesaw and brother of Heather Chappell, Marietta and Laurie James, Athens
- April 7 Jenny Collver, daughter of Meredith and Michael Collver, Atlanta
- April 9 Robbie Preston, son of Johnnie and Dick Preston, Marietta
- April 10 Benjamin Thomas Harvey, son of Penny and Bob Harvery, Lilburn
- April 10 Richie Frank Williams, son of Floria Williams, Asheville, NC
- April 11 Robert Cantrell, son of Juanita Cantrell, Marietta
- April 12 Clay Cagle, son of Mr. And Mrs. Tim Cagle, Alpharetta
- April 12 "Bo" Tuggle, son of Connie and Johnny Tuggle, Snellville
- April 13 Cole Avry Barnett, son of DeAnne Barnett, Woodstock
- April 13 Jimmy Cox, son of Audrey Cunningham, Cumming
- April 14 Timothy Lanier, son of Diane Lanier, Norcross
- April 15 Mike Cowan, son of Marilyn Cowan, Bronxville, NY
- April 15 David Kulp, son of Ken Kulp, Marietta
- April 16 Tiffani Lea-Nicole Coke, daughter of Stacie Lawson, Lawrenceville
- April 16 Jeffery Morris, son of Cathy and John Murch, Winder
- April 17 Bobby Runnels, brother of Angel Runnels, Norcross
- April 18 Yardley Coffey, son of Pat Coffey, Lithonia
- April 18 Gary Pruitt, son of Shirley Pruitt, Cumming
- April 19 Amir Jackson, son of Victoria and Kevin Jackson, Lithonia
- April 20 Padraic Dirr, son of Jim Dirr, Atlanta; brother of Moira Dirr, Dunwoody
- April 20 Chari Hanshaw, daughter of Sibyl Cole, Atlanta
- April 20 Michael Lee Haggard, son of Leann Smith, Lexington, KY
- April 20 Mandy, sister of Kelsey Silberg, Duluth
- April 21 Jonathan Holcomb, son of Tony Holcomb, Grayson
- April 22 Mark Joseph Gore, son of Barbara Rodriguez, Lilburn
- April 23 Lauren Alexandra Foley, daughter of Christy and Eamonn Foley, Cumming
- April 24 Robert Coltman, son of Ellen and Barney Coltman, Buford
- April 24 Martin Austin, son of Eleanor Lorenz, Marietta
- April 25 Allison M. Bumpass, daughter of Rachel Bumpass, Atlanta
- April 27 Madeline Dabney Adams, daughter of Madeline R. Adams, Atlanta
- April 27 Amanda Johns, daughter of Linda and Ted Johns, Lawrenceville



# We Remember You With Love

## APRIL BIRTH DATES (CONTINUED)

- April 27 Mark Alan Smith, son of Doris Smith, Atlanta  
 April 28 Chad Alessio, son of Carol and Mike Alessio, Peachtree City  
 April 29 Rodrekus Cox, son of Sylvia Cox, Ellenwood  
 April 29 Chris Wells, son of Mary B. Parker, Marietta  
 April 30 Maria Victoria Boucugnani, daughter of Lynda and Tom Whitehead, Fayetteville, and Al Boucugnani, Hampton



## APRIL DEATH DATES

- April 1 David Bakay, son of Nita Bakay and brother of Michelle Bakay, Conyers  
 April 2 Philip Jordan Grier, son of Elaine and Jim Grier, Atlanta  
 April 2 Amie Marie Guthrie, daughter of Becki and Jim Guthrie, Lilburn  
 April 2 Amanda Phinney Havens, daughter of David and Teresa Phinney, Hoschton  
 April 3 John Bucsela, son of Jeanne Bucsela, Atlanta  
 April 3 Judy Michele McAllister, daughter of Mary McAllister, Otto, NC  
 April 4 Rodd Norton, son of Pat W. Barber, Marietta  
 April 4 Rod Tapley, son of Liz Tapley, Niceville, FL  
 April 5 Bryan Dickinson Farmer, son of Linda and Ben Farmer, Marietta  
 April 5 Charles Lee McKeever, son of King Holloway, Decatur  
 April 6 Taylor Renee Nelson, daughter of Karen Nelson, Smyrna  
 April 6 Christopher Michael Wells, son of Mary B. Parker, Marietta  
 April 6 Marc Stuart Ratthaus, son of Sue Ratthaus, Alpharetta  
 April 7 Tyler Hassett, son of Janice and Jeff Hassett, Snellville  
 April 7 Rhonda McChanie, daughter of Hazel Murray, Buford  
 April 7 Glenn Prather, son of Judy Prather, Ackworth  
 April 8 Emma Parker Gordon, daughter of Lee Anne and Marc Gordon, Saginaw, MI and granddaughter of Renee Turner, Cumming  
 April 10 Jonathan Green, son of Diana and Bill Green, Jonesboro  
 April 10 Richard Levy, son of Emily Levy, Atlanta  
 April 11 Erin Flowers, daughter of Phyllis Jean Flowers, Albuquerque, NM  
 April 12 Kirk Bowen, son of Jennifer Bowen, Stone Mountain  
 April 12 Scott Owen, son of Joyce and Rich Owen, Santa Rosa Beach, FL  
 April 13 Cole Avry, son of DeAnne Barnett, Woodstock  
 April 13 Stephen E. Beam, son of Marcia and Ron Carter, Waleska  
 April 14 Paul Peterson, son of Sherril Peterson, Griffin  
 April 15 Max Erickson, son of Anita Erickson, Atlanta  
 April 15 Lovelle Forbes, son of Velma Vincent, Lithonia

# We Remember You With Love

## APRIL DEATH DATES (continued)

|          |                                                                                           |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 16 | Woody Jackson, son of Mahali, Scottdale                                                   |
| April 16 | Chris McLemore, son of Sherry Owens, brother of Mark Owens, Covington                     |
| April 17 | Timothy Wade Stanley, son of Bob and Marie Stanley, Burney, CA and brother of Tonya Jones |
| April 17 | Wayne Robert Looker, son of Wendy and Richard Looker, Swansea, MA                         |
| April 19 | Mandy Creel, daughter of Donna Creel, LaGrange                                            |
| April 19 | Amir Jackson, son of Victoria and Kevin Jackson, Lithonia                                 |
| April 20 | Evan Bozoff, son of Lynn and Alan Bozoff, Marietta                                        |
| April 20 | Robert Brock, son of Beverly Davis, Jonesboro                                             |
| April 20 | Kemba Bryant, son of Mellinese and Liewellyn Bryant, Riverdale                            |
| April 20 | "Gent" Gentry, son of Lib and Wayne Gentry, Doraville                                     |
| April 22 | Shelly Harmon, daughter of Patty and Sammy Harmon and brother of Gray Harmon, Chamblee    |
| April 22 | Lisa Mewbourne, daughter of Faye Martin, Austell                                          |
| April 23 | Mary Jane Black, daughter of Frances Black, Lexington                                     |
| April 23 | Allison M. Bumpass, daughter of Rachel Bumpass, Atlanta                                   |
| April 23 | Stacy M. Feltman, daughter of Laurie and Harold Guice, Stockbridge                        |
| April 23 | Paula Wandell, daughter of Elfireda and George Wandell, Marietta                          |
| April 24 | Andrea Ficarotto, sister of Chris Baltrukovicz, Mukilteu, WA                              |
| April 24 | Christopher Kuzela, son of Pat and Ed Kuzela, Decatur                                     |
| April 25 | Laurie Marshall, daughter of Suzanne Marshall, Tucker                                     |
| April 25 | Michael Lee Haggard, son of Leann Smith, Lexington, KY                                    |
| April 28 | Grant Molder, Jr., son of Alice Molder, Atlanta                                           |
| April 29 | Jimmy Agan, son of Jim and Sue Agan, Austell                                              |
| April 30 | Richard Foley, son of Brenda Heninger, Atlanta                                            |



Precious Moments by Enesco has announced the creation of an inspiring figurine by Precious Moments artist Sam Butcher which will be sold nationwide to benefit The Compassionate Friends National Organization.

The figurine depicts a Precious Moments child sitting on a rock holding two roses in a winter scene. Behind her on a stone is the saying "God Gives Us Memories So That We Might Have Roses in December." a popular sentiment among many members of The Compassionate Friends.



The beautiful soft pastel figurine, made of porcelain, is scheduled to arrive in authorized Precious Moments retail stores May 2000. At that time, you may purchase the figurine through your local Precious Moments dealer. Dealers will also receive a special display with brochures that explain about TCF.

Sam Butcher, creator of the popular Precious Moments, is a bereaved parent. His son Philip died in an auto accident.

**What the TCF Veterans Know**

By Mary Clark ~ TCF, Sugar Land-SW Houston Chapter

Are you new to The Compassionate Friends? We want to welcome you, but somehow that word isn't right- this is not a group anyone wants to join. All of us wish no one ever had to walk through that door or receive this newsletter. So when we say welcome, perhaps what we really mean is we're so sorry-but we are glad you've found us and hope you will find support at TCF.

Many members of TCF were hesitant to attend that first meeting. We didn't know what to expect. Would we be forced to talk about our child? Did TCF members all share the same faith? Did we have to make a donation or commit to anything? The answer to all those questions is no. We'll listen if you wish to talk; we are members of all faiths and none; there is no cost; and you may attend as often as you wish and stay for as long as you wish. Just come.

Our few rules are simple ones and designed to ensure that TCF is a safe and comfortable place for those grieving a child's death. We request that members maintain confidentiality within the group, and we ask you to respect everyone's right to their individual beliefs. We don't tell each other how to grieve; we just walk together along this most painful of journeys.

Having made the difficult decision to attend, some of us old timers remember being surprised or disappointed at what we found there. Perhaps we were hoping our grief would begin to ease but instead we woke the next morning feeling even worse. Already overwhelmed with our own pain, now the grief of others weighed on our mind. The parent who was sadly remembering a daughter's death 10 years ago frightened us: would we still feel so sad after all those years? And what about those folks laughing and drinking coffee? How can they seem so carefree?

Perhaps talking about the death of a child isn't such a good idea after all.

But thousands of TCF members around the world would say it was a good idea, just not an easy one. Many forced themselves to attend at first, remembering the leader's recommendation that it takes three meetings before a new member should make a decision about TCF. Others wished there was a meeting every week. Everyone is different.

Those of us who continue to participate, sometimes for a year, sometimes forever, slowly discover what makes TCF work for us. First, it's good to know you're not losing your mind even though it may feel like it. It's strangely comforting to know that others understand your confusion and face similar difficulties. Sharing our own stories and listening to the stories of others eases the isolation that many bereaved families experience.

As the months pass, we learn that while the experience of grief has some universal components, each of us will grieve as individuals with our own timetable. Many of us who thought grieving had a distinct beginning and end, with definable stages along the way, find that our theory doesn't make much sense in the real world. Grief is more like love: loud at times, quiet at others, with a truth that can and will live on forever.

One day we look at the parent who cries for the daughter who died 10 years ago with a new understanding. His everyday life is no longer eclipsed by pain; we visit with him regularly at the coffee table. But TCF is the place he can bring his memories and his grief and talk about the child he will always miss and love. The thought that we, too, may want to be involved with TCF for many years does not seem as frightening as it did those first months we hesitated before walking in the door.

It isn't easy getting here, of course. But we don't hesitate anymore.. We unlock the door and stand there, hoping that the newly bereaved family arriving will know that they-and we-need not walk alone.



**The Compassionate  
Friends - 23<sup>rd</sup>  
National Conference**

June 30 - July 2, 2000  
Rosemont, Illinois

Registration Inquiries: 630-830-0630

Visit the TCF Atlanta Web Site for online Registration  
[www.tcfatlanta.org](http://www.tcfatlanta.org)

## The Compassionate Friends Atlanta Area Chapters Meeting Schedule

TCF VoiceLink: (770) 491-8784 Leave word for a prompt return call

Web Site: [www.tcfatlanta.org](http://www.tcfatlanta.org) Webmaster Email: [webmaster@tcfatlanta.org](mailto:webmaster@tcfatlanta.org)

### Meet Monthly at the following locations:

**Atlanta (Tucker) Chapter** - 7:30 p.m., Second Tuesdays: First Christian Church of Atlanta, 4532 LaVista Rd., Tucker, GA, Contact: John DuBose at (770) 469-7159 or email [jddubose@juno.com](mailto:jddubose@juno.com)

**Sibling Group (Tucker)** - ages 12 and over.  
Jim Dirr (siblings) at (770) 813-9831  
or email [jdirr@lavista.com](mailto:jdirr@lavista.com)

**North Atlanta (Sandy Springs) Chapter** - 7:30 p.m., Fourth Wednesdays: The Link Counseling Center, 348 Mt. Vernon Highway, Sandy Springs, GA. Contact: Judy Blumsack at (770) 410-9819 or by email: [jeblumsack@aol.com](mailto:jeblumsack@aol.com)

**Marietta Chapter** - 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.; First Tuesdays; The Fellowship Hall of The First Baptist Church of Marietta, 148 Church Street, Marietta, Ga Marilyn Barton at 770-424-1548 or email [mbar2000@yahoo.com](mailto:mbar2000@yahoo.com)  
NOTICE: April meeting will be Second Tuesday, April 11<sup>th</sup> due to Spring Break.

**South Atlanta (Jonesboro) Group** - 7:30 p.m., First Mondays: Poston Road Baptist Church, 9701 Poston Rd., Jonesboro, GA. Contact: Freddie Saye at (770) 957-6610 (evenings) or email [Fcsaye@aol.com](mailto:Fcsaye@aol.com)

**Southwest Atlanta (Ben Hill) Group** - 7:30 p.m., First Thursdays: . Ben Hill United Methodist Church, 2099 Fairburn Road, SW, Atlanta, Ga., 30331, Room 301 Contact: Sharon Williams at (404) 768 5440 or email [saw913@aol.com](mailto:saw913@aol.com)

**Lawrenceville Chapter** - 7:30 p.m., Third Thursdays: First Baptist Church of Lawrenceville, 165 Clayton St., Lawrenceville, GA. Contact: Kathy Malone at (770) 979-1763 or email [pkmalone@mindspring.com](mailto:pkmalone@mindspring.com)

**North Georgia Chapter (Gainesville)** - 7:30 p.m., Second Thursday each month Gainesville Care Center, 435 Green Street Place, Gainesville, GA. Contact: Judy Miller at (770) 287-1239 or email [mill369@ibm.net](mailto:mill369@ibm.net)

**Rockdale Parents Bereavement Group (Conyers)** - 7:30 PM on the 1st Tuesday of every month. Eastwood Baptist Church, 3130 Salem Road, Conyers Rachel Wooldridge, Contact 770-483-3925 or Bill and Teal Snapp (770) 483-1267 or email [Thesnapps@email.msn.com](mailto:Thesnapps@email.msn.com)

**Rome Chapter** - 7:00 p.m., Second Thursday of each month First Baptist Church, Rome Ga. Contact Sandra Stinson (706) 235-6108.

**Athens Chapter (Northeast Georgia)** - 7:30 p.m., Second Mondays: Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 800 West Lake Drive (ext. of Alps Rd.), Athens, GA. Contact Sally Robinson at (706) 769-6256.

**Please Circle One: NEW SUBSCRIPTION - RENEWAL - CHANGE FORM**

If you are receiving our newsletter for the first time...everyone within The Compassionate Friends Organization wants to say .... We are sorry you have the need for this publication but we are glad you found us and we hope our newsletter will be helpful on your journey. Someone may have lovingly sent you the newsletter...and if so and you find it helpful, please complete the data sheet enclosed and return it so that we may add you to our newsletter database for future mailings. This is to insure that all the information we have is correct and complete.

*This if for internal use only.*

**Please print, filling in all applicable blanks/boxes:**

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ St: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (including area code) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Death Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cause of Child's Death (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Child's relationship to you (e.g. son, daughter, brother, sister, grandchild) \_\_\_\_\_

Names and ages of all surviving siblings living with you:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you attend meetings of one or more of the Atlanta Area TCF Chapters? \_\_\_\_ If so, circle which one(s)?

(1) Tucker (2) Ben Hill (3) Sandy Springs (4) Marietta (5) Jonesboro (6) Lawrenceville (8) Gainesville (10) Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. How did you find out about The Compassionate Friends? Please circle one: (1) Friends (2) Family (3) Hospital (4) Church (5) School (6) Funeral Homes (7) Internet (8) Newspaper (9) Employers (Human Resources) (10) Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: The information you have given above will be confidential (used for internal purposes only) unless you answer "yes" to one or more of the following questions:**

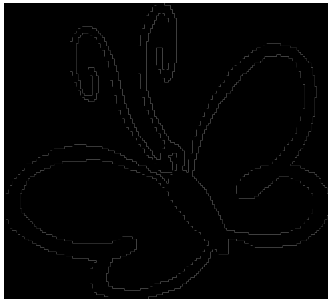
- 1. Do you want you child's name to appear in the newsletter's "*We Remember You*" section of birth and death dates? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
- 2. Do you wish to have your child's name included on the Wall of Memory on our Atlanta TCF Web Site? Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_
- 3. May we include the above information in a TCF directory? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Voluntary donations are TCF's only source of income. The Compassionate Friends needs to be here for the families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

Yes, I want to help.....a donation is enclosed in Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please make all checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends, P.O. Box 656, Tucker, Ga 30085

**Please Fold, Seal, Stamp and Mail....Thanks** (Internet - Chapter Leaders)



# BUTTERFLY BANQUET

May 2, 2000. 7:00 p.m.

RESPONSE FORM

**DEADLINE APRIL 15, 2000**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

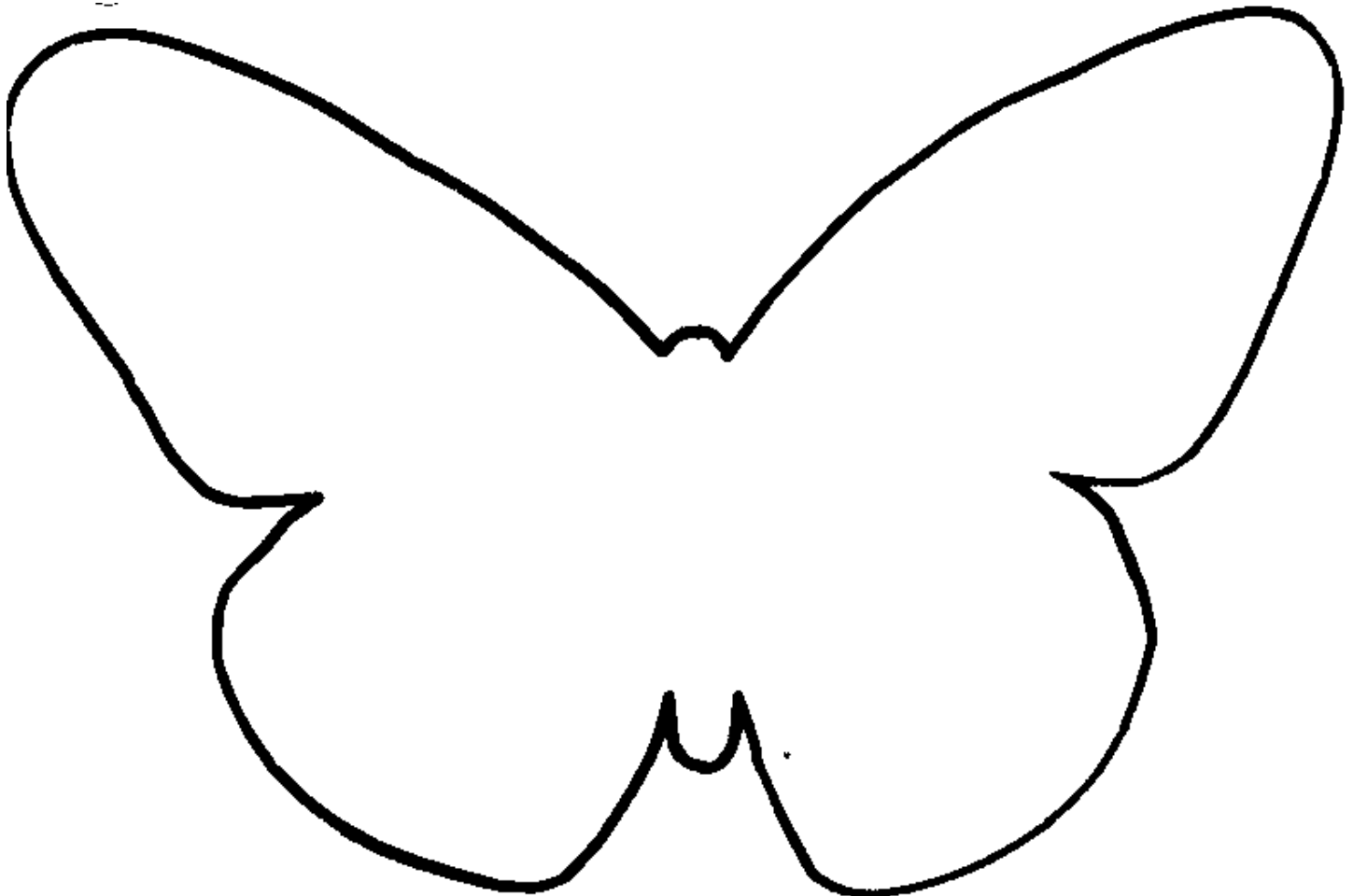
NO. ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ ADULTS \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ CHILDREN UNDER 12

\_\_\_\_\_ CHECK ENCLOSED (\$10/adult; \$5/child) \_\_\_\_\_ BUTTERFLY ENCLOSED  
(PAYABLE TO **MARIETTA CHAPTER OF TCF**)

SEND TO: BUTTERFLY BANQUET  
THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS  
P.O. BOX 656  
TUCKER, GA 30085

PLEASE DECORATE THE BUTTERFLY BELOW IN ANY WAY YOU CHOOSE TO HONOR YOUR CHILD.

.....



To My Compassionate Friends,

I'm working on a piece for our church newsletter in which I quote Viktor Frankl, a concentration camp survivor who lost his wife, parents and siblings in the Holocaust. "Nothing could touch the strength of my love....Love is as strong as death."



Our current Bible study is on Bonhoffer. He states, "Death cannot restrain love. Love is stronger than death." These words touched me deeply during our class, and I started thinking of Loren and how strong our love IS for each other. I recalled all the loving little gestures we did for each other and all the love he shared and left among his friends. I was overwhelmed by the impact this kid had on me and others, and puddled up a little - mainly because I could not contain all the joy I felt for the love that I know will always be a part of me.

After the Bible study, three women came up to me and said, "I know, you're having a bad day, aren't you?"

When I tried to explain that when a moment of bittersweet joy, a manifestation of a love stronger than death, wells up in my soul and overflows through my eyes, it DOES NOT constitute a "bad day", I knew they didn't understand...And as I wound down my little spiel...I actually felt sorry for them....

-by Susan Larson, Lilburn, Ga  
In Memory of Loren Larson 10/15/82 - 11/25/98

The Compassionate Friends  
Atlanta Area Chapters  
Post Office Box 656  
Tucker, GA 30085

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

**Linked Together**

|                                                                                   |
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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Newsletter of  
The Compassionate Friends, Inc.  
Atlanta Area Chapters  
March - April 2000**