



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**

Linked Together

**Newsletter of the Atlanta Chapter
Spring 2007**

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

Atlanta Area Web Site

www.tcfatlanta.org

TCF Atlanta Newsletter

1364 Sanden Ferry Drive
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The Atlanta Chapter of The Compassionate Friends meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. at the:

First Christian Church of Atlanta
4532 LaVista Road, Tucker, GA 30084

Upcoming Meetings:

April 10

May 8

June 12

The Atlanta Chapter also offers a Sibling Group at the same time as our regular monthly meeting.

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

To Our New Members

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Members Who are Further Down the 'Grief Road'

We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting we have new parents. THINK BACK – what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF "veterans" to welcome you, share your grief, encourage you and tell you, "your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!"

YOU NEED NOT WALK ALONE.
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Atlanta Chapter Welcomes Two New Co-Leaders, as One Steps Down

Two men from the Atlanta Chapter of The Compassionate Friends have stepped forward to become co-leaders and support group facilitators, as one co-leader has announced plans to resign.

Effective June 30, Cathy Willis Spraez is stepping down as chapter co-leader and support group facilitator.

Ghakarhi Btembke and Joseph Hobbs have both accepted roles as co-leaders and facilitators, effective immediately.

The chapter thanks Cathy for her guidance and support, as we welcome the involvement of Ghakarhi and Joe in their new roles.

Following is a letter and poem Cathy wanted to share with the chapter.



Dear Atlanta Chapter Compassionate Friends,

It is with a heavy heart that I announce my resignation as chapter co-leader and support group facilitator, effective June 30th. I am not one to ever give up or resign a task I believe in and so this is difficult for me. But I think the one thing we learn with great clarity after our child dies is what we can realistically accomplish and what we must do to save ourselves for this continued journey.

Recent events have caused me to re-examine, once again, what is most important in my life and the life of my family. Some of you may know that my grandson Noah, who was born the day we buried my son Evan, has recently been diagnosed with Autism. While we are very hopeful for him, we are guarded and know that in order for there to be a real change for the positive, our family has to do all we can for him. He is only 2 ½ years old and is receiving six hours of formal therapy each week. But there are many more hours in his week that require us to become therapists ourselves to ensure the best possible outcome for him. So, that is how I've chosen to spend my time.

Evan was so excited about the baby coming and being an uncle to Noah. So I also do this to honor Evan and all that he stood for. He was the only one of my three boys to talk with excitement about being a parent himself. He even named his children as early as middle school. Anna, if it was a girl, and Julian, if it was a boy. One of my most precious memories of him is just days before his death, talking with him about what a wonderful father he would be some day.

I often think back on my first TCF meeting, several months after Evan's death. I remember the urge... not to walk, but to run as fast as I could...away from the reality that simply by being there, in the presence of other grieving parents, I had to face the hard truth that Evan was never coming back. I remember the metallic taste in my mouth that originated from that physical part of my grieving. I remember the audible gasp as I entered the room and saw all of the wounded souls who were bonded to me and I to them as soon as we made eye contact. I remember not being able to speak, crying instead through the entire meeting. How is it, I thought, could this one paramount thing in my life inextricably link me to those who were present, those who had gone before, and those who sadly, will continue to come and need the support of The Compassionate Friends?

Now that a little time has passed, (and I stress the "little" part because 2 ½ years is nothing) I am able to find some joy again, mostly in this precious little grandson Noah, who is so full of life and so happy and so wonderfully and mysteriously made. He is a constant reminder of all that is good in my life. So, I will do what I need to do for him and for my family.

There are many capable leaders and facilitators for our chapter. Please know I will continue to think of all of you and hope to see you when I can.

My best wishes and peace to all of you,
Cathy Willis Spraez

An ocean of grief, my heart has gone cold
A dull ache leaves its mark
Nothing more, nothing more
But the sound of the waves lapping the shore

An ocean of grief, my heart has been crushed
With no sense of rhythm
Its beat is all wrong
And a longing, a yearning for days that are gone

An ocean of grief, my heart washed over
with nothing much left
But the salt of my tears
And dreams for you my soul no longer hears

An ocean of grief, my heart brought to its knees
And left in its wake

The dark place my heart dwells
A rocky beach filled with sharp broken shells

An ocean of grief, the damage is done
My heart changed forever
To a great gnawing pain
And a knowledge that nothing is ever the same

With this ocean of grief comes a fragile belief
With my heart I'll hold fast
'till my last night falls on this earthly plain
That one day soon I'll be near you again

Cathy Spraez
Mother of Evan Sheffield
6-12-81 — 6-23-05

Atlanta Chapter to Carry Banner in Annual Walk to Remember

Again this year, the Atlanta Chapter invites you to add your child, sibling or grandchild's name to a banner that chapter members will carry in the 8th annual Walk to Remember. The Walk, traditionally held on the last morning of the TCF National Conference, honors the memory of our children gone too soon.

This year's Walk to Remember will be held on Sunday, July 22 in Oklahoma City. The National Conference runs July 20-22.

Chapter co-leader Joe Hobbs and his wife plan to attend the conference and participate in the Walk to Remember. Other chapter members who would like to participate also are encouraged to attend the conference.

Whether or not you can participate in the National Conference and Walk to Remember, you are invited to add your child's name to the banner. See page 4 of this newsletter for a form to return. The deadline for adding your child's name to the banner is June 15.

If you do plan to attend the National Conference, you are encouraged to reserve your hotel room soon. Hotel rooms at the conference site usually sell out quickly. A block of rooms has been set aside for TCF at two Oklahoma City hotels: the Renaissance Oklahoma City Convention Center Hotel (attached to the convention center via a

skywalk) and the Courtyard by Marriott Downtown Oklahoma City (across the street). Reservations for both hotels can be made by calling 1-800-859-6877.

In addition to programs for parents, the National Conference includes a full program designed especially for siblings.

The Oklahoma chapters are inviting all families – whether or not they can attend the National Conference – to decorate the Convention Center with Dream Catchers in memory of their children. They are asking for a \$10 donation for each Dream Catcher. To download the template for the Dream Catcher, go to: <http://www.tcfwalktoremember.net/>

Financial assistance to cover some conference registration fees is available, if needed. Contact Cindy Durham of the Atlanta Chapter for details: cindy_durham@bellsouth.net.

Details about the conference program are available on the National TCF Web site: www.compassionatefriends.org

To view a video about the 2006 Walk to Remember, go to: <http://www.tcfatlanta.org/walk2006/walk2006.html>

John Coggins III Foundation Gives \$1,000 to Chapter's Sibling Group

The John Coggins III Foundation, Inc., has given a \$1,000 gift to the Atlanta Chapter of TCF's sibling group. The Foundation honors the memory of John Coggins, III who was born in Atlanta on March 8, 1988, and died Oct. 24, 2005, at the age of 17. A memorial Web site can be found at <http://john-coggins-iii.memory-of.com/>

A portion of the funds will be used to purchase two books for siblings who are members of our chapter, or whose parents are members of our chapter. The books given to chapter members include "Surviving a Sibling" and "This Healing Journey." If you are a sibling or have children who have not received copies of these books and would like to, please let us know.

Funds from this gift also will be used to help pay the sibling registration fees at the National TCF Conference for any siblings who would like to attend. And, a brochure about our chapter will be distributed to guidance counselors at area high schools so they can tell teens who might need us about TCF.



Atlanta Walks For Our Children and Siblings Gone Too Soon

The Compassionate Friends National Walk to Remember will be held at 8 a.m. Sunday morning, July 22, in Oklahoma City, the National Conference host city, prior to the closing ceremony.

First held in conjunction with the national conference in 2000, this Remembrance Walk has quickly become a highlight for conference-goers with between 600 and 1,000 joining together hand-in-hand, arm-in-arm to cover the two-mile course arranged for the event.

This is our way to honor the memories of children and siblings who we will never forget.

Families who have had a child die, but are unable to attend the conference or walk, are invited to include their child's name on our "Atlanta Walks" banner carried by members of our local Atlanta TCF Chapter attending the Oklahoma City Conference.

If you would like to have your child, sibling or grandchild's name included, please complete the following form and return it to us as soon as possible. The deadline is June 15.

Atlanta Walks – 2007 In Memory of our Children and Siblings

Yes, I would like to have my child/sibling/grandchild included on the Atlanta Walks banner.

Child's Name _____
(Please print clearly)

Yes, I would like to help with the Walk to Remember expenses and support the work of The Compassionate Friends Atlanta Chapter by making a donation in the amount of:

\$ _____ (\$10, \$25, \$50.....)

Please mail your check payable to "The Compassionate Friends" to:

The Compassionate Friends
c/o Jayne Newton
808 Brentway Court
Lilburn, GA 30047
Thank you for your support. (Deadline June 15)



*Sample Banner from 2004 Walk for the Hollywood Conference
"Atlanta Walks...
In Memory of Our Children and Siblings"*

April, May and June Birthdays

Child's Name	Birthday	Angel Date	Relationship	Family
Michael Btembke	4/1/1985	8/3/2003	son	Ghakarhi Btembke
Matthew Taylor	4/1/1980	4/13/2005	son	Jim and Elaine Taylor
April Leshay Nesmith	4/5/1985	Unknown - TCF	daughter	Carla Adamar
Steven L. Brumlow	4/7/1985	6/10/2005	son	Colette Bauer
Dr. Thomas Brown IV	4/8/1961	7/27/1999	son	Lillie Brown
Bo Tuggle	4/12/1975	10/22/1992	son	Connie and Johnny Tuggle
Padraic Dirr	4/20/1969	7/15/1969	son	Jim Dirr
David Ferguson	4/20/1985	10/30/2004	son	Christina and David Ferguson
William Fielding Foulke, Jr.	4/28/1988	6/8/2006	son	Holly Foulke
Jason Maham	4/28/1975	8/17/2004	son	Trish Mahan
Jennifer Lea Evans	5/6/1974	6/19/1995	daughter	Delores Evans
Elijah Samuel Marcus	5/9/2006	5/9/2006	son	Eric and LaPrecious Marcus
David Brown	5/13/1970	10/7/2000	son	Keith and Ann Brown
Damien White	5/17/1978	1/6/2003	son	Robin White
Daniel Prescott	5/19/1967	3/31/2004	son	Marcia Prescott
Daniel Prescott	5/19/1967	3/31/2004	brother	Pam Prescott
Marc William Waidner	5/19/1970	10/30/1988	son	Mary Alice Wood
Chad Gordon	5/21/1972	9/3/1996	son	Jayne and Wayne Newton
Kimberly Florence	5/23/1976	8/3/2003	daughter	Kate Florence
Joey Capron	5/26/1963	3/17/1984	son	Carmen Capron
Henry Robinson Cart	5/27/1989	9/30/2006	son	Roberta and Rob Cart
Richmond Matthew Petzel	5/27/1987	6/1/2006	son	Cindy Garner
David Thompson	5/27/1962	5/15/2001	son	Bill Thompson
Donald Wesley Carithers	6/10/1978	8/8/1998	son	Susan and John Carithers
Donald Wesley Carithers	6/10/1978	8/8/1998	brother	Jennifer and Brooke Carithers
Evan Sheffield	6/12/1981	6/23/2004	son	Cathy Spraeatz
Joshua Anavitarte	6/13/1979	3/3/2002	son	Jean Marie Anavitarte
D'Keesiyah Hardaway	6/16/1996	3/3/2000	granddaughter	Albert and Florence Daniels
Spencer McCrea Oedel	6/10/1986	9/11/2005	son	Amy Lighthill
Jennifer Hower	6/23/1975	12/27/2004	sister	Julie Fischer
Billy Snapp	6/23/1981	2/25/1996	son	Teal and Bill Snapp
John Allen Askins	6/24/1971	3/3/1995	son	Elaine Askins
Brian Patrick Devine	6/26/1982	8/21/2005	brother	Colleen Devine
Brian Patrick Devine	6/26/1982	8/21/2005	son	Eileen and Patrick Devine
Anita Alford	6/29/1980	9/2/2006	daughter	Selma Calaman
Mandi Lynn Mast	6/29/1980	8/15/2000	daughter	Diane and Daniel Mast
Rebecca Steinbach	6/30/1987	6/19/2002	daughter	Dawn Steinbach
Aaron Woodruff	6/30/1975	6/22/2002	brother	Rachel Woodruff

Spanish-Speaking TCF Group Needed for Families in Atlanta

Our TCF chapter is investigating the possibility of starting a support group for parents who speak Spanish. If you know a bereaved parent who speaks Spanish and might be willing to lead this group, contact Ghakarhi Btembke at 678-291-9935 or unicorngab@comcast.net.



April, May and June Angel Dates

Child's Name	Angel Date	Birthdate	Relationship	Family
Terry Tedford	4/1/2005	1/27/1949	brother	Cheryl Tedford
Jessica Lyn Bryl	4/3/2000	1/19/1977	daughter	Betty and Daniel Bryl
Hallbrook 'Trey' Polite, III	4/9/2006	3/28/2006	son	Linda and Hallbrook Polite, Jr.
Matthew Taylor	4/13/2005	4/1/1980	son	Jim and Elaine Taylor
Jameka Deshon Holmes	4/14/2004	11/4/1980	daughter	Charlotte Hamm
Jennifer Smith	4/14/1998	8/24/1981	daughter	Linda Smith
John Sistrunk	4/16/2002	8/10/1981	son	Sarah Smith Sistrunk
Juanito Vasquez	4/17/2005	11/28/1986	son	Luly Albornoz
Anita Marepally	4/20/2006	9/15/1981	sister	Archana Vemulapalli-Marepally
Philip E. Walsh	4/21/2001	10/15/1980	son	Ruth Simmons
Christopher Kuzela	4/24/1988	7/7/1967	son	Ed and Pat Kuzela
Xavier Khamani Ray	4/24/2004	9/7/1995	son	Stephanie Ray
Charlie Wellman	4/27/2005	1/20/1988	son	Mary Wellman
Mark Curtis Smith	5/1/1989	10/13/1967	son	Jane Smith
Yolandra Erin Dixon	5/3/1999	3/5/1976	daughter	Georgia Ware-Dixon
Connor Brown	5/4/2003	10/6/1997	grandson	Kaye Hyde
Arthur Burt Jordan	5/6/2006	2/16/1973	son	Ann Asbell
Arthur Burt Jordan	5/6/2006	2/16/1973	brother	Emily Jordan
Amanda Christine Warnock	5/6/2001	11/13/1987	daughter	Amy Osier
Julian Oliver Carter	5/7/2006	8/12/1988	son	Bryan and Julie Carter
Al Bath Wilson	5/8/2002	11/2/1978	son	Susan Wilson
Christopher Lee Simpson	5/9/1995	8/22/1978	grandson	Elizabeth Luke
Elijah Samuel Marcus	5/9/2006	5/9/2006	son	Eric and LaPrecious Marcus
Chris Simpson	5/9/1995	8/22/1978	son	Tricia and Kenny Simpson
Brandon Burke	5/10/2003	12/2/1985	son	Charlene and Johnny Burke
Brandon Burke	5/10/2003	12/2/1985	grandson	Shirley A. Kendrick
Kameron Rutherford	5/11/2004	11/21/2003	son	Judy and Khristopher Rutherford
Tyreek Seivwright	5/12/2000	11/1/1982	son	Donna Attridge
David Thompson	5/15/2001	5/27/1962	son	Bill Thompson
Kim Gelly	5/24/2002	3/24/1966	daughter	Wanda and Bobby Boylston
Matthew Thomas Crowell	5/24/1999	7/27/1982	son	Barry and Doris Crowell
Kim Gelly	5/25/2002	3/24/1966	sister	Laurie Rogers
Sallie Scanlon	5/31/1993	10/20/1961	daughter	Jane R. Scanlon
Richmond Matthew Petzel	6/1/2006	5/27/1987	son	Cindy Garner
Joshua Polain	6/1/2003	12/3/2002	son	Kimberly Polain
Paul Abraham	6/5/2004	8/13/1975	son	Alan and Deborah Abraham
William Fielding Foulke, Jr.	6/8/2006	4/28/1988	son	Holly Foulke
Steven L. Brumlow	6/10/2005	4/7/1985	son	Colette Bauer
Kaxon Harris	6/10/2003	10/3/2001	son	Karen Harris
Margie Ann Lind	6/10/1979	8/21/1963	daughter	Bette and Bob Lind
Robert A. Lind, Jr.	6/10/1979	11/29/1961	son	Bette and Bob Lind
Lane Veteto	6/11/2001	10/7/1982	son	Margaret Bear
Keith Perry	6/11/2004	11/14/1966	son	Oveta Perry
Averil Brown	6/15/2004	12/7/1980	son	Carolyn Brown
Jason Gibson	6/18/1997	1/10/1971	son	Tricia Garrett
Jennifer Lea Evans	6/19/1995	5/6/1974	daughter	Delores Evans
Joel Robert Grey	6/19/2004	2/28/1967	son	Diane Grey
Rebecca Steinbach	6/19/2002	6/30/1987	daughter	Dawn Steinbach

Evan Walker	6/22/2004	10/12/2002	son	Kim and Eric Walker
Aaron Woodruff	6/22/2002	6/30/1975	brother	Rachel Woodruff
Evan Sheffield	6/23/2004	6/12/1981	son	Cathy Spraetz
Dominic Alan Nwoye	6/25/2002	9/13/1996	son	Juanita Bell
Steven Curtis	6/26/1990	1/22/1974	son	Janet Curtis
Melvin Shannon	6/30/2000	2/23/1956	son	Lillian Smith
Melvin Shannon	6/30/2000	2/23/1956	brother	Juanita White

TCF Presents Employer Recognition Award to Atlanta Chapter Member

In March, the Office of Inspector General Office of Audit Services, Inc., was honored with The Compassionate Friends Employer Recognition Award for its overwhelming support of Lydia Burns.

Burns, who lives in Tallahassee, but participates in Atlanta Chapter meetings when she is working in Atlanta, nominated her employer for this award to show her appreciation for the support her co-workers gave her after her son died from heart complications.

The award was accepted by Pete Barbera, regional inspector general for the Southeast, and Barbara Hehemann, administrative officer.

In her letter of nomination, Burns said that, after two years, her co-workers “still stand by my side and support me when birthdays, anniversaries and holidays approach. They let me cry without saying I should move on. They listen when I talk about my wonderful young man. They encourage me to do what feels right and not worry about what others think.”

Tears Still Fall

I wish that I could stop crying
 But nothing I do seems to help
 You were taken from us without warning
 And life just seems so worthless.

I try to think of the fun we had
 The times we laughed and played
 But my heart just pushed those thoughts aside
 Since you went away.

For some brief moments I can almost laugh
 But then I remember your poor face

The face of a child lost and gone
 From us and the human race.

You never had a chance to marry
 Or have a child of your own
 Sometimes I think life would have been easier
 If I too were never born.

But then your childhood
 That did bring me so much joy
 Would be in my heart and I realize
 I cry because I miss the love you brought.

So the world may never get to know you
 My sweet and loving young man
 But my mind is full of the great memories
 That will always make us who we are.

I will cherish every moment
 You and I had to share
 And someday the tears of sorrow
 Will bring my heart joy that is hidden there.

Love you, my son
 This the end of the second year and nine months
 of your departure.

Lydia F. Burns 4/2/2007



Charity Game at Turner Field Helps Raise Funds for MRI Machine

By Cindy Durham
Atlanta Chapter, TCF



Two months before my son Tony died in 2004, he received the thrill of a lifetime. As part of the St. Pius X Catholic High School Varsity baseball team, he pitched the last three innings of a charity baseball game played at Turner Field.

For a high school pitcher, getting to sit in the Braves dugout and then pitch from the same mound that so many great pitchers have pitched from over the years, it was a dream come true.

This charity game is played every year – featuring Georgia vs. Georgia Tech at 7 p.m., and a high school game immediately before it. St. Pius has been invited to play again this year on April 24, this time facing Norcross High School at 3:30 p.m.

The purpose of the game is to raise money toward the purchase of an intra-operative MRI machine to treat children with brain tumors at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

This machine enhances the view of a child's brain during surgery, which ultimately benefits both doctor and patient. But the machine is expensive and scarce, which is why fundraisers like the Spring Baseball Classic are so important.

Three years ago, I was supportive of this effort to help raise funds to help purchase the MRI machine. But, our main focus was on our team and selling enough tickets to earn a second invitation to play in the game.

Perspectives change after you have a child die. It's still an exciting opportunity for the St. Pius baseball team. But, it's so much more than that. I'm more interested now in wanting to see funds raised to purchase this MRI machine so, perhaps, it can help to save another family from going through what my family has gone through. If this equipment can help to save the life of another child, what a wonderful thing that would be.

This year's game will be bittersweet. It will be wonderful seeing my daughter sitting in the dugout with the team (as scorekeeper), but it will also bring back so many memories of one of Tony's last games.

But, it's also a chance to help play a role in helping children facing brain tumor surgery and maybe to help keep another family from needing to join our group.

If you'd like to join us at the game, please do. Your \$10 ticket will give you a wonderful afternoon/evening of baseball – with some of the best seats you'll ever get at Turner Field. But it also will go to a very worthy cause.

St. Pius needs to turn individual ticket orders and corporate sponsorships in by April 16. Contact me at cindy_durham@bellsouth.net if you'd like to buy tickets or consider a sponsorship.

I Carry Your Heart With Me

I carry your heart with me
(I carry it in my heart)

I am never without it
(Anywhere I go you go, my dear; my darling)

I fear no fate
(For you are my fate; my sweet)

I want no world
(For beautiful you are my world, my true)

And its you are whatever a moon has always meant
And whatever a sun will always sing is you

Here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(Here is the root of the root and the bud of the
bud and the sky of the sky of a tree called life:
Which grows higher than soul can hope or mind can
hide)

And this is the wonder that's keeping the stars
apart

I carry your heart
(I carry it in my heart)

E.E. Cummings

*In Loving Memory of April Leshay Nesmith...from
Mommy - Carla Adamar (birthday - April 5, 1985)*

Faith – as a Support Group Topic

At our chapter meetings each month, we ask chapter members to stay away from prescribing solutions for others. Instead, we ask them to speak from the perspective of what works for them.

Likewise, religion can be a touchy subject. For some, religion and their faith is what helps them through. But, some members experience a very difficult time with their faith following the death of a child. So, we ask members to avoid religion during the sharing sessions.

We are considering, though, following the example of a TCF chapter in Denver that focuses on the subject of “faith” during one meeting a year. The Denver chapter says that its annual meeting about faith is one of the best-attended meetings of the year.

The point of that meeting isn't to preach faith or one particular religion. Rather, it focuses on “how my child's death has affected my faith.” The point of the discussion isn't WHAT you believe, but rather HOW your beliefs have been affected by the death of your child.

The Atlanta Chapter's Steering Committee wants your feedback. Would you be interested in seeing one upcoming meeting devoted to this topic? Or, do you think this is something our chapter should stay away from addressing at a chapter meeting?

One possibility – if we decide to do this – would be to divide the parent group into two groups that month. One group would discuss the subject of faith and the other would focus on other topics.

Please tell us what you think. E-mail:
cindy_durham@bellsouth.net

News Briefs

Two TCF chapters in Georgia have recently closed – the North Georgia Chapter (which met in Gainesville) and the South Atlanta Chapter (which met in Jonesboro).

Two new TCF chapters have opened in Georgia – one in Mount Vernon and one in Brunswick.

Upcoming Chapter Meetings

We reach out to you with the understanding and love only another bereaved parent can offer. Attending meetings and learning from others what has helped them is one way to ease the pain of losing a child. We welcome you to join us at the Atlanta Chapter of TCF.

Upcoming meetings will be held on April 10, May 8 and June 12 at the First Christian Church of Atlanta, 4532 LaVista Road, Tucker, GA 30084. The meetings are from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Our sibling group (ages 12 and up) meets at the same time and place.

Lending Library and Book Reviews

We have a large lending library at our meetings. We also welcome book donations. If you have grief books you would like to donate, we will include inside the front cover of the book a “Donated in Memory of _____” And include your name and your child or sibling's name.

We also welcome “book reviews”. If you have read a book which you felt was helpful on your grief journey, please let us know. Send book reviews and other articles, poems, pictures and remembrances to Cindy Durham for submission in our monthly newsletter. E-mail cindy_durham@bellsouth.net or mail to The Compassionate Friends, 1364 Sanden Ferry Drive, Decatur, GA 30033.

Special Birthday Table

Our chapter has a monthly Birthday Table. This is a special table set up for those who have a child, grandchild or sibling's birthday in that month. Please bring a photo/memento and share a special memory of your child. You are also welcome to bring your child's favorite food or birthday cake to share with the group. We hope you will take this opportunity to share your child with us.

For more information, please call Tamie Dodge, our birthday table coordinator, at 770-982-2251 or Dodgecat2001@yahoo.com



®Sibling Credo

We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us. When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we

understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life.

Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

Birthdays and Angel Date Cards

Cards are created by
Carol Hawley
In Memory of her son, Billy Hawley
3/15/83 – 9/27/04
Norcross, GA

Gifts of Love

A love gift is a gift of money to The Compassionate Friends of Atlanta. 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. The following donations are in support of the Atlanta Chapter newsletter, candlelight service, Web site and other outreach.

All chapters within TCF are totally dependent on funds from our families. We DO NOT receive funds from our National Office. Everything we need to operate our local chapters are paid directly from our local resources and our local family contributions. Thank you to all who contribute and support your local chapters. Some people contribute in memory of other's children.....this is a wonderful way for others to say "I am remembering your child." Other "Gifts of Love" are evident by all the compassionate and giving volunteers we have within our TCF Atlanta organization.



Love gifts to the Atlanta Chapter of TCF should be made payable to The Compassionate Friends and mailed to our treasurer: Jayne Newton, 808 Brentway Court, Lilburn, GA 30047.

In Loving Memory of John Coggins III, from John Coggins III Foundation, Norcross, GA
In Loving Memory of Chip Swilley, from his parents Elsie and Reezin Swilley, Atlanta, GA
In Loving Memory of Chris Simpson, from his parents Tricia and Dan Simpson, Auburn, GA
In Loving Memory of Chris Simpson, from his grandmother Elizabeth Luke, Auburn, GA

In Loving Memory of Michael Btembke, from his father Ghakarhi Btembke, Norcross, GA
In Loving Memory of Matthew Meehan, from his father Michael Meehan, Stone Mountain, GA
In Loving Memory of Jenny Moriarty, from her father Lawrence Moriarty, Atlanta, GA

In Loving Memory of Joey Capron, from his mother Carmen Capron, Chamblee, GA
In Loving Memory of Deborah Wasserman, from her mother-in-law Marilyn Wasserman, Decatur, GA
In Loving Memory of Stephanie Weber, from her parents John and Cecilia Weber, Roswell, GA

NEW SUBSCRIPTION - RENEWAL - CHANGE FORM - DONATIONS

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 is for internal use only.*

Please print, filling in all applicable blanks/boxes:

Your Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

Phone (including area code) _____ Email: _____

Do you prefer to receive the newsletter by (check one): Mail Email (provide email address above)

Child's Full 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:

- 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 your child's name to appear in the newsletter's "**We Remember You**" section of birth and death dates? Yes___ No___
2. Do you want to receive the daily e-newsletter from TCF Atlanta? If so, please include your email _____
2. Do you wish to have your child's name included on the Wall of Memory on our TCF Atlanta Web Site? Yes___ No ___
3. May we include the above information in the TCF Atlanta Chapter directory? Yes _____ No _____

Voluntary donations are TCF Atlanta'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 with TCF outreach...a donation is enclosed in Memory of _____

I would like to apply my donation toward the following outreach: (1) _____ newsletter (2) _____ birthday/angel date cards
(3) _____ newly-bereaved packets (4) _____ annual candlelight remembrance service (5) _____ library (6) _____ general expenses

Make Checks Payable to: The Compassionate Friends

Please return to: The Compassionate Friends, c/o Jayne Newton (treasurer), 808 Brentway Court, Lilburn, GA 30047

Or Make Donations Online by Pay Pal

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



®Our Credo...

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.

We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope.
Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for our children 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 and creeds. 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 we feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength; some of us are struggling to find answers.

Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression; others radiate an inner peace.

But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,
it is pain we will share just as we share with each other our love for our children.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building that future together as we reach out to each other in love and
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



The Compassionate Friends Atlanta Chapter
1364 Sanden Ferry Drive
Decatur, GA 30033

Honoring 27 Years of Support and Friendship for
Bereaved Families

Spring 2007 Newsletter