



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



## South Bay/L.A. Chapter



A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND FAMILIES

NOV. 2011 ISSUE

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### OUR NEXT MEETING

will be Nov. 2nd, the first Wednesday  
of the month at 7:00 P.M.

"This newsletter is sponsored  
by an anonymous family in  
memory of our children".

#### LOCATION:

The Neighborhood Church  
415 Paseo Del Mar  
Palos Verdes Estates, CA  
(South of Torrance Beach)

**DIRECTIONS:** Pacific Coast Hwy. to Palos Verdes Blvd. → Palos Verdes Blvd. becomes Palos Verdes Drive West. Veer Right. → Go to Via Corta (stop sign just past Malaga Cove Plaza). Turn right. → Go down hill to Arroyo (stop sign). Turn right. → Continue down hill to end of street. → Turn left on Paseo Del Mar. → Meetings are held at the west end of the church.

**--Please remember to park in the church parking lot and not on the street.--**

#### WHO ARE WE...

The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.

We gather to listen, to share, and to support each other in the resolution of our grief. You need not walk alone, we are The Compassionate Friends.

#### COMING IN NOVEMBER...

This month we will be having our Pot-Luck and Remembrance Program instead of our regular meeting. Family and friends are invited to join us.

#### Upcoming Events:

Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>: World Wide Candle Lighting

July 20-22: TCF 35<sup>th</sup> National Conference (see pg.16)

Free picture buttons of your child are available. Call Ken at (310) 544-6690.

**TCF Lunch Group** meets for lunch at Mimi's Café every Friday at 1:00. (Crenshaw and PCH). All members are invited.

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## November 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting is our Holiday Pot Luck and Remembrance program...



Instead of our regular meeting this month, we will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall, here at the church at 7 PM. This pot luck and remembrance program is a tradition our chapter hosts to help ease you into the holiday season. Friends and family are invited. Each family is asked to bring a dish to share. Our children's pictures will be displayed. Anyone who wants to share a poem, story, or tribute with the group is welcomed to do so.

On December 7th, we will have our regular meeting, but the meeting may be in a different room. (It is the one time of the year the church uses our room and it may still be needed for storage.) If we are not in our usual room, follow the signs on the door.

Mark your calendar for The World Wide Candle Lighting which will be on Sunday, Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> at the Malaga Cove shopping center, from 7-8 PM.

## Thanksgiving

No doubt some of us, especially the recently bereaved, are thinking at this time, "What can I be thankful for?" May the following reflections encourage you to add your own personal and particular thoughts of gratitude.

The life our child had, no matter how brief—his existence touched our lives, so we grew a bit: Thank You.

The miracle of his conception, formation, and growth: Thank You.

The love he showed us, and the love we experienced through him: Thank You.

The hope his existence brought to our hearts: Thank You.

The uniqueness of his person, which afforded us new insights: Thank You.

The beauty of nature – sun, moon, stars, flowers, bird songs, and all growing things: Thank You.

The signs of friendship – smiles, hugs, kisses, notes, phone calls, all the "doings-for-us": Thank You.

As our children's lives were a gift, so our lives are a gift: Thank You.

--Author Unknown

## Memories of Thanksgiving Past

As Thanksgiving approaches, my husband, my daughter and I were recently recalling our first Thanksgiving without Jack. We simply ran away that first year. Since Jack's birthday always fell near Thanksgiving, even though we celebrated his day on his day, everybody always knew that Thanksgiving dinner was really a birthday dinner.

He truly loved that meal. I found I couldn't cook it that year, nor the next. I also found nobody wanted me to. So, we ran away— as far away from tradition as we could. They laugh at me in the groups when I tell them we had dinner that first year at the Benihana of Tokyo Restaurant. As my family talked about it, we all agreed we would do it again, given the choice. It was right for us.

What is right for you this Thanksgiving? Really think about the choices you have available to you— and do what will help you through this special family time with the least pain. There is no rule that says you have to do it as you always have, you know. I can assure you Benihana of Tokyo will be able to accommodate you should they be your choice. It just isn't a busy day for them, for some reason!

I can also assure you that eventually you'll be able to approach the holidays without this overwhelming fear and dread. It was the third year before we were ready to return to some of our old traditions. We now fill that empty chair with some person or persons who need to have a place to be that day. We feel good about that. It doesn't completely fill his chair, but it helps, and we do give thanks to those we have left.

I am now able to prepare our traditional turkey, dressing, wild rice, green beans, sweet potato souffle and ambrosia— and have done so for the past four years. I knew I was better when I was able to do that. Don't you have to measure progress in strange ways when you're recovering from the loss of your child? I can tell you it is nice to have progress to measure. Don't despair. You'll get there, too.

--Mary Cleckley TCF, Atlanta, GA

The tragedy of Life  
is not Death,  
but what dies inside us  
While we Live...  
—Norman Cousins

## Little Things Mean A Lot



The words, "little things mean a lot," took on an entirely different meaning when my husband and I received a candle from one of his friends shortly after the death of our two sons. This thoughtful gift began the meaningful ritual of lighting a candle each evening during the dinner hour, and symbolized that nothing will ever extinguish the light of Erik and David that we carry with love in the depths of our hearts. I am quite sure that this friend never imagined that his gift would provide such lasting comfort. Such a seemingly little thing - but it has meant so much.

One of the lessons grief has taught me is how important it is to remember those who have lost a loved one by death - whether it is a spouse, child, sibling, parent or significant other - at any time, but especially during the holiday season. I reasoned that if I had been comforted by receiving a candle gift, perhaps others might be comforted as well.

And so another tradition was born, more or less, by happenstance. As I became aware of those who have experienced the death of a loved one during the year, I noted the loss. Then, as the holiday season approached, I wrote to each of them, acknowledged their changed lives, shared a reflection about their loved one, if I had known them personally, and included a candle as a symbol of everlasting love.

Notes of gratitude told how this simple gesture had warmed hurting hearts. Surprise was a common response. Some commented at how touched they were that someone outside of their family and/ or who did not know them personally had acknowledged their changed lives. Others wrote that receiving the note and candle "out of the blue," months after their loved one had died, had comforted them - especially if they were beginning to feel alone in their grief. Several told how they lighted the candle as they wrote their Christmas cards or how they planned to burn the candle during their Christmas dinner. A couple shared that they were going to adopt the idea (just as I had adopted it) and send candles to others who were grieving the death of a loved one.

The most visible candle lighting remembrance is likely The Compassionate Friends' Worldwide Candle Lighting Event. Taking advantage of the technology available through the Internet and acknowledging the multiple emotions and cultural

pressures associated with the holiday season, the second Sunday in December was chosen for this commemoration. Just like the handoff of a baton in a relay race, the lighting of the candles begins at the International Date line at 7:00 p.m., the candles stay lit for one hour and are extinguished just as the bereaved parents in the next time zone light their candles. The ceremony ends when all the bereaved parents in all of the time zones have lit their candles. Visualizing an untold number of candles circling and illuminating the globe in a twenty-four hour wave of love lights contributes to a powerful feeling among bereaved families and the assurance that they are not alone in their grief.

An important benefit of this kind of remembrance is that friends and family members are given an opportunity to talk about the deceased with the bereaved family. Those who intended to share their memories at "the right time," but never did because "the time had never seemed right," are given a second chance to act on their intentions of weeks, months, or years past and share their reflections, stories and memories about the one who died.

There are other meaningful ways to break the silence, to give the bereaved an opportunity to give a voice to his or her grief experience - maybe it is by sending a candle, a note of reflection, a flower, a phone call or some other meaningful symbol. Seemingly a little thing, but it can mean a lot whether the gift is given or received, not only during the holiday season, but anytime.

--By Nita Aasen St. Peter, Minnesota  
Bereavement Magazine, 4765 Carefree Circle,  
Colorado Springs, CO 80917

## At Thanksgiving

Though you're filled with sorrow and pain over the loss of your child, you can be thankful for:

The memories you hold close.

The time you shared with your child, no matter how short it was.

The things your child taught you.

The friends that are there when-you-need them.

And you can also be thankful for:

The strength that makes you a survivor.

The smiles of other children; they are not our missing children, but they still smile.

-- TCF Portland, OR

## Holidays

A very difficult area of functioning is coming to grips with the knowledge that there is absolutely no way of getting around holidays, despite your best efforts to avoid them. And they are horrendous times for many years. Their pain cannot be minimized, but they still must be faced.

One family trying to avoid Thanksgiving- which was the dead child's birthday as well- decided that family gatherings were no longer for them. They would travel or simply ignore the festivities. One day the mother came upon her ten year old daughter crying and asked what was wrong. She was sobbing, reported the mother, "All the children in school had told of their plans and made table decorations for the holiday." Lynn felt completely removed from her classmates. She cried that she was not only deprived of her brother who was dead, but she couldn't even have Thanksgiving dinner and a turkey!!! I listened and held her in my arms and cried. They also mattered. That night I talked to my husband and we decided that, no matter how bleak and empty it would be, we would have a traditional Thanksgiving dinner.

The family sat around the table, very quietly at first. The father said grace and thanked the Lord for a bountiful meal. When he was through, their ten year old said she had something to add. "I want to thank Mommy and Daddy for making this very special dinner for our family. And most of all I want to thank you God for having let us have my brother Eric for six years."

The mother who will never forget what her daughter said told me there was not a dry eye at the table for a few minutes. But gradually, as the meal progressed, they made an effort to discuss why the holiday was celebrated. From there, the parents told of amusing experiences at Thanksgiving dinners in their younger years. The mother said she planned to tell the stories to lighten the atmosphere just as carefully as she planned the menu. By the time the meal was over, the parents discovered what had been built up in their minds as unsurvivable had become just another turning point.

There will be many such turning points as you work your way forward. You have already survived what you were certain you could not live through- the death of your child. Turning points,



plateaus, are merely steps in coping and nothing more. As you go through each holiday, each season, each happy/sad occasion, you will gain strength from having passed beyond yet another painful event.

--Harriet Schiff

## The Empty Chair

The table is set and ready with food to delight the eye

Everyone is waiting with anticipation high-  
But one place is empty, void of a loved one dear  
And as we pause to remember,  
we wipe away the tear.

Your chair may be empty,  
and your presence no longer there  
But your memory is with us,  
as we gather around this fare.

Someone recalls something you once said,  
and the memories start to flow

And in this magic moment,  
your spirit upon us glows

Gone but never forgotten,  
as with us you'll always be

And if I look close, your presence,  
in the empty chair I see.

--Sheila Simmons, TCF/Atlanta, GA



## Veteran's Day

Beyond the history of grand events,  
behind the memory of battles fought, of  
freedoms lost and won - there stand the  
silent legends of this earth, the monuments of  
human joy and sorrow and a sky of laughter in a  
sea of tears. And they who cried the tears - their  
children fallen, sisters, brothers dead ... with lives  
washed over by relentless grief they fought the  
battles seldom written in stone.

And they who cried the tears and laughed the  
laughter, (though we may not be told their name  
and place) they share with us the history of  
coping, of courage tested, and enduring hope.  
And they who cried the tears and laughed the  
laughter are history, as much as swords at war,  
as much as grand events, and freedoms won.  
And all whoever mourned - the whole world  
over - are quietly with you and me today to walk  
with us through grief, to hope, and to heal. We  
do not walk alone.

--Sascha Wagner

## Suicide - When Someone Is Too Bruised to Be Touched



A few days ago, I was asked to visit a family who had, just that day, lost their 19-year-old son to suicide. There isn't much one can offer by way of consolation, even faith consolation, at a moment like this, when everyone is in shock and the pain is so raw. Few things can so devastate us as the suicide of a loved one, especially of one's own child. There is the horrific shock of losing a loved one so suddenly which, just of itself, can bring us to our knees; but, with suicide, there are other soul-wrenching feelings too, confusion, guilt, second-guessing, religious anxiety. Where did we fail this person? What might we still have done? What should we have noticed? What is this person's state with God?

What needs to be said about all of this: First of all that suicide is a disease and the most misunderstood of all sicknesses. It takes a person out of life against his or her will, the emotional equivalent of cancer, a stroke, or a heart attack. Second, we, those left behind, need not spend undue energy second-guessing as to how we might have failed that person, what we should have noticed, and what we might still have done to prevent the suicide. Suicide is an illness and, as with any sickness, we can love someone and still not be able to save that person from death. God loved this person too and, like us, could not do anything this side of eternity. Finally, we should not worry too much about how God meets this person on the other side. God's love, unlike ours, can go through locked doors and touch what will not allow itself to be touched by us.

Is this making light of suicide? Hardly. Anyone who has ever dealt with either the victim of a suicide before his or her death or with those grieving that death afterwards knows that it is impossible to make light of it. There is no hell and there is no pain like the one suicide inflicts. Nobody who is healthy wants to die and nobody who is healthy wants to burden his or her loved ones with this kind of pain. And that's the point: This is only done when someone isn't healthy. The fact that education can often prevent suicide should tell us something.

Suicide is an illness, not a sin. Nobody just calmly decides to commit suicide and burden his or her loved ones with that death any more than

anyone calmly decides to die of cancer and cause pain. The victim of suicide (in all but rare cases) is a trapped person, caught up in a fiery, private chaos that has its roots both in his or her emotions and bio-chemistry. Suicide is a desperate attempt to end unendurable pain, akin to one throwing oneself through a window because one's clothing is on fire.

Many of us have known victims of suicide, and we know too that in almost every case that person was not full of ego, pride, haughtiness, and the desire to hurt someone. Generally it's the opposite. The victim has cancerous problems precisely because he or she is wounded, raw, and too bruised to have the necessary resiliency needed to deal with life. Those of us who have lost loved ones to suicide know that the problem is not one of strength but of weakness, the person is too bruised to be touched.

I remember a comment I overheard at a funeral for a suicide victim. The priest had preached badly, hinting that this suicide was somehow the man's own fault and that suicide was always the ultimate act of despair. At the reception afterwards a neighbor of the victim expressed his displeasure at the priest's homily: "There are a lot of people in this world who should kill themselves," he lamented bitterly, "but those kind never do! This man is the last person who should have killed himself, because he was one of the most sensitive people I've ever met!" A book could be written on that statement. Too often it is precisely the meek who seem to lose the battle, at least in this world.

Finally, I submit that we shouldn't worry too much about how God meets our loved ones who have fallen victim to suicide. God, as Jesus assures us, has a special affection for those of us who are too bruised and wounded to be touched. Jesus assures us too that God's love can go through locked doors and into broken places, free up what's paralyzed, and help that which can no longer help itself. God is not blocked when we are. God can reach through.

And so our loved ones who have fallen-victim to suicide are now inside of God's embrace, enjoying a freedom they could never quite enjoy here, and being healed through a touch they could never quite accept from us.

--Father Ron Rolheiser, a Roman Catholic priest and member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas. Reprinted with permission from Solace Newsletter.

## A Poem From Erin

As I look back on the memories  
 Of my little girl's life on earth,  
 I always seem to recall  
 The sacredness of her birth  
 She came out crying and kicking  
 at the injustice of it all.  
 She seemed to be asking in her own way,  
 "How can you do this to me; I am so very small?"  
 Doctors prodding and poking,  
 Sticking needles where they shouldn't be.  
 I always imagine her thinking: "How did this  
 happen to me?"  
 I was in a place so quiet and warm.  
 I was inside my mommy's womb,  
 but then I was forced to leave  
 and enter this cold sterile room.  
 When my mommy and I were together  
 she took such good care of me.  
 Could I please be with my mommy again?  
 Can't you just leave me be?  
 But the doctor's continue poking; I am in so  
 much pain.  
 Now I understand they are only helping  
 so that I can remain  
 with my mommy and daddy,  
 together, just us three.  
 That would be so wonderful  
 If only it could be.  
 But I know that I must go now,  
 There's a problem with my heart  
 Good-bye, Mommy and Daddy,  
 For now we must be apart  
 But please treasure the memories  
 of my life here on earth.  
 Always smile when you think of me  
 looking at you at my birth  
 Now I am with Jesus,  
 In a place where happiness reigns.  
 My life here is so wonderful,  
 I no longer feel any pain!  
 But I know that you will miss me—  
 there are tears running down your face.  
 Please know that someday we will be together  
 in this beautiful, wonderful place.  
 You will hold me again someday  
 And there will be no more pain.  
 For when I climb into your waiting arms  
 Forever there I will remain.

--Jodi Haley, Erin's Mom, Oklahoma City, OK  
 In memory of Erin Nicole Haley. Born 10/05/89,

and died five hours later from Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome.

## Newly Bereaved ...

### You Must Get Over It



The other day a friend of mine and I were having a conversation about how angry he felt when someone said to him, "You must get over it and move on with your life." He lost his son to suicide just a few months ago. Dick said he would love to get over "it", but how and what was "it?"

Thinking back over my early stages of grief, I remembered feeling the same way as Dick. I was confused at what "it" was, and how to overcome "it." Was "it" our child? Was "it" the death? Was "it" our pain? Were they saying that I was not dealing with my grief properly? I was trying so hard to get over "it," but how does one stop the overwhelming pain? I wanted to scream and ask what the formula was that would rid me of such intense emotions.

As I walked my individual journey of grief, I learned how to deal with people telling me such things. These are some of the ways I found for coping.

\* Most people mean well when they say these things. They just do not want you to hurt anymore and try to "push" you forward. They do not understand the hurt and confusion they cause by such statements.

\* Most people do not understand the process of grieving, and we need to gently educate them. They have no idea, unless they have had a similar loss, of the time and energy it takes to walk through grief.

\* Whenever you hear words like "should" or "must" from people giving you advice, beware of their words. They are usually reciting "old scripts" that may not apply to you.

\* Some people cannot handle the death of your loved one and want you to get over "it" so they do not have to deal with the issues your loss brings up for them. It is best to limit the time you spend with this type of person especially in your early stages of grief.

\* You never get over "it" because that would mean you would have to stop loving that person or remembering your life together. The pain we feel is just a reminder that we loved so very

deeply. Many times I will tell people just that!

It takes time, commitment, and courage to incorporate such a deep pain into ourselves. We have to address the pain directly, feel its power, understand it, and finally, befriend it before we can rebuild our lives. I believe this process is one of the most difficult challenges of being human. We need loving and caring people to support us through this difficult time. Many times you can find such people in your church, family, support groups, therapists, and friends. Build yourself a support system that will aid you through your journey. Limit your interaction with people you do not find supportive. Remember, this is one of the most challenging times of our life, and you will need a strong support system.

There is no set time limit to your individual grief journey. The key is to keep moving forward along the path and not become stuck along the way. The time it takes is of little importance. From time to time, you may even feel you are slipping backwards and that is perfectly normal. It may be necessary to revisit an event or set of feelings in order to take the next important step forward.

I can tell you that it does get better. It takes courage to face each emotion and keep moving along that road. I have faith that each one of you has that courage.

--By Penny Blaze From *Thanatos*  
Reprinted with permission from *A Journey Together*, Winter, 1997

## For Friends and Family ...

### You'll Excuse Me

You'll excuse me if the bounce is gone from my step. Or the depth of my laughter has changed. Issues that were once monumental now seem so insignificant. Please excuse me if I don't commiserate that your car needs repair or the faucet leaks; my focus on life has forever changed. You'll excuse me if my spirit seems lost during holidays of any kind. They are now days "to bear"- rather than days to share and enjoy. You'll pardon me if I bring you down or make you feel discomfort, and I'll pardon you for not understanding that my life will never be the same. That although I'll survive there will always be sorrow.

--Joan Fischer, TCF Nassau County, NY

Welcome...



## What Goes On At A Compassionate Friends Meeting?

A question that is asked frequently by newly bereaved parents who have never attended a meeting is, "What do you do?" or rather, "What will you expect me to do?" In answer to the last question, we expect and require nothing more than your name. Our meetings are informal. We open the meeting with introductions by mentioning our name and child's name, but if you feel that you can not do this, it is okay also. We have all, at one time or another, choked up on the mention of our child's name or the circumstances of his or her death.

Some people attend meetings several times and do not enter any discussion or voice their feelings. They absorb some ideas and discard others that do not meet their immediate needs. But, inevitably, someone around the table will say something that is tuned to the exact way you feel. Then the realization comes that one is among friends, people who really understand and care about them and their sensitive feelings.

Some parents are more vocal from the start, and they find willing listeners who neither criticize or pass judgment on them. We most likely have the same feelings of anger, despair, longing, pains, and a multitude of others.

Now a word about crying. PLEASE don't stay away because you are afraid you will cry! We have all cried many times. Perhaps we've attended several months and didn't shed a tear. Then something is said or a memory comes back that brings tears to our eyes. Compassionate Friends' can accept the gamut of feelings from tears to laughter. Laughter? Of course! We are, after all, human and our emotions are many and varied. If we can accept each other's feelings, this must include all ranges of emotions.

In the course of discussion, you may hear the answer to a question or problem that has been plaguing you. Several parents may tell you how they handled the question of what to do with their child's possessions - clothes, toys, books, etc., or how they have gotten through holidays, birthdays, and other difficult days. Maybe you will pick up something that will be helpful in dealing with your surviving children's problems; how to deal with a seemingly uncaring relative or friends- to hurtful

remarks, or how to answer the question "How many children do you have?"

Sometimes what has helped one may not have worked for another, but what is important is the open and honest discussion and the chance to decide for yourself.

Please don't let the word meeting intimidate you. Perhaps we should call it a gathering. Whether our gathering consists of a program featuring a film, a speaker, a tape, or general discussion, please don't hesitate to join us! A parent who has "survived" the loss of their child will always be there to greet you and understand.  
--Verdugo Hills, CA newsletter

## Book in Review ...



### Men & Grief By Carol Staudacher

"Experiencing Loss as a Father" is very well done and recognizes our society's view of Father as a grief manager. One of the real assets of *Men & Grief* is the format used. It is clear, with each section introduced in simple outline form. It is full of profound and timely quotes, and the paragraphs layout in a manner that is easy to digest. In addition to these ideas, the book is descriptive of specific losses and the special challenges that each presents.

"Experiencing Loss During Boyhood and Adolescence" goes into some detail about confusion, guilt, and suppressing feelings. Everyone: men, women, and professionals can benefit greatly from this book.

--Excerpt from a book review by Joy Johnson

## Helpful Hint...



### Can I Take a Break?

I do not know what percentage of the population can run a marathon, but I am positive I am not one of them. Just thinking about running or even walking that far makes me tired. I know it is possible, just not by me! The only way I can even conceive of making a journey this long would be to break it into smaller, manageable sections with a healthy break in between. How far I travel each day would depend on how I felt, how much support I had, my energy level, the weather, my job, my family, and countless other variables. Needless to say,

this would be a very long and difficult journey. Does this sound like grief?

When we are first confronted with grief, it is impossible to see "the end of the journey." This is because grief does not have an endpoint. Even though there is no end, we know we must travel towards something. That something is hope. How much progress we make on any given day depends on all of the variables in our lives. It also depends on our ability to take an occasional break.

Grief is hard work. It is a long journey that must be broken into segments, not a sprint. Often, I hear clients say they feel guilty if they stop to take a rest or take time for themselves or even feel happy. This is very normal. This is not denying your grief; it is a part of the grief journey, without rest we become more and more tired and irritable, less productive and healthy. By stopping to care for ourselves, we can actually travel farther over time. It is so easy to get overwhelmed with all of the emotions, commitments, expectations, and challenges that come with grief that we often forget to take care of ourselves. My encouragement to you is to take breaks to care for yourself. Do something fun, even if you don't feel like it. Rest when you have the chance. Go out with friends or family. Do something you find relaxing and enjoyable at least once a week. It won't take the pain away or make you forget why you are sad, but it will give you the strength you will need over the course of a very long journey.  
--Robert Smith Reprinted from the BPUSA of Springfield & Jacksonville, Illinois February 2006

## Nightmare

In the still dark hours of night  
When sleep eludes,  
Horror thoughts swirl through my mind  
Terrifying,  
Unbidden, uninvited - Why? How?  
The suffering, the torture  
Of those few brief moments  
Before death overcame all.  
The images are too cruel to bear  
My mind screams in agony  
Till tears come and release the pain  
And calming numbness dulls my mind  
--Athalie Tysoe, Mother of Jennifer Gay Tysoe

## Just For Today

Just for today I will try to live through the next 24-hours and not expect to get over my child's death, but instead learn to live with it just one day at a time.

Just for today, I will remember my child's life, not his death, and bask in the comfort of all those treasured days and moments we shared.

Just for today I will forgive all the family and friends who didn't help or comfort me the way I needed them to. They truly did not know how.

Just for today, I will smile no matter how much I hurt on the inside, for maybe if I smile a little, my heart will soften and I will begin to heal.

Just for today, I will reach out to comfort a relative or friend of my child, for they are hurting too, and perhaps we can comfort each other.

Just for today I will free myself from my self-inflicted burden of guilt, for deep in my heart I know if there was anything I could have done to save my child from death, I would have done it.

Just for today I will honor my child's memory by doing something with another child because I know that would have made my own child proud.

Just for today, I will offer my hand in friendship to another bereaved parent, for I do know how they feel.

Just for today when my heart feels like breaking, I will stop and remember that grief is the price we pay for loving, and the only reason I hurt is because I had the privilege of loving so much.

Just for today I will not compare myself with others. I am fortunate to be who I am and to have had my child for as long as I did.

Just for today, I will accept that I did not die when my child died. My life did go on and I am the only one who can make that life worthwhile once more.

-- Vicky Tushingam Alive Alone, LA, CA

## A Thanksgiving Prayer From A Bereaved Parent



Dear God, though I'll never be glad that my child died, I thank you with all my heart that she lived. She touched my life in a way that only she could and I'll always feel enriched for having known

her.

Thank you for the strength and courage to endure what has happened. While the lesson was very painful, I have learned that I can handle whatever life has to offer.

Thank you for the little miracles you have sent me. The messages took a little while to sink in, but I am comforted by them now.

Thank you for the friends who gathered around me when I needed them most. They stayed with me through the horrible times and now through the good times.

Thank you for the new friends I have made. They have a very special place in my heart. Though they never knew my child, they cared enough about me to listen, hug me, cry, or whatever I needed.

Thank you for making me constantly search for whatever good I can find in a situation and strive to improve myself. I will never again be the person I was before my child's death, but I am not broken and empty as I once was afraid I would be. I have more compassion and patience. I am less judgmental. I am the "New and improved" me.

Thank you for love. Loving someone means risking being devastated by loss again. Never loving though would be an even greater loss.

Thank you most of all for my family. They loved me, cried with me, missed my child too, shared my pain, understood, listened to my endless stories, and waited patiently until I could walk on my own again. They were at first, the only reason I could face another day. Now that I am once again, a participant in life instead of just a spectator, they share my joy.

Finally I thank you for taking care of my child. I know she's happy, at peace, and safe in your care. I look forward to the day when I'll see her again. Amen

--Katy Mc Cormick TCF - Lower Bucks, PA



## Our Children Remembered



Ron Acker  
Born: 10/65 Died: 5/95  
Mother: Ursula Spey-Acker  
Father: Heinz H. Acker

Jonathan Adams  
Born: 1/81 Died: 2/08  
Parent: Siv & Eddie Adams

Ramon Alvarez  
Born: 10/84 - Died: 2/07  
Mother: Terrie Alvarez

Sumer Nicole Alvarez  
Born: 5/85 Died: 7/005  
Parents: Dave Alvarez &  
Sandy Murphy

Robert H. Apodaca  
Born: 12/55 Died: 9/89  
Mother: Margaret Hall  
Father: Al Apodaca

Noah William Aragon  
Born: 1/05 Died: 3/06  
Parents: Rich & Michele  
Aragon

Brandon Armstrong  
Miscarried: June 1995  
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Joshua Arevalo  
Born: 7/93 Died: 8/11  
Mother: Vilma Alfaro

Joseph David Artino  
Born: 11/51 Died: 11/07  
Mother: Nancy Graybill &  
Step-father: Art Graybill

Jason M. Bakos  
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07  
Father: James Bakos

Alexandra Renee Balesh  
Born: 9/73 Died: 3/95  
Parents: Ron & Stella Balesh

Kimberly Barcnas  
Born: 2/88 Died: 10/06  
Mother: Maria Guadalupe Ixta

Christopher Barnhart  
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/2007  
Parents: Ron & Susan Mother  
Sister: Stacy Pierce

Christopher Michael Barta  
Born: 2/72 Died: 9/04  
Mother: Mary Barta

Stephen Barrington Baxter  
Born: 7/61 Died: 4/99  
Parents: Cash & Betty Baxter

Vincent Beagle  
Born: 11/82 Died: 5/10  
Mother: Angela Beagle

Tristina Ann Beale  
Born: 12/80 Died: 9/08  
Mother: Kathy Beale

Frank Becker  
Born: 11/61 Died: 8/07  
Parents: Al & Louise Becker

Kimberly Belluomini  
Born: 10/62 Died: 10/00  
Parents: Joyce Anderson &  
Ronald Assmann

Sammy Bloom  
Born: 2/59 Died: 12/82  
Parents: Lois & Sam Bloom

Kurt Boettcher  
Born: 12/71 Died: 06/95  
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Todd Boettcher  
Born: 2/79 Died: 10/79  
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Alan Bolton  
Born: 11/63 Died: 3/06  
Mother: Helen Eddens

Kevin Border  
Born: 11/88 Died: 11/09  
Mother: Kelly Border

Antoinette Botley  
Born: 12/67 Died: 7/10  
Mother: Fredia McGrew

Renee Bouchard  
Born: 3/75 Died: 5/06  
Mother: Susan Bouchard

Tamara Lynette Boyd  
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/00  
Parents: Gloria & Gayle Jones

Jazzelyn Braga  
Born: 11/08 Died: 5/09  
Father: Leonard Braga

Lawrence Tom Brennan  
Born: 11/86 Died: 12/10  
Parents: Manuel & Lisa Jo  
Hernandez

William Joseph Britton  
Born: 3/62 Died: 7/85  
Mother: Jean Anne Britton

Sayumi Claire Brower  
Born: 9/08 Died: 9/08  
Parents: Scott & Maiko  
Brower

Eric Michael Brown  
Born: 11/65 Died: 9/00  
Mother: Beverly Young

Benjamin Matthew Brytan  
Born: 10/84 Died: 6/96  
Mother: Karen Merickel &  
Robert Brytan

Robert L. Buckner  
Born: 2/92 Died: 3/03  
Parents: Brad & Cindy  
Buckner

Tony Burack  
Born: 12/63 Died: 12/87  
Parents: Rita & Herb Burack

Brittany Nicole Cail  
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/08  
Mother: Raquel Cail

Albert Caldera  
Born: 3/78 Died: 2/10  
Parents: Refugio & Maria  
Caldera

Christina Califano  
Born: 10/90 Died: 11/06  
Father: John Califano

Cesar Isaac Cancino  
Born: 01/05 Died: 01/05  
Parents: Claudia & Cesar  
Cancino

Kenneth Capparelli  
Born: 1/77 Died: 1/04  
Mother: Sandy Capparelli

Frank Christopher Castania  
Born: 8/94 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Frank & Debbie  
Castania --Grandparents:  
Richard & Ann Leach

Vanessa Roseann Castania  
Born: 2/97 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Frank & Debbie  
Castania-- Grandparents:  
Richard & Ann Leach

Ryan Cavanaugh  
Born: 6/83 Died: 11/06  
Mother: Kimberly Cavanaugh

Zackary Kenneth Charlton  
Born: 11/81 Died: 3/10  
Parents: Christine & Kerr  
Sister: Allie Bentley

Nathaniel Choate  
Born: 7/80 Died: 5/08  
Mother: Vicki Blain

Andrew Alexander Chou  
Born: 12/03 Died: 12/03  
Parents: Lu-Sieng Siau &  
Wibawa Chou

Ophelra Grace Clark  
Born: 10/82 Died: 9/10  
Sister: Rebecca Clark

John Francis Cleary  
Born: 12/74 Died: 8/93  
Mother: Pauline Cleary Basil

Kelly Swan Cleary  
Born: 3/59 Died: 3/95  
Parents: Dick & Bev Swan

Sarah Elizabeth Cooper  
Born: 10/95 Died: 8/00  
Parents: Mark & Sandra  
Cooper

Tiffany Corkins  
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/05  
Mother: Nancy Lamb

Hugo Ignacio Corbalan  
Born: 4/84 Died: 5/08  
Mother: Isabel Acosta

Marika Critelli  
Born: 3/78 Died: 11/09  
Father: Michael Critelli

Joseph Francesco Michael  
Curreri  
Born: 9/80 Died: 10/07  
Mother: Karen Curreri



# Our Children Remembered



Scott Curry  
Born: 8/59 Died: 7/08  
Mother: Marilyn Nemeth

Amy Elizabeth Dodd  
Born: 1/74 Died: 7/02  
Mother: Kathleen Dodd

Kurt Faerber  
Born: 8/63 Died: 3/87  
Mother: Trudy Faerber

Melinda "Peeper" Gardner-  
Collins  
Born: 6/56 Died: 8/07  
Mother: Pat Gardner

Rodney D. Day, Jr.  
Born: 4/96 Died: 6/01  
Parents: Jersuha Day

Wayne Douglas  
Born: 9/71 Died: 1/10  
Mother: Marie Galli

Jarod Ryan Faulk  
Born: 8/86 Died: 12/08  
Father: Joe Faulk

Justin Brian Gartland  
Born: 10/81 Died: 4/05  
Parents: Brian & Paulette  
Gartland

Danielle Ann Davis  
Born: 10/78 Died: 3/10  
Mother: Jackie Davis

Ramsay Downie, II  
Born: 2/64 Died: 10/99  
Ramsay & Sally Downie

Chase Feldkamp  
Born: 5/05 Died: 3/06  
Parents: Buddy & Jessica  
Feldkamp

Richard Lamar Gibbs  
Born: 3/84 Died: 5/05  
Mother: Ann Wasecha

Michael David Deboe  
Born: 12/75 Died: 5/09  
Parents: Dave & Judy Deboe

Rachel Sheridan Dunlap  
Born: 9/69 Died: 3/09  
Mother: Janell Dunlap

David Joseph Ferralez  
Born: 2/74 Died: 12/02  
Parents: John & Rebecca  
Ferralez

Steven Paul Giuliano  
Born: 4/55 Died: 4/95  
Mother: Eleanor Giuliano

Phillip Dennis Delurgio  
Born: 11/64 Died: 7/10  
Mother: Denise Nolan  
Delurgio

Myaka Kaitana Durham  
Born: 1/04/06 Died: 1/06  
Parents: Jahman & Ampy  
Durham

Michella Leanne Matasso  
Fincannon  
Born: 8/86 Died: 1/06  
Parents: Bill & Cheryl  
Matasso

Jacob Seth Goar  
Born: 1/79 Died: 5/01  
Parents: Michael & Venus  
Nunan

Anthony Joseph Demasio  
Born: 6/52 Died: 7/00  
Vivian Demasio

Scott Michael Dykstra  
Born: 7/72 Died: 10/01  
Parents: Mike & Rita Dykstra

Emma Nicole Fisher  
Born: 11/99 Died: 7/06  
Parents: Nancy & Elliott  
Fisher

Morgan Leeann Gomez  
Born: 1/08 Died: 1/08  
Parents: Amanda & Louie  
Gomez

Lee Denmon, III  
Born: 7/79 Died: 3/03  
Parents: Frances & Lee  
Denmon, Jr.

Gary Edholm  
Born: 5/56 Died: 9/95  
Parents: Patti & Bob White

Casey Owen Flint  
Born: 5/75 Died: 7/09  
Mother: Catherine Flint

Nicholas Gonzalez  
Born: 2/63 Died: 10/01  
Parents: Nick & Gloria  
Gonzalez

Douglas Thorn Dethlefsen  
Born: 11/64 Died: 11/09  
Father: Douglas G. Dethlefsen

Mark Edler  
Born: 11/73 Died: 1/92  
Parents: Kitty & Rich Edler

April Lou Flynn  
Born: 4/61 Died: 1/05  
Mother: Peggy Flynn

Evan Leonard Grau  
Born: 8/82 Died: 5/04  
Parents: Maria & Wayne Grau

Cori Daye Desmond  
Born: 3/80 Died: 12/09  
Parents: Mark & Monica  
Desmond

Timothy Charles Egnatoff  
Born: 11/92 Died: 9/08  
Parents: Rick & Cathy Reny

Mark Frazee  
Born: 5/79 Died: 7/07  
Mother: Kathy Cammarano

Christopher Dudley Gray  
Born: 5/83 Died: 2/04  
Parents: Dudley & Laurie  
Gray

Luke Edward Devlin  
Born: 12/07 Died: 12/07  
Parents: Jacqueline & Tom  
Devlin

Lorian Tamara Elbert  
Born: 5/66 Died: 10/07  
Mother: Dorota Starr Elbert

Peter Joseph Fuentes  
Born: 2/68 Died: 3/98  
Mother: Pat Fuentes

Matthew Ryan Gregory  
Born: 3/80 Died: 1/11  
Parents: Carol & Fred Gregory

Allison Jeanine Kirkbride  
Dewart  
Born: 10/87 Died: 1/06  
Parents: Z & Michael Dewart

Luke Emery  
Born: 7/89 Died: 12/99  
Parents: Karen & Glenn  
Emery

Donald A. Funk  
Born: 12/41 Died: 9/00  
Parents: William & Norma  
Jean Funk

Adam Francois Guymon  
Born: 4/89 Died: 4/06  
Mother: Eileen Guymon

Gary A. Dicey, II  
Born: 4/82 Died: 6/98  
Father: Gary A. Dicey, Sr.

Jeffery Mark Engleman  
Born: 6/61 Died: 2/10  
Parents: Janette & Laszlo  
Engelman

Ricardo Ramon Gallegos JR.  
Born: 4/85 Died: 2/02  
Mother: Sheri Schrier

Anthony Joel Guzman  
Born: 5/87 Died: 1/08  
Mother: Teresa Guzman

Michael A. DiMaggio  
Born: 10/54 Died: 7/01  
Parents: Neno & Helen Di  
Maggio

Richard Paul Engelman  
Born: 02/66 Died: 03/95  
Parents: Janette & Laszlo  
Engelman

Mark Scott Galper  
Born: 2/62 Died: 5/97  
Mother: Sheri Schrier

Andrew John Gvist  
Born: 7/88 Died: 5/05  
Father: Mark Gvist

Henry Espinoza  
Born: 12/63 Died: 9/98  
Mother: Virginia Espinoza



## Our Children Remembered



Justin Todd Gwizdala  
Born: 10/75 Died: 6/96  
Parents: Kathy & Gary  
Gwizdala

James Burman Hahn  
Born: 11/68 Died: 12/05  
Mother: Berna Hahn &  
J. Thomas Hahn

Grant Henry Hampton  
Born: 3/79 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Jeri & George Medak

Brandon Allen Hanson  
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/10  
Mother: Yolanda Alepe

Robert Belmares Harris  
Born: 12/66 Died: 12/95  
Parents: Bea & Larry Harris

Rachel Anne Hartman  
Born: 2/91 Died: 7/04  
Parents: David & Paula  
Hartman

Robert Hashimoto Jr  
Born: 5/66 Died: 5/92  
Parents: Robert & Shirley  
Hashimoto

Caleb Haskell  
Born: 6/78 Died: 9/06  
Parents: Karen & Kim Haskell

Daniel Hassley  
Born: 2/71 Died: 2/90  
Parents: Eila & Richard  
Hassley

Alicia M. Hayes  
Born: 1/81 Died: 5/96  
Parents: Becky & Dave Jordan

Jason Patrick Healey  
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/09  
Mother: Sharon Sykes Healey

Emma Joy Heath  
Born: 5/98 Died: 6/07  
Parents: DJ & Phil Heath

Kent Hisamune  
Born: 6/00 Died: 6/00  
Parents: Toshi & Hideko  
Hisamune

Jesse Hoffman  
Born: 1/86 Died: 8/10  
Mother: Gina Hoffman

Hope Ann Honeycutt  
Born: 12/62 Died: 6/00  
Mother: Donna Honeycutt

Adria Horning  
Born: 12/91 Died: 3/07  
Parents: Gary Horning &  
Linda Cipriani

Jeremy Michael Howard  
Born: 7/83 Died: 6/94  
Mother: Donna Howard-  
Scruggs  
Grandmother: Charlotte  
Crager

Jennifer Nicole Hower  
Born: 6/75 Died: 12/04  
Brother: Jeff Hower

Miranda Howells  
Born: 8/91 Died: 11/09  
Father: Walter Howells III

Rachel Suzanne Hoyt  
Born: 2/70 Died: 1/95  
Sister: Laura Hoyt D'anna

Tara Hudson  
Born: 1/86 Died: 1/07  
Mother: Mari Hudson

Chad Michael Huisinga  
Born: 10/74 Died: 12/95  
Parents: Alan & Melinda  
Huisinga

Hannah Nichea Hupke  
Born: 9/87 Died: 6/05  
Parents: Bruce & Joni Hupke

Zane Austin Hutchins  
Born: 9/03 Died: 2/04  
Parents: Mae Rivera & Jon  
Hutchins

Casie Leean Hyde  
Born: 3/89 Died: 12/05  
Mother: Kelli Rigby-Hyde

John Joseph Iacono  
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/04  
Parents: Nancy & Anthony  
Iacono

Ben Francisco Inez de la Cruz  
Born: 1/71 Died: 11/91  
Parents: Francesca Inez &  
Emmanuel de la Cruz

John E. James  
Born: 6/62 Died: 9/93  
Parents: Marilyn & Lupe  
Arvizo

Kalaea Jennings  
Born: 4/07 Died: 9/07  
Parents: Nacio & Maria  
Jennings

Melissa Gale Jetton  
Born: 5/58 Died: 7/84  
Parents: James & Cathie Jetton

William Jimenez  
Born: 3/94 Died: 5/04  
Sister: Adrianna Jimenz

Daniel A. Jones V.  
Born: 5/92 Died: 10/09  
Father: Daniel A. Jones IV.

David B. Jones  
Born: 3/50 Died: 3/01  
Mother: Lucille Jones

Thomas Sean Jordahl  
Born: 7/67 Died: 4/03  
Mother: Lynda Orr

Jeff Joyce  
Born: 2/68 Died: 4/01  
Mother: Wadene Duffy

Lance John Juracka  
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/06  
Parents: Frank & Nancy  
Juracka

Heather Mary Kain  
Born: 6/83 Died: 2/10  
Mother: Maura Kain

Edwin J. Kaslowski  
Born: 11/67 Died: 7/96  
Mother: Carolyn Kaslowski

Emily Matilda Kass  
Born: 6/95 Died: 3/06  
Mother: Susan Kass

Scott Ira Kaufman  
Born: 4/68 Died: 7/95  
Mother: Renee Kaufman

Douglas Drennen Kay  
Born: 3/72 Died: 9/06  
Parents: Steve & Diane Kay

Kalin Marie Keech  
Born: 10/90 Died: 6/09  
Richard & Kris Keech

Kathryn Anne Kelly  
Born: 12/72 Died: 1/91  
Parents: Dick & Timmy Kelly

Timothy Michael Kerrigan  
Born: 4/68 Died: 8/02  
Mother: JoAnna Kerrigan

Sean A. King  
Born: 7/63 Died: 12/07  
Parents: Catherine & Michael  
King

Kay Dee Kinney-Palser  
Born: 6/87 Died: 6/99  
Grandmothers: Diana Palser &  
Kay Kinney

Colby Joshua Koenig  
Born: 6/84 Died: 1/10  
Parents: Cindy Tobis & John  
Koenig

Keith Konopasek  
Born: 1/63 Died: 7/95  
Parents: Ken & Mary  
Konopasek

Susan Ann Kruger  
Born: 9/64 Died: 6/08  
Mother: Gloria Swensson

Kyle Kubachka  
Born: 1/89 Died: 11/08  
Parents: Keith & April  
Kubachka

Natalie Samantha Large  
Born: 6/05 Died: 6/05  
Parents: Burke & Maya Large

Dolores LaRue  
Born: 8/57 Died: 11/08  
Mother: Maggie Ramirez

Cherese Mari Laulhere  
Born: 9/74 Died: 3/96  
Parents: Larry & Chris  
Laulhere



# Our Children Remembered



Bernard Lawrence  
Born: 2/63 Died: 12/06  
Mother: Jackie Bowens

Janet Sue Mann  
Born: 10/61 Died: 9/10  
Mother: Nancy Mann

Angel Flores Misa, Jr  
Born: 10/69 Died: 7/06  
Parents: Roland & Luscita Dilley

Michaela Grace Nunez  
Born: 2/05 Died: 7/05  
Parents: Roger & Jennifer Nunez

Bryan Yutaka Lee  
Born: 12/70 Died: 9/07  
Mother: Kathee Lee

Gabriella Mantini  
Born: 5/85 Died: 8/06  
Mother: Martha Mantini

Jamie Susan Mintz  
Born: 11/52 Died: 12/04  
Sister: Jessica Mintz

Sally Anne O'Connor  
Born: 12/62 Died: 2/11  
Mother: Grace "Darline" Dye

Steven J. Lee  
Born: 1/63 Died: 10/06  
Mother: Donna Lee

Alex J. Mantyla  
Born: 3/89 Died: 8/08  
Parents: Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla

David F. Mobilio  
Born: 7/71 Died: 11/02  
Parents: Richard & Laurie Mobilio

Thomas Jinkwang Oh  
Born: 2/72 Died: 6/03  
Sister: Barbara Oh

Avery James Lent  
Born: 12/03 Died: 7/06  
Parents: Crystal Henning & Dan Holly

Audrey Sinclair Marshall  
Born: 2/00 Died: 3/00  
Parents: Don & Kimberly Marshall

Danielle Ann Mosher  
Born: 8/78 Died: 6/97  
Parents: Paul & Rose Mary Mosher

Dominique Oliver  
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/02  
Mother: Cheryl Stevens

Wendy Levine  
Born: 10/65 Died: 11/95  
Parents: Paul & Sharon Levine

Paul Martinez  
Born: 1/86 Died: 3/08  
Mother: Lorraine Martinez

Peter Anthony Murillo  
Born: 11/72 Died: 10/04  
Mother: Stella Murillo

Henry Ortega  
Born: 5/97 Died: 7/08  
Parents: Henry & Wendy Ortega

Michael Lococo  
Born: 2/55 Died: 1/10  
Mother: Patrina Lococo

Daniel George Mateik III  
Born: 12/84 Died: 6/09  
Mother: Stefanie Hudak

Christopher Myers  
Born: 10/86 Died: 5/06  
Parents: Janet & Larry Myers

Caitlin Nalani Oto  
Born: 10/88 Died: 2/05  
Father: Carl Oto

Anthony "Tony" Low  
Born: 1/46 Died: 3/99  
Parents: Frances & Matthew Low

Daniel McClernan  
Born: 7/53 Died: 2/07  
Mother: Lee McClernan

Christian Paul Nagy  
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/02  
Parents: Paul & Teresa Nagy

Sally O' Toole  
Born: 10/53 Died: 03/85  
Mother: Kay Arndt

Richard Lee Luthe  
Born: 11/76 Died: 1/98  
Parents: Jeff & Lorraine Luthe

Robert Andrew Mead  
Born: 5/65 Died: 4/11  
Mother: Carol Mead

Richard Paul Negrete  
Born: 6/43 Died: 2/04  
Mother: Sally Negrete

Lucas Hunter Palar  
Born: 11/89 Died: 5/06  
Parents: Hugh Palar & DeAnna Williams

Audrey Sinclair Marshall  
Born: 2/00 Died: 3/00  
Parents: Kimberly & Don Marshall

Nicole Marie Megaloudis  
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/04  
Mother: Gail Megaloudis-Rongen

Joy Ellen Nelson  
Born: 1/97 Died: 1/97  
Parents: Mary Desmond & David Nelson

Armon Parker  
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/04  
Mother: Sabrina Parker

Kyle Jeffrey Martin  
Born: 11/80 Died: 7/04  
Parents: David & Joanne Martin

Alexis Melgoza  
Born: 3/90 Died: 6/11  
Mother: Gina Melgoza

Eric M. Neuan  
Born: 1/79 Died: 3/09  
Parents: Eric & Lynn Neuman

Annemarie Pellerito  
Born: 9/73 Died: 8/03  
Parents: Vicki & Pete Pellerito

Jason Lee Martineau  
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07  
Father: James Bakos

Shawn Mellen  
Born: 05/81 Died: 8/99  
Godmother: Rose Sarukian

Danielle Nice  
Born: 7/81 Died: 8/04  
Parents: Daniel & Debbie Nice

Joseph Ryan Persh  
Born: 1/03 Died: 2/03  
Parents: Gary & Jane Persh

Michelle Marie Mandich  
Born: 5/89 Died: 2/05  
Parents: Michael & Lori Mandich

Damion Mendoza  
Born: 7/76 Died: 6/92  
Parents: Carlene & Paul Mendoza

Monique Nicholson  
Born: 7/71 Died: 1/08  
Sister: April Nicholson

Daniel Andrew Peterson  
Born: 1/78 Died: 5/13/85  
Mother: Gay Kennedy

Daniel Edward Manella  
Born: 9/67 Died: 10/98  
Sister: Kathleen Manella

Shannon R. Middleton  
Born: 2/77 Died: 5/94  
Mother: Candy Middleton

Geoff James Nowak  
Born: 11/97 Died: 2/98  
Parents: Christen Murphey & Geoff Nowak

Richard Phillips  
Born: 9/81 Died: 3/11  
Mother: Lisa Grant

Elizabeth Mann  
Born: 7/60 Died: 5/05  
Parents: David & Olivia Mann

Steven Douglas Millar  
Born: 2/70 Died: 10/00  
Parents: David & Suzanne Millar

Logan Kay Nunez  
Born: 1/95 Died: 4/05  
Parents: Mike & Laura Nunez

Jennifer Pizer  
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/91  
Parents: Janis & Bud Pizer



Chris Pierce  
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07  
Sister: Stacy Pierce

D'Juan Marcel Pratt  
Born: 12/79 Died: 11/06  
Mother: Gwendolyn Elaine  
Maiden

Shannon Quigly  
Born: 112/68 Died: 1/09  
Mother: Kathleen Shortridge

Daniel Paul Rains  
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/91  
Mother: Janet Ferjo

Jeffrey Alan Rakus  
Born: 10/86 Died: 7/06  
Parents: Tony & Donna Rakus

Julius Ramarez JR.  
Born: 8/10 Died: 8/10  
Parents: Bridle & Jules  
Ramirez

Tejal Pati Reddy  
Born: 6/86 Died: 12/08  
Parents: Pranitha & Krupa  
Reddy

Richard R. Reyes  
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/08  
Mother: Terry Reyes

Aaron Rico  
Born: 12/89 Died: 12/10  
Parents: Cameron & Annette  
Rico

Keith Patrick Riley  
Born: 3/69 Died: 10/99  
Parents: Kevin & Debby Riley

Christopher Rivera  
Born: 10/67 Died: 1/06  
Mother: Katherine Wagner

Ruth "Vanny" Rodriguez  
Born: 10/73 Died: 5/01  
Parents: George & Ruby  
Rodriguez

Christine E. Rojas  
Born: 6/64 Died: 12/94  
Parents: Ray & Esther Rojas

Jamie (James) Lloyd Roman  
Born: 4/78 Died: 2/97  
Mother: Carolyn Roman

Frankie Romero  
Born: 10/81 Died: 9/93  
Mother: Magdalena Hilda  
Salas & Francisco L. Romero

Dominic Roque  
Born: 8/02 Died: 1/09  
Parents: Kerrie & Ren Roque

James Garrett Ross  
Born: 12/74 Died: 10/05  
Parents: Jim & Sharon Ross

Michael William Roth  
Born: 6/71 Died: 12/08  
Parents: Karen & William  
Roth

John Patrick Rouse  
Born: 1/78 Died: 7/02  
Mother: Sharon Rouse

Michael B. Ruggera, Jr.  
Born: 4/51 Died: 4/96  
Parents: Michael & Frances  
Ruggera

Shannon Quigley Runningbear  
Born: 12/68 Died: 1/09  
Mother: Kathleen Crowley  
Shortridge

Armando Sainz  
Born: 6/76 Died: 2/02  
Mother: Jennie Hernandez

Andrew Patrick Sakura  
Born: 3/90 Died: 3/08  
Parents: Bruce & Karen  
Sakura

Jeffrey Alan Sampson  
Born: 3/86 Died: 5/05  
Parents: Claude & Paula  
Sampson

Lisa Sandoval  
Born: 9/76 Died: 12/92  
Parents: Susan & Ruben  
Sandoval

F. Marlow Santos  
Born: 10/84 Died: 7/93  
Parents: Fred & Julie Gillette

Shaulamit Rose Scher-Gilfert  
Born: 12/08 Died: 12/08  
Mother: Aliza Scher  
Grandmother: Adrienne Scher

Karen Ailegra Scholl  
Born: 8/64 Died: 4/99  
Mother: Kay Scholl

Matt Scholl  
Born: 2/73 Died: 4/08  
Parents: Bill & Kay Scholl

Candace Arond Schonberg  
Born: 3/98 Died: 11/00  
Parents: Andrene & Arond  
Schonberg

Jonathan "Jamie" Schubert  
Born: 7/65 Died: 12/06  
Parents: Lynn & Roy Schubert

Melissa Lauren Schweisberger  
Born: 10/84 Died: 11/99  
Parents: John & Margarita  
Schweisberger

Dylan Elwood Sievers  
Born: 8/08 Died: 8/08  
Parents Daren & Marne  
Sievers

Tyson Donald Sievers  
Born: 8/08 Died: 9/08  
Parents: Darren & Marne  
Sievers

Gerald Slater  
Born: 2/71 Died: 8/94  
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Jeff Eric Snowden  
Born: 2/61 Died: 6/01  
Parents: Daryle & Sandra  
Snowden

Larry A. Stauffer  
Born: 1/67 Died: 5/08  
Mother: Shirley Finnin

Miaamor Jennine Steeh  
Born: 7/05 Died: 9/10  
Father: Donya Steen

Daniel John Swiggum  
Born: 6/88 Died: 7/08  
Parents: Stewart & Marian  
Swiggum

Elizabeth D. Szuccs  
Born: 4/72 Died: 6/11  
Mother: Dolores C. Szuccs

Joseph Tauaefa  
Born: 2/85 Died: 7/10  
Parents: Loi & Sioka Tauaefa

Kristi Nicole Taylor  
Born: 5/80 Died: 9/94  
Parents: Kathy & Cory Taylor

John Teresinski  
Born: 12/67 Died: 1/00  
Parents: Beverly & Victor  
Teresinski

Ryan William Thomas  
Born: 2/82 Died: 4/04  
Mother: Linda Thomas

Laura C. Toomey  
Born: 1/69 Died: 12/78  
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth  
Toomey

Michael D. Toomey  
Born: 4/62 Died: 2/05  
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth  
Toomey

Nathan Torbert  
Born: 1/78 Died: 12/05  
Mother: Rebecca Williams

David Torres  
Born: 6/66 Died: 3/06  
Mother: Joyce Whirry

Marcelo Torres  
Born: 8/81 Died: 9/03  
Parents: Jaime & Carmen  
Torres

Brian Gregory Trotter  
Born: 10/78 Died: 8/94  
Mother: Abby Trotter-Herft

Ubong Jabari Uko  
Born: 2/81 Died: 5/09  
Mother: Denise Dues

Mark T. Vasquez  
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/11  
Parents: Manuel & Blanca  
Vasquez

Gregory Earl Veal  
Born: 2/90 Died: 7/00  
Mother: Virginia Veal

**Our Children Remembered**

Tommy Villanueva  
Born: 10/68 Died: 5/02  
Parents: Jennie & Edgar Villanueva

Eric Douglas Vines  
Born: 7/77 Died: 7/91  
Parents: Doug & Lynn Vines

Mark Daniel Vinson  
Born: 11/78 Died: 7/10  
Mother: Virginia Vinson

Serena Yasmeen C. Viveros  
Born: 11/05 Died: 11/05  
Mother: Brenda Viveros

Chris Henry Vogeler  
Born: 9/66 Died: 12/04  
Parents: Frank & Lois Fisher

Marisa Ann Vuoso  
Born: 7/83 Died: 3/93  
Parents: Debbie & Marco Vuoso

Kristopher Wadman  
Born: 11/82 Died: 10/00  
Parents: Michael & Melodie Wadman

Carl Alan Wagenknecht  
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/04  
Parents: Tom & Janis Wagenknecht

Jeffrey Sinclair Wagstaff  
Born: 9/80 Died: 4/99  
Parents: Johnny & Barbara Walker  
Sister: Sheimekia Wagstaff

Cory Dylan Walker  
Born: 8/76 Died: 3/01  
Parents: Jim and Susan Walker

Eric Webb  
Born: 6/85 Died: 10/07  
Parents: Jim & Vickie Webb

Dennis William Webber  
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/05  
Parent: Blaine & Sin Young Webber

Sharon Ann Wendt  
Born: 6/54 Died: 4/99  
Parents: Mr. & Mrs. Carmel Doucet

Brian Scott West  
Born: 8/70 Died: 4/08  
Parents: David & Connie Schlottman

Andreas Wickstrom  
Born: 12/83 Died: 12/01  
Parents: John & Inge Wickstrom

Victoria Winchester  
Born: 2/57 Died: 2/84  
Mother: Erin Adams

Jennifer Winkelspecht  
Born: 7/75 Died: 8/95  
Parents: Brian & Lisa Winkelspecht

Jordan Michael Witte  
Born: 1/87 Died: 11/08  
Parents: Licha & Mike Witte

Bob Woodyard  
Born: 7/55 Died: 10/08  
Bill & Barb Woodyard

Amy Woolington  
Born: 10/85 Died: 1/07  
Parents: Pam Weiss & John Woolington

Christopher Wootton  
Born: 11/86 Died: 5/08  
Father: Jim Wootton

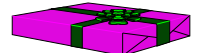
Cristofur Daye Wroten-Kennedy  
Born: 2/75 Died: 9/01  
Mother: Dusty Wroten  
Father: Joe Kennedy

Steve R. Young  
Born: 7/57 Died: 2/90  
Mother: Marjorie S. Young

Whitney Marie Young  
Born: 8/87 Died: 11/06  
Parents: Marlene & Steve Young

Thomas Zachary  
Born: 12/85 Died: 7/11  
Father: Bob McGaha

Kevin Zelik  
Born: 11/85 Died: 6/10  
Parents: Joe & Linda Zelik

**Birthday Tributes...**

In honor of your child's birthday, we welcome you to submit a birthday tribute. Though your child is no longer here to buy a present for, think of this as a birthday present about your child. This tribute is an opportunity to share your child with us all. (We thank you for any birthday donations that help offset chapter expenses.)

**A Birthday Tribute to:  
Kevin Zelik  
Nov. 1985 - June 2010**

We miss you so much big guy. You were such an amazing young man and touched so many with your kindness and compassion. We hope you are doing all the things in heaven that you loved doing while you were here. The world is a better place because you lived in it.

Love, Mom and Dad


**A Birthday Tribute to:  
Larry "Weasel" Brennan  
Nov. 1986 - Dec. 2010**

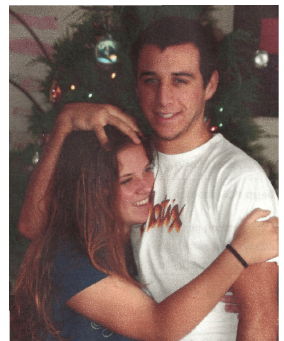
Dear Butthead,

You would have been 25 years old this month...an old man!! We would have been drinking mom's sweet tea, and eating her fried chicken, mashed potatoes, and delicious gravy that you would have hogged and eaten ALL of...fatty! Mom would have made your favorite chocolate cake with chocolate frosting because of course, you can't like the same cake as me. I miss you every day and you are always on my mind. Half the time it's because only you would understand a funny moment and laugh with me; the other half is because I need you to beat up some jerk for me...I know you are looking down marking down every guy you are going to need to talk to eventually :] I love you and happy "birfday" (you know I had to say it) Wawwy.

Love, Sister girl (sis nasty)

PS...Larry, your sister's B-day note above made me laugh and cry. I think she summed up things very well, especially the "birfday" part...always making fun of "ma's" southern roots!! All I want to add is that you are missed so darn much! WE ALL LOVE you so much and of course the MOSTEST!!!!

Happy Birthday Booger Butt,  
Happy "birfday," Big Daddy & Mom



## For Siblings ...



### Not The Same

He was a very nice man, like so many others, and yet he was so different. His quick smile and gentle ways were like those of others and yet, he was so uncommon. He was kind and loving with unshakable faith like others, and yet he was so unique. He was a dutiful soldier who gave his life like many others, and yet he was so special. The same as others? No. Not to those who knew him. He was himself, an individual, and he was my brother.

--Pamela Miller Farrell TCF, Evansville, IL

### I'm Missing You

I'm missing you-- All day, every day.  
On a bright summer morning, or  
When the moon is full  
In the golden days of fall,  
As the storm clouds build, and it's snowing,  
When the willows begin to turn green--  
You are always with me,  
In my mind and in my heart.  
My brother, my good friend,  
I'm missing you.

--Kris Cunningham TCF, Moro, IL

## For Grandparents...



Once I saw a grown man cry.  
"Now there goes a man with feeling," said I.  
He was strong, able, quite well built,  
With muscles, gray hair and charm to the hilt.  
I moved toward him slowly and said,  
"What's wrong?"  
The look he gave me was tear-filled and long.  
"I cry for a child. My grandchild has died."  
So I sat beside him and two grown men cried.  
--Author unknown from "For Bereaved Grandparents" by Margaret H. Gerner, a Centering Corporation Resource St. Louis, MO

## From Our Members ...

### "Oh My Little Ones"



You bring me joy, oh my little ones,  
I see your smile when clouds are near  
I hear your laugh oh so clear to me  
I'll hold your hand don't be afraid  
We watched you grow each and every day  
Sharing your love along the way  
You touch our hearts, oh my little ones,

Being here was oh so grand  
We strolled along the shore,  
Throwing pebbles in the sand  
We ran and played for hours  
Catching dreams are the memories we have  
The time is now to say good-bye  
We love you, so please hold tight  
We'll miss you, oh my little ones,  
Please take care of each other tonight  
--© Words and music by Richard Leach,  
Proud grandfather of Vanessa Roseann  
Castania 2/24/97 - 7/02/05 and Frank  
Christopher Castania 8/07/94 - 7/02/05  
TCF South Bay/L.A., CA

We welcome and encourage you to submit contributions you found meaningful to you in your grief. We prefer your original poems and thoughts, but we can also print other material if proper credit is given to the author. Please take the time to submit a poem or article you found helpful.

**TCF 2012 National and International Conference...** The Compassionate Friends/USA, is pleased to announce that, in conjunction with the 35th National Conference, it will also be hosting The Compassionate Friends 5th International Gathering. The combined conference will be held July 20-22, 2012 in beautiful Costa Mesa, California.

Because many people will be traveling long distances from countries around the world, special excursions are being planned for before and after the conference, so everyone is invited to combine their stay with visits to some of California's great attractions.

The conference, will be held at the Hilton Orange County Costa Mesa Hotel. TCF will have a block of rooms available at \$129 USD for up to four occupants (King bed or double beds). Reservations for the hotel and registration for the conference cannot be made now, but will begin online earlier than normal for TCF conferences.

**We Need Your Help...** The 2012 Conference Planning Committee has started planing for next years conference. Our chapter is in charge of the Volunteer desk, and the Hospitality and Reflection Rooms.

Because it will be held so close to home, we strongly recommend that you start making plans now to attend. We will let you know when registrations can be made for the conference. Right now, we are looking for people to sign up to volunteer at the conference. There are many jobs, both big and small that need to be done. Could you sit at a table and answer questions? Restock refreshments in the Hospitality Room?

Help put together a video of children's pictures? Can we count on you to help?

We would love to include as many members of our chapter as we can to help the conference be a huge success. This is a rewarding undertaking that we can do to honor our children and to help the newly bereaved... Please help us make this one of the best conferences TCF has ever had. Please call Kitty Edler at (310) 541-8221 or E-mail her at [KittyEdler@aol.com](mailto:KittyEdler@aol.com) for more information.

**TCF Now on Facebook ...** Please visit and help promote The Compassionate Friends National Organization's new Facebook page by becoming a fan. You can get there by clicking on the link from TCF's national website home page at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org). Or, you can log into Facebook and search for The Compassionate Friends/USA. In addition to the social support aspect, The Compassionate Friends/USA Facebook page will have information about upcoming events such as conferences, the Walk to Remember, and the Worldwide Candle Lighting. Please visit often and contribute to the conversation.

**Our Website...** We are now posting a tribute page for each of our children. Please visit the new site and add your child's information. You can also download the monthly newsletter which will help defray chapter expenses of the printing and mailing of your newsletter. (Please let us know if you can be removed from the regular mailing list.) Contact Crystal at: [crystal@tcfsbla.org](mailto:crystal@tcfsbla.org) and she will help you with the steps to create your own tribute.

**The National Office of TCF has an ongoing support group** for parents and siblings online. For a complete schedule and to register for Online Support, visit <http://compassionatefriends.org> and follow the directions to register.

**Healing the Grieving Heart...** Featuring experts who discuss the many aspects of grief, with a main focus on the death of a child and its effects on the family. "Healing the Grieving Heart" can be heard on the Web live at [www.health.voiceamerica.com](http://www.health.voiceamerica.com) every Thursday at noon EST and are also archived on the TCF national website. Shows are also broadcast at 11 a.m. EST Sundays on a number of radio stations across the country and streamed online simultaneously at [www.HealthRadioNetwork.com](http://www.HealthRadioNetwork.com)

**Welcome New Members ...** We welcome our new members to our chapter of TCF. We're sorry you have a need to be with us, but we hope you feel you have found a safe place to share your grief and will return. It often takes a few meetings to feel at ease in a group setting. Please try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is for you. Each meeting is different, and the next one might be the one that really helps.

We encourage you to take advantage of our resources. We have a well stocked library of grief materials, a phone friend committee that welcomes calls at any time, and a members' directory to call another parent you have met at the meetings.

**Thank You ...** Thank you to all those who donate to our meeting basket or send donations to our chapter. Since there are no fees or dues to belong to TCF, your donations keep us functioning, and we appreciate your help.



**Birthday Tributes...** During your child's birthday month, you may place a picture and either a short personal message, poem, or story about your child in the newsletter. (Less than 200 words, please.) Do not cut your picture. We will block off unused areas. If it is a group photo, identify the person to be cropped. This tribute is an opportunity to tell a short story about your child, so we will be able to know them better. Photos must have identification on the back. Enclose a SASE in order for photos to be returned by mail. (Please do not send your only picture.)

Tributes must be in by the 1st of the month preceding your child's birthday month or at the prior meeting. (Example: Dec.1 for Jan. birthdays). Otherwise they will appear if space permits or in the following month's issue.

**Phone Friends ...** Sometimes you want or need to talk about the life and death of your child with someone that understands and can share your pain. The following friends are on the telephone committee, and are available to talk when ever you need someone who understands. Cheryl Stephens.....(323) 855-2630  
Kitty Edler.....(310) 541-8221  
Karen Merickel.....(310) 375-2498  
Richard Leach (grandchild).....(310) 833-5213

**SIBLING PHONE FRIENDS**

Kristy Mueller.....(310) 373-9977  
Joey Vines.....(310) 658-4339  
Sue Gardner.....(310) 316-3777



**Memory Book...** Our chapter has an ongoing Memory Book. Each child is given a page in the book. Pictures, poems, or a tribute you choose that will help us to remember your child can be included. Feel free to add your picture to the Memory Book at any of our meetings. This is one way we can meet and remember the new member's children.

**Library Information...** At each meeting we have a library table. It is on the honor system. Many of you have books you got when you were newly bereaved and may no longer need. Perhaps you would like to donate books on grief that you found helpful. If you wish to donate a book to our library, please let the librarian know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

**Newsletter...** For those of you who are receiving the newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us that you might find it helpful. We warmly invite you to attend one of our meetings. Please let us know if you know of someone who could benefit from our newsletter which is sent free to bereaved parents. We do ask that professionals, friends, and family members contribute a donation to help offset the costs involved. If any information needs to be changed, or if you would like your child included in the "Our Children Remembered" section, please contact the editor at (310) 530-3214.

#### **Additional Grief Support .... Bereavement Organizations and Resources:**

**The Compassionate Friends So. Bay/L.A.,CA:** (310) 963-4646. Parent support group & newsletter for bereaved parents and siblings.

**TCF National Newsletter:** For all bereaved parents and siblings. Published quarterly; subscription fee.

Contact TCF Inc., P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696 (630) 990-0010

**TRINITY CARE HOSPICE:** Bereavement Coordinator

Gayle Kirma (310) 257-3567



#### **FAMILY & FRIENDS OF MURDER VICTIMS:**

Rose Madsen, (909) 798-4803 Newsletter and support group, e-mail Roseydoll@aol.com

**ALIVE ALONE:** For parents who have lost their only child, or all their children. 1112 Champaign Dr., Van Wert, OH 45891 Newsletter available. [www.Alivealone.org](http://www.Alivealone.org)

**SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE:** Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Sam & Lois Bloom (310) 377-8857  
**BEREAVEMENT MAGAZINE:** published 9 times a year. Articles for all types of grief.

Subscription fee. Bereavement Publishing, Inc., 4765 Carefree Circle, Colorado Springs, CO 80917

**OUR HOUSE/BEREAVEMENT HOUSE:** 1950 Sawtelle Blvd., Suite 255, L.A., CA General bereavement and bereavement for children. (310) 475-0299

**PATHWAYS HOSPICE:** Bereavement support and sibling group. Bill Hoy (562) 531-3031

**NEW HOPE GRIEF SUPPORT COMMUNITY:** Grief support and education groups for adults and children. Susan K. Beeney, P.O. Box 8057, Long Beach, CA 90808, (562) 429-0075

**THE GATHERING PLACE:** Various support groups including support for loss of a child, support group for children 5-8, 9-12, and teens, (also Spanish). Call Claire Towle (310) 374-6323, Beach Cities Health Dist

#### **LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS**

**Los Angeles:** (310) 474-3407 1st Thurs.

**Orange Coast/Irvine:** (949) 552-2800 1st Wed.

**Orange Co./Anaheim:** (714) 993-6708

**Pomona/San Gabriel:** (626) 919-7206

**Redlands:** (800) 717-0373 3rd Tues.

**Riverside-Inland Empire:** (909) 683-4160

**Ventura Co. TCF:** (805)981-1573 1&3 Thurs.

**Verdugo Hills:** (818) 957-0254 4th Thurs.

**San Fernando Valley:** (818) 788-9701 2nd Mon.



#### **A SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

Post Net Printing for their help in printing our newsletters each month and to Reverend Karl Johnson and the Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

#### **STEERING COMMITTEE OFFICERS:**

CHAPTER LEADER: Cheryl Stephens

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOF READER: Becky Jordan

TREASURER: Ken Konopasek

CARDS & WEBSITE: Crystal Henning

NEW MEMBER FOLLOW-UP: Laurie Gray

# DONATIONS TO THE SOUTH BAY/L.A. CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

In loving memory of Brandon Armstrong and Dominique Oliver ... not a day goes by where I don't think of you or miss you. You two are the guiding force that makes me want to live, not just exist...

Love, Mom

In loving memory of all our children. We hope you will find this Thanksgiving a time to reflect on the friends and family that were present in your lives during your loss. May you find something to smile about as you reflect on past holidays.

With sincere gratitude and deep appreciation, we acknowledge the generosity of the previous individuals and companies. Your tax deductible donation, given, in memory of your loved one enables us to reach bereaved parents with telephone calls and information, and they also help defray newsletter and mailing costs. Please help us reach out to others in this difficult time. Indicate any special tribute you wish printed in our newsletter.

When making a donation, please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. Chpt.

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends So Bay/ L.A. Chapter  
P.O. Box 11171  
Torrance, CA 90510-1171

In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date \_\_\_\_\_ Death date \_\_\_\_\_ Sent from \_\_\_\_\_

Tribute \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

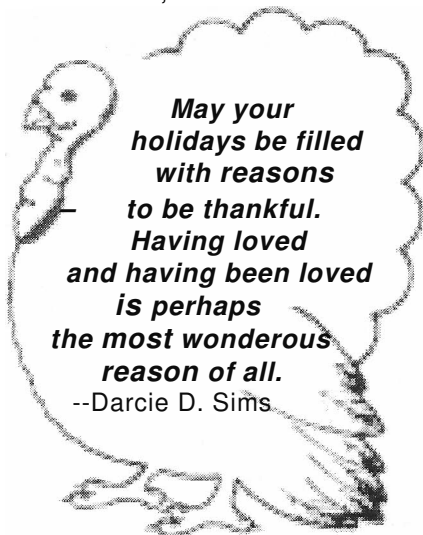
To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month, or it will appear in the following issue.

The Compassionate Friends  
South Bay/L.A., CA Chapter  
P.O. Box 11171  
Torrance, CA 90510-1171

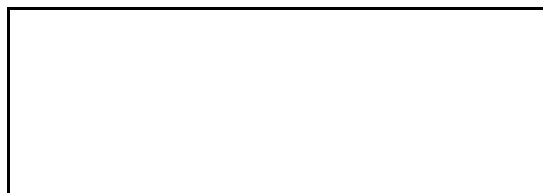
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--Change of Service Requested--



## NOVEMBER 2011

Time Sensitive Material, Please Deliver Promptly



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

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

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

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.  
We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.

We are young, and we are old.

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

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

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

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

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a  
future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy,  
share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts,  
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.  
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