



The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

TCF's National Office
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www.compassionatefriends.org

F-M Area Chapter
P.O. Box 10686
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www.tcffargomoorhead.org
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The F-M Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
127 2ND AVE E
WEST FARGO, ND

Please enter on the West side. Our meeting is in the Fellowship Hall - lower level, west side.

Upcoming Meetings

August 13th
September 10th

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on August 27th @ Fry'n Pan
TCF FM Chapter's 9th Annual Walk to Remember - August 8, 2015
TCF Regional Conference - Rochester, MN October 2-4, 2015

LOVE GIFTS

Pat & Denny Wateland in memory of their daughter, Tracy Ann Wateland

Richard & Clare Elless in memory of their daughter, Tari Elless Heller
Grace Wolf in memory of her son, Justin Jay Wolf

Keith & Sandra Kiser in memory of their son, Cordell A. Kiser

Nancy & Tom Kassman in memory of their son, Kyle Kassman

Jerry & Yvonne Nelson in memory of their son, Kyle Nelson

We are deeply grateful for the LOVE GIFTS given this month.

Our chapter and all chapters, are financed solely through your Love Gifts.

Donations make this newsletter, postage, books, tapes, etc. possible.

Thank you for your tax deductible gifts.

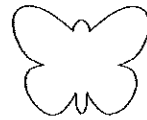


OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain 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. ©2007



Butterfly Decals

Our trailer is beginning to look like a butterfly garden! The trailer was purchased in order to transport materials to our chapter activities but it has also helped make our local chapter better known in the Fargo-Moorhead community. Each butterfly decal holds the first and last name of one of our precious children.

Butterflies are still available in all five colors (yellow, pink, red, blue and green). The cost for 1 butterfly is \$25, 3 butterflies are \$65 and 4 butterflies are \$80. If you wish to purchase more than 4, please contact our chapter leader, John Milligan. Butterfly orders should include the child's name and color of the butterfly. Checks should be made payable to TCF of Fargo-Moorhead and the order mailed to PO Box 10686, Fargo, ND 58106.

You can see pictures of the trailer with butterflies on our website at www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourtrailer.html.

"Some say you're too painful to remember. I say you're too precious to forget."
Our Mom's group has been meeting on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Fry'n Pan Restaurant, 300 Main Avenue, Fargo. Our gatherings are informal as we come together to talk about our children, books that we've read, recipes we've tried, our jobs and whatever else comes up during the course of the evening. We all have times where the listening heart of another mom or grandma is welcome (and necessary). Please join us this month on Thursday August 27th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylc13@msn.com.

GIVING BACK TO FRIENDS WHO HELPED YOU GRIEVE

Grief is isolating. You may become so isolated that you are barely aware of your friends' help. Sure, you remember their phone calls and sympathy cards; but, you may not see the scope of their caring. As I discovered, the support of friends is necessary for grief reconciliations.

On a Friday night in February of 2007, my elder daughter died from the injuries she received in a car crash. On Sunday, just two days later, my father-in-law succumbed to pneumonia. I sobbed when I saw their photos on the same page of the newspaper. Friends saw the photos, read the obituaries, and were ringing the door bell an hour after they received the paper.

Eight weeks later, my brother had a heart attack and died. Again, my friends rallied to help. Nine months after the dual death weekend, my former son-in-law died from the injuries he received in another car crash. His death made our twin grandchildren orphans and my husband and me their legal guardians. Tragedy after tragedy, my friends provided a foundation of support, a foundation strong as steel, and it has never faltered.

According to the article, "Trauma, Loss and Traumatic Grief," posted on The International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Website, survivors need to find a support system. This system may include friends, clergy, or others who have experienced traumatic loss. "It may take some time to identify friends who can be good listeners," the article notes. All of my friends were good listeners, thank goodness.

Judith Viorst writes about the values of friendship in her book, **Necessary Losses**. She thinks close friends contribute to our personal growth. "We will frequently turn – for reassurance, for comfort, for come-and-save me help – not to our blood relations; but, to friends," writes Viorst. With the support of family and friends, I've created a new and happy life. It was time to return their kindness.

I'm giving back by listening. Listening was the greatest gift my friends gave me. More important, they listened without judging. Instead of my friends listening to me, I am now listening to them. I hear stories about family relationships, wedding plans, and grandchildren. These stories remind me of the similarity of our lives.

I'm giving back by speaking. When a church friend called and asked if I would be willing to give a sermon, I agreed. My sermon was about saying "yes" to life after loved ones die. After the service, many church members thanked me for sharing my story. One said, "I wanted to stand up and applaud." Others described the memorials they had established in honor of their deceased loved ones.

I'm giving back by volunteering. When I agreed to serve as secretary of a state organization, my husband was concerned. He didn't think I had time to raise our grandchildren, manage the household, maintain a writing career, and carry out the duties of the office. "I only need to take minutes eight times," I explained. "Besides, they need me." The president was relieved to fill the office and I was glad to help out.

I'm giving back by comforting. Experience with grief has increased my sensitivity. When I meet someone who is grieving, I encourage them to talk about their deceased loved one. Also, I ask their permission to give them a hug. Sending friends copies of my grief books is another way I offer comfort.

Are you emerging from the darkness of grief? If so, maybe it's time to give back. According to certified psychotherapist Derek P. Scott, giving back can be a form of personal growth. In his article, "Understanding and Working with Multiple Loss," Scott says mourners may move from meaninglessness to "a sense of reconnection to the soul's purpose." Giving back has enriched my soul and it can do the same for you.

Harriet Hodgson, From the Open to Hope Foundation

Does the Pain Ever End?

No, I don't think the pain ever ends. I don't even think it gets less. But I DO believe that our capacity to absorb, submerge, manage, and breathe through the pain expands until it lays over our grief like a comforting quilt. Sometimes we lift the corners and peek underneath, and are overwhelmed that the same pain is still there, but we learn that gently putting the quilt back down and resting our hands on it lets us know that we are in control of our grief, not the other way around.

It takes a long, long time.

It takes a lot of very hard work.

But we are the ones to make our grief-covering quilt, and we do it in our own way, on our own time, and in our own pattern.

And the quilt grows bigger with time, too, covering all those "new" things we discover bring us grief...like cleaning out our kid's bedroom, or finding a diary that was hidden in a drawer, or hearing from our child's best friend years later, saying that he or she still misses and thinks about our kid.

May your quilt cover your grief softly today, and may you feel its warmth and weight and know that love made every stitch.

Love and blessings,
~ Vicki W, TCF/Miles City, MT

Death Takes a Back Seat

There was a time, not so long ago, when the only focus I had was on the death of my child. The loss of his life and his absence from the physical plane swept over me like a tsunami. I lived his death every waking moment. The sorrow was devastating, and the waves of pain kept coming and coming, crashing over me, with no end in sight.

Each of us has experienced our grief in a unique way, and each of us has done what is necessary to cope. But at some point in my grief, I began perceiving my son's death as only one moment in his life. I believe that was when I began to find hope.

The shock had worn off; the tsunami of pain had subsided. I began remembering the events and everyday activities with joy instead of sorrow. I remembered his birth, his first steps, his first word, and his development as a toddler and then as a young child. I remembered his first day of school. I remembered the anxiety I felt as he blithely slipped out of the car and walked up that big sidewalk by himself for the first time. "I love you, Mom," he said as he grabbed his lunchbox, crayons and tablet. He looked so cute and confident that day. He knew he was going to learn to read.

I remembered his trips to the barber with my dad, the fun they had together, the first ride in Grandpa's new convertible, the obvious love they shared. I remembered the day my dad cried when Todd asked him, "Grandpa, have you ever loved someone so much that you just want to be a part of them? That's how much I love you." He was six years old, dad was the hardened WWII Marine, and dad's eyes filled with tears as the impact of this tremendous break through my son had given him touched him. Dad was always a gentler, more open man after that innocent statement of emotion by his grandson.

I remembered the many Christmas celebrations, the anticipation that filled Todd's heart each year. The holidays were very special to him.

I remembered our move to Houston when Todd was just 12 years old; he got a paper route, a heavy duty Schwinn bike and he was earning money for his first car. Every Sunday I would drive him on his paper route at about 4:00 am because the papers were too heavy for the bike. Todd would make my coffee and wake me up, and off we would go. Those were special times when it was just Todd and I talking easily about his life, his dreams and the future. I thought about Todd's high school years, his graduation, the promise of the future and the tears in my dad's eyes as he watched the ceremony marking yet another milestone in his special grandson's life. I remembered the birth of Todd's son, the nights we sat talking while he fed his baby, and the discussions about the best way to raise a child. I remember the day he married, the birth of each of his daughters, the deep love and devotion he had for them.

Then I recalled the day when Todd received his MBA from Texas A&M. My dad stood proudly in the aisle watching the ceremony and listening to the Aggie fight song, tears in his eyes as he looked at his grandson, grown-up and ready for life.

I remembered my son's first house—a fixer upper. My husband and I gave him money for the down payment, and he put plenty of sweat equity into it. After his daughters were born, he chose to move to a larger home, selling his first home with no small amount of sadness. For this was where his adult life started. This home had marked his first real step in responsibility and the world of the adult.

All the good times come flooding back now, the memories as vivid as the moments were in time. Yes, there is still sadness, but my heart tells me that I must celebrate the 35 years Todd had on this earth. He lived a good life, laughed, loved and worked hard. He was a lot like his grandpa in that respect.

Now when I tell a story about Todd, there is a returning joy in my heart. And now, each day when I come home from work, I remember how good it was to see him after a stressful day and to reach out and hug my child....whether he was 3 years old or 35 years old. We have a bond, a bond I have felt everyday since his birth. The bond between mother and child does not end at death.

Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF/Katy, TX

COPING WITH MEMORIES

Memories are a bridge between the past and the present. In an abstract, though none the less real sense, you can teach your child, be with him or her, by crossing the bridge. remembering. but herein lies the pain — you have to go back to the past because he or she is not physically present.

The memories that you have of your child. whether of happy or unhappy times. or perhaps of how he or she looked, felt, sounded — all of these are precious. special, and sometimes can be so painful that you want to block them to escape the anguish. This is normal. natural. And yet the loss of your memories would leave a large gap. Perhaps the most difficult to deal with are the sudden, unexpected stabs that can occur at any time. When an association with your child comes out of the blue — perhaps a piece of music or a can of spaghetti in the supermarket — whatever it is that throws you. by to remember to breathe deeply and slow", and it will help. Remembering is important because even when it is painful, healing is taking place.

~ Jenny Kander, TCF/Johannesburg, SA

"Grief is neither a sign of weakness nor a lack of faith.
It's the price we pay for love." ~ Darcie Sims



OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
HALLIE CLARE BJELLAND.....	11.....	ANDY & RHONDA BJELLAND
JOSEPH T BOLGER.....	49.....	LOWELL & PRISCILLA BOLGER
ZACHARY COLE.....	27.....	JERRY & DEB COLE
ASHLEY RAE HAINES.....	27.....	WILLIAM HAINES III
HEIDI HELLAND.....	28.....	JOHN & TERRI HELLAND
TARI L HELLER.....	60.....	RICHARD & CLARE ELLESS
CORDELL ALAN KISER.....	43.....	KEITH & SANDRA KISER
ERIC C LARSON.....	35.....	CRAIG & BARB LARSON
JOSHUAH G NELSON.....	24.....	JOHN & DARCY NELSON
KYLE NELSON.....	21.....	JERRY & YVONNE NELSON
DEREK PETERSEN.....	37.....	DONNA PETERSEN
JAMES KEVIN SKJEFTE.....	43.....	VERNE & DIANE SKJEFTE
BRANDI ROSE IRENE TEEUWEN.....	13.....	JOHN & NANCY TEEUWEN
DANE TVEDT.....	27.....	TOMMY & LEAH TVEDT
MICHELLE WARNECKE.....	48.....	DOUG & JOAN WARNECKE
JUSTIN JAY WOLF.....	38.....	GRACE WOLF

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
TAMERA KAY CHAPUT.....	9.....	GERALD & DELORES BEYERS
CORDELL ALAN KISER.....	3.....	KEITH & SANDRA KISER
MICHAEL LEALLEN KRAIG.....	2.....	JILL KRAIG & BRYAN MOFFET
KENT R NELSON.....	5.....	DEANNA NELSON
MATTHEW ROBERT SAUNDERS.....	10.....	ROBERTS & MARY SAUNDERS
GREGORY SEARS.....	6.....	LORI & JERRY BRADY
.....		PERSYS PIERSALL (Grandmother)
BRANDI ROSE IRENE TEEUWEN.....	13.....	JOHN & NANCY TEEUWEN
SCOTT ANTHONY TOBOLT.....	12.....	JOHN & MARY TOBOLT
AUSTIN WAYNE WAGAR.....	3.....	JAMIE & SCOTT OLSON

The Secret of TCF

The secret of the Compassionate Friends is simple. There is no line between the helper and the being helped. In the early months of people's membership in TCF, it seems that most of the time is spent absorbing ideas, crying, and letting the grief flow, and "learning the ropes" of being a bereaved parent. The next step is reaching out to others and helping them. It is not a big step, for listening to another person sort out his life helps us to sort out our lives, too. But it is an important step because it is the first point at which the movement is reversed. All the energy has been going inward. We had been feeling so empty inside that we kept withdrawing into ourselves. But at the point when we turn around is the point when we first listen to another, speak the words of comfort and hope, share our pain instead of just feeling our pain. At that time, the real healing has begun.

~ Dennis Klass, PH.D., Advisor, TCF/St. Louis, MO

SIBLING PAGE

A GENTLE BREEZE

A gentle breeze descended onto the world, changing the atmosphere. He would flow through the house, around the block, throughout the neighborhood--through my heart. A gentle breeze, he changed many lives. On a hot day, he was a cool breeze, making the worst heat less intense.

He was a gentle breeze; a constant breeze; a breeze that made the lives of those he knew a little bit better. This breeze was a kind one, not one of destruction. A breeze such as this, as good as this, should remain endless.

But one cold night, a different wind came along and overpowered our gentle breeze. This wind was one of destruction, thriving on pain, torment and grief.

The gentle breeze that had captured my heart and soul was fading away, until ... stillness. Nothing moved. Time stood still. Heaviness was now taking the place of my gentle breeze. The new wind raged in me, forcing upon me everything it thrived on. That cold night, my gentle breeze died, leaving me with a tormenting storm of emotions and feelings. A storm that welled up grief and a devastating sense of loss in my heart.

My environment is so hostile, yet so very still. A gentle breeze, such as the one I had grown to love and rely on, comes only once. How I long to feel the gentle breeze again, teasing me with his spontaneity. How I long for the gentle breeze to be there for me on those hot, summer days that seem so heavy and endless. This breeze will always occupy a special place in my memory. The breeze I long for so much is a part of me.

This gentle breeze is my brother, Shannon.

Bereavement Magazine - (888)604-4673 (HOPE)
www.bereavementmag.org - November/December 1989

A Sister's Love

First, there's the fear,
Followed by disbelief.
Then there's the tears,
Followed by the grief,
Could it really be true
That they say she may die?
The pain is so deep seeded
Why her, Father, why?
Time can never change the hurt,
hide the tears, they never dry.
Things can never be the same,
A child should never die.
She did though, on a summer day,
One I won't forget.
I loved that girl, oh, so much,
Now memories are all that's left.
Is it fair to live on without you, girl?
I think that's what you'd like,
The house has an empty feeling,
Your room is dark, day and night.
I won't forget you, don't you fear,
You'll always have a place in my heart
My love for you lives on.
Looking back through
The book of life
YOU are my favorite part!
~Helen Ann Marie Naselli, Rockville Center, NY

Beloved Brother: Losing You is Losing Me

Dearest Justin,
To lose a sibling is to lose oneself,
For a part of me is gone...
And now I'm left to reminisce
As now I try to carry on.
The thought of you not being here
Has torn my world apart...
Yet every day I feel you near;
Is a blessing to my heart.
Your memory comforts me today
In ways I wish you knew...
But tears are falling from the pain
That comes from losing you.
I see your face in the morning sun
And in the moon at night...
I wonder how you're feeling now,
I pray that you're alright.
And one day when my time has come
To soar with eagles' wings...
We will be joined forevermore.
I Love You Forever & Always.
~ Charlie Clakley, TCF/Tyler, TX

BROTHERS

Brothers grow together with wind in their hair, wild schemes in their heads, and with mud in their raggedy pants.
They look back into one another's eyes, with spirits burning from a common flame. They wrestle life with such similar hands.
No tree is too tall or hill too high to climb, for those whose bonds are flesh and set together through time.
Yet the song ever told us that dragons live forever but not the little boys.
Suddenly one of us is all alone, clinging to the memories of wind and mud and hills of stone.
We're still together in our own way, if not but in a burning little flame.
~ Ken, TCF/Salem, OR

TO THOSE WHO DON'T KNOW

If you could imagine the loneliest moment in your entire life, remember exactly how your body felt in that moment, empty those feelings into an expanding pill and swallow it, then you could begin to imagine what it feels to live through loss.
I would have one hand in happiness...the memories we made together, and one hand in isolation...the world without my brother. I constantly push and pull in an attempt to firmly remember yet triumphantly live a positive life.
~ Scott Mastley, for his brother Chris, TCF/Atlanta, GA

Alone in the
Night sky,
God bless that child,
Every one loved him, I will
Love you too, Nathan, forever.

In memory of my brother,
Nathan Moyer Schewe
~ Written by Madeline Schewe, age 8

Am I Healing?

Am I healing? I'm able to gaze at her photograph without that tourniquet tightening around my throat, clamping memory...

I'm beginning to see her in her life, and not only myself bereft of her life...

Piece by piece, I re-enter the world. A new phase. A new body, a new voice. Birds console me by flying, trees by growing, dogs by the warm patch they leave behind on the sofa. Unknown people merely by performing their motions. It's like a slow recovery from a sickness, this recovery of one's self...

Toby Talbot, TCF/Volusia/Flagler, FL

AFTER THE FIRST YEAR

After the first year,

The pain changes from a crushing weight,
to a wickedly cutting edge.

Time speeds up from grinding plodding
to a more normal routine.

And sometimes you can forget
(for a moment)

that your whole life was destroyed
Just last year.

After the first year,

You start to remember the good times.
You can tell a funny story about your child,
and save crying for later.

But sometimes it seems like you're the only
one left who mourns.

"What's the matter with you, anyway?"
"It's been a whole year."

After the first year,

Your child seems a little closer and yet so
far away.

Miracle of miracles, you haven't forgotten
how he walks, his voice, the shape of his
head, or the warmth of his hand in yours.

Those memories ambush you at many
unlikely moments, and tear you apart.

After the first year,

Your heart begins to thaw. You remember
that you once loved your surviving children
and you love them again. You remember
that life used to hold joy, and you
rediscover some small enjoyment in living.

After the first year,

You pick up your burdens and go on.
Amazingly, you have survived a blow more
painful than anything you ever imagined.
Even though you sometimes wish you could
have died, too.

It slowly dawns on you that you must still
live, because after the first year,
comes the second year.

-- Liz Ford, TCF/Madison, WI

Adjustments

Went to the field with a heart heavy as stone,
I have lost my riding partner so I just rode all alone.
But watched the group she rode with, they had fun,
It reminded me of the past and her place in the sun.
Tried to draw picture of children as I have for years,
But have lost my oldest subject to sadness and tears.
We have removed things that cause pain and grief,
And we don't go out in public, to parties for relief.
Vacations are a safe place and the same safe place,
Old friends have not been replaced with a new face.
We only have our family as our friends these days,
Death has caused lives to change in untested ways.
The future I am told will not be so dark and black,
But things are altered forever, we can never go back.

Jere Williamson, TCF/Nashville, TN

Circle

How do you bear it all?

The cry came from a mother

Whose son had died only weeks before.

We were in a circle, looking at her,

Looking around, looking away,

Tears in our hearts, in our eyes.

How do we bear it?

I don't know,

But the circle helps.

~ Eva Lager, TCF/Western Australia

To Honor You

To honor you, I get up every day and take a breath
And start another day without you in it.

To honor you, I laugh and love with those who knew your smile
And the way your eyes twinkled with mischief and secret
knowledge.

To honor you, I listen to music you would have like,
And sing at the top of my lungs, with the windows rolled down.
To honor you, I take chances, say what I feel, hold nothing
back,

Risk making a fool of myself, dance every dance.
You were my light, my heart, my gift of love from the very
highest source.

So every day, I vow to make a difference, share a smile, live,
laugh and love.

Now I live for us both, so all I do, I do to honor you.

~ Connie F Kiefer Byrd, In loving Memory of Jordan
Alexander Kiefer

Lovingly lifted from the St Paul, MN Chapter Newsletter

BUTTERFLY

Butterfly flutter by.

Butterfly hear me cry.

Butterfly hear me sigh.

Butterfly say good-bye.

Good-bye,

Butterfly.

Goodbye.

~ Katrina Krauss, TCF/Anne Arundel Cty, MD

We must have your written permission on file to use your child's name in the newsletter. Permission may be withdrawn at any time by written request. This information is used to maintain our Chapter Database. It is confidential and is only utilized for Chapter activities such as the newsletter.

Your Name: _____

Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____

Date: _____

(Signature)

Please return to: The Compassionate Friends of F-M Area, P.O. Box 10686, Fargo ND 58106
(Please note that if you have already submitted a permission slip, you do not need to submit another one)

Please check out our Chapter website's page for 'Our Beloved Children' (www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourchildren.html). If you would like your child's picture and a poem or story posted on this page, please submit them to us at tcf1313@hotmail.com or mail them to our PO Box (listed on the back of the newsletter). Photos and poems/stories sent to the PO Box will be electronically scanned and then returned to you so please remember to include a return address.

HOPE...

I saw a husband and wife last night, standing close to one another to better see and to show the pictures of their son. The pictures were in a little flip folder which had a hard paper cover and was a little bent around the edges. They must have shown these pictures many, many times. Their son, such a nice looking boy, was about 18. I watch how the husband put the picture folder away in this pocket. It must have been in and out of there many, many times. Still he handled it so gently, so tenderly, almost with reverence. Their son was dead.

They were attending their first meeting of HOPE, acronym for Helping Other Parents Endure, a chapter of The Compassionate Friends. It's a place where they could mention their son. Other fathers with boys 18 can laugh about their sons latest hijinks and grin knowingly. But what does a man say about his son who is dead? or a daughter.

And what does a mother talk about? What does a mother do with the mementos of her child that remind her of the funny tender stuff of childhood? The time he or she was not yet two and dressed for church and found the only muddy place out front. The trophy won by mistake. The homely TV lamp they bought thinking how much I would love it. And there it sits in the closet. And it will never go to Goodwill. And there will never be another. And we will never sit and laugh together over stories of "when you were little."

The one thing about The Compassionate Friends is that the mention of your child's name won't cause an awkward gap. You know, the kind that makes you feel somehow you shouldn't have said anything. How can anyone else know that your child is still real? That they were real and are real? I want to scream sometimes that my boys are real? See, he's here in my heart. Oh, and when I stopped at a traffic light today, there was boy in a car next to me who put his hand to chin, just like my son did. It was amazing - that gesture, that hand - just like my son's.

The little one is not so clear in my mind anymore, but he's real. How many children do I have? Three. My daughter is married and living in New York. And the boys? Well, one will always be four and a half. I heard him laugh the other day in the giggles of some preschoolers. And my oldest son? I told you he got his black belt, didn't I? And that he made sergeant? And that I saw him this morning in the gesture of a boy waiting at a traffic light?

~ LaVergne Dunn, TCF/Ottuma, IA

THE LITTLE THINGS

Often even the simple tasks of daily living seem to drain every ounce of one's energy. Remember going to the grocery store even months after your child's death and the feelings you had as you passed up his or her favorite cereal? Or watching another child (the same age as yours was) in a restaurant and trying to swallow your food...you probably didn't even taste it. Or hearing a certain song in public and fighting back the tears?

Sometimes even getting through the day in your own home makes you feel like you've run a marathon and leaves you in worse shape. You probably never dreamed that doing the family laundry could make you cry or that getting a piece of mail in your child's name could suck your breath away.

Even the best of friends and families can't know the strength you must summon day after day. We shouldn't expect them to understand completely, but it does get lonely. Perhaps this quote puts it into a nutshell:

*One sad thing about this world is that
the acts that take the most out of you are
usually the ones that other people will
never know about.*

~ Anne Tyler, TCF/Sacramento Valley, CA

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
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 FARGO ND 58106

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**The
 Compassionate
 Friends**
Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

MISSION STATEMENT: When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

A SINCERE WELCOME TO ALL COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS...We are a nonprofit self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. We offer group support, understanding and friendship. Our purpose is to promote and aid parents and siblings in the positive resolution of the grief they are experiencing and to foster physical and emotional health. If you have questions or wish to talk directly to a member of the Fargo-Moorhead Compassionate Friends, please call any of the numbers listed.

FARGO-MOORHEAD COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS BOARD

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE BOARD AT ANY TIME!

Chapter Leader	John Milligan..... 701-491-0364	Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen 701-730-0805
Meeting Facilitator	Paul & Kara Bailey..... 701-261-0668	Newsletter Database	Mike Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Secretary	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287	Website Administrator	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287
Treasurer	Chuck Klinkhammer 701-298-2929	Newsletter Printing	Joyce at Olivet Lutheran Church
Initial Contact	Jamie Olson 701-219-3865	Mailing Committee	Contact Us to Join
Librarian	Contact Us to Volunteer		

LIBRARY INFORMATION: We have an extensive library available. Please feel free to check materials at our next meeting.

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

HAVING A BAD DAY OR NIGHT? Feel free to call and talk to any of the following:
 John Milligan (son, 25 - car accident) 701-491-0364
 Lois Gangnes (son, 24 - accident) 701-282-4083
 Nancy Teeuwen (daughter, 15 hours - illness) 701-730-0805
 Mark & Hella Helfter (miscarriage & son, 35 - accident) 701-235-9622

Love gifts must be received by the 15th to be included in the next month's newsletter. If you wish to give a love gift please complete:

Love gift given in Memory/Honor of _____
 Name _____
 Address _____
 Relationship _____ Born _____ Died _____

NOTE: By giving a love gift, you are giving us permission to include your child(ren) in our monthly birthdays and anniversaries.