



The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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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
February 11th
March 10th

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on February 25th
@ Fry'n Pan
TCF National Conference -
Scottsdale, AZ July 8-10, 2016

LOVE GIFTS

Suzie & Jim Hill in memory of their son, Jon Poitra
Lois & Larry Gangnes in memory of their son, Brent M. Gangnes
Brenda Kluth in memory of her son, Brandon Kluth

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.

What I Need

A lot of time!
A little space,
A kind of quiet
Resting place,
Are what I need
At times like these
A special spot
Where I can grieve.

~ Beth Pinion, TCF/Andalusia, AL

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

"When our special sadness comes to call, when we remember more than we can bear, when courage falters -- shadows everywhere: Then let us reach and touch and share, we, who are friends." ~ Sascha Wagner

Our Mom's group generally meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Fryn' Pan restaurant, 300 Main Avenue, Fargo. Our gatherings are very informal as we meet to talk about our children, books, recipes, jobs and whatever else comes up in conversation. We all have times when we need the listening heart of another mom or grandma. Please join us this month on Thursday February 25th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylc13@msn.com.

IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER

We can't see you here,
We can't talk to you here,
But we can see and talk to you
In our hearts forever.
We can't touch you here,
We can't kiss you here,
But we can touch and kiss you
In our hearts forever.

We will have aching hearts forever and ever,
We will have pain and grief for all tomorrows,
But we will always love you
In our hearts forever.

~ Marlene Kimmel Leff, TCF/Villanova, PA

DEATH OF A DREAM

My baby is gone, and no one understands my sorrow. They said: "You were only seven weeks pregnant."

They didn't know I had already named the baby....Rachel for a girl, Joshua for a boy. They didn't know my twelve year old son had already promised to take care of that baby every day, and was considering even changing diapers. They didn't know my nine year old had been asking for a brother or sister for six years. They just didn't know all my hopes and dreams for this baby.

They said: "Don't worry....you'll get pregnant again." They didn't know it had taken six years to conceive this child. They didn't know this was a very special baby, conceived under a Christmas tree, with the man I love. This was a baby I wanted...not just any baby. I don't know if I will ever have the courage to try again.

They said: "You are young. Only thirty-two. You have many years yet to have a child. They didn't know my mother started menopause at thirty-six. Or that two of my aunts had hysterectomies for cancer, one at twenty-four and the other at thirty-six. Or that my cousin is at stage two with cervical cancer. Even now the clock is running out on me.

They said: "Miscarriages happen...nothing to worry about." They didn't know this was my fifth miscarriage, one a set of twins. They didn't know how losing my baby pulls my emotions inside out and leaves me feeling raw and tender. They didn't understand my fear that I will never have another baby.

They said that I was silly to cry. They didn't understand my grief. It was not a lump of flesh, it was my baby. They didn't understand the joy I felt, or the loss, or the emptiness I feel. They said: "These things happen for a reason. The baby probably hadn't formed properly." They said I should be grateful.

They can't understand the anger I feel....towards women trying desperately to rid themselves of unwanted babies, and towards the happy women awaiting the birth of their babies. They didn't understand my anger at my own body, for rejecting my baby and destroying my dream.

They said: "You already have two healthy children, consider yourself lucky." I am fortunate. Many women will never be able to have a child of their own. But it doesn't lessen my sorrow. My baby is gone and I am sad. Why won't they let me grieve?

~ Linda Young, *The Complete Mother* / Spring 1987 ;
Lovingly lifted from TCF Philippines Chapter web site

Last Moments

Last moments
Snatches of conversation
That echo across all decades...
Priceless words
Indelibly etched on the heart.
Sometimes
Thoughts were never spoken
But unexpected sentiment—
A quick embrace, a silly smirk,
Or joyous laughter—
Reaches through the pain
And warms the heart.
We came too soon to understand
The folly of harsh words
Or neglected touch,
For who can know which
Taken-for-granted event
Will become
A last moment.

~ Diane Fields, TCF/Westmoreland, PA

Valentine's Day 2012

This day
set aside
to celebrate love.
Just another time
to feel the loss
the emptiness
every day
you being gone.
The hollow place
that is now.
A part of me
an inner scar
crafted
by the death of
my child.

~ Melissa Anne Schroeter, TCF/Rockland County, NY
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HEALING VERSUS RECOVERY

I have heard the terms "recovery" and "healing" used interchangeably to refer to the goal of processing grief. I would like to propose the idea that recovery carries with it the assumption of an injury or illness and that when the necessary repair has taken place, the person will return basically to the same person he was previous to the injury or illness.

When a child dies, there is, indeed, an injury of massive proportions. All systems--physical, mental, and spiritual--are affected. There is physical pain, emotional retching, spiritual upheaval, and struggling. All this may be occurring simultaneously. Though there may not be bleeding in the physical sense, there is emotional hemorrhaging. The body and psyche are in crisis. Bereaved parents are often unable to eat; they may experience sleep disturbances and disorientation. Believe it or not, all these reactions are normal. Grief is a normal part of life. This is not a mental illness or some chemical imbalance of the brain. What is not normal is to experience the death of a child.

The major difference between recovery and healing is that the goal is not to return to who we were before our child died. That goal is impossible to achieve. To continue to try to achieve a goal of recovery is to assume that life will be basically the same with a few minor adjustments. We'll set one less place at the table, buy less food, feel sad on holidays, cry a bit more. Our lives have been permanently and irrevocably changed. Part of the healing process is accepting that not only has our life changed, but that we are, in fact, becoming different people. The becoming is the healing.

During this process, we examine every facet of our lives and our belief systems. This is a journey, not a "repair." By living through this journey, we become different people. True, we may basically look the same, but we are not the same as before our child died. We look at life in a new way. Our interests change and our priorities change. We will never look at a child the same again. We have a new and deeper level of understanding and compassion for those experiencing pain--all kinds of pain. We have a different understanding of spirituality. We ourselves feel new and different. We carry some of the old person with us through the healing process, but we emerge different. We are healed, not recovered.

~ Bridie Tracy, TCF/Shoreline Chapter, CT

SYMBOLS

We are fast approaching Valentine's Day, filled with symbols of love ... hearts and roses. As a young schoolgirl, I can remember wishing I would get a valentine from someone special. My friends and I would count how many valentines we had received, feeling certain that the more you received, the more it indicated your popularity.

As I grew older, I was thrilled when I received flowers from that special someone. Surely this was, true love. As a married woman, Valentine's Day was always special. Glen and I usually went out to dinner, and I often received flowers or a special gift that said, I love you! While those gifts were much appreciated, I would be hard pressed now to tell you what we did or what I received.

However, one Valentine's Day will stay frozen in my memory forever, February 14, 1983. Glen took my arm and steadied me as I walked into a mortuary to view the body of our 17 year old son Nathan, who had been killed by a drunken driver on February 10. We had ordered a spray of seventeen red roses to be placed on his casket. When I ordered those flowers, I was stunned to discover how high priced roses are on Valentine's Day! At first, I had decided I would be content with carnations. Then the florist saw in my eyes how much I wanted my last gift to my son to be the very best...red, long stemmed roses. The florist promised she would provide us with roses, regardless of how little we could afford to pay.

That afternoon, I drank in every detail of my boy, his hair, the bruise on his face, the National Honor Society pin on his lapel, those wonderful, strong hands. Then I pulled myself together for a very special appointment. I was the Academic Counselor at Nathan's high school, and we had arranged a special viewing for the students prior to the general visitation. I watched as young girls brought beautiful bouquets of red roses they had received from their boyfriends, but now they were placing them below our son's casket. Their final act of love for a very dear friend.

It has taken me a long time to be able to actually celebrate Valentine's Day in a normal fashion. In fact, I guess I never will be able to do that. Valentine's Day is no longer a superficial type of holiday where I just send cards or give candy or flowers without much deliberation beforehand. The symbols are still there; I just see them differently now: THE HEART: Broken, bruised, and bandaged, but not defeated.

And now, there's one more symbol:

The HAND: As we offer our hands to each other in friendship, in understanding, in strength, we are saying: WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE, WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS!

May your Valentine's Day be filled with roses that will encourage your broken heart and give you strength to offer a helping hand to others who are grieving.

~Marilyn Heavilin, TCF/Redlands, CA
In Memory of my son, Nathan

Shards of Grief Linger after Murder

On a dreary night in December, a knock came at our door with news that would forever alter our lives. The news was that Anne, our only daughter, had been kidnapped and brutally murdered by persons or a person unknown. The shock, disbelief, anguish and anxieties over the next several months, a small piece of the grieving process, were extraordinary, and I have often wondered how we survived.

There was the extreme rage at the person who was responsible for taking Anne's life for no reason except for the pure pleasure of destroying good. But we survived.

There was the awful anger against the legal system for being so callous and insensitive to the needs of the family and friends. The wounds from Anne's death were already deep and unhealing, but listening to and reading about the insinuations and innuendoes by the lawyers made the wounds grow deeper and deeper. The impression was given the family must endure punishment for allowing our daughter to be in the wrong place. This caused a feeling of guilt. But we survived.

There was the fear that Anne would become just another statistic, and the person responsible would go unpunished. Now the fear exists that the person will be released from prison to repeat his acts of violence. I am afraid that fears are addictive and one replaces another. Perhaps the worst fear is, when your faith in God is at its lowest ebb, that you will never be able to respond to normal stimuli again and regain all that faith. All the fears are real; but so far we have survived.

These, I suppose, are normal reactions as the result of a violent act. I believe these anxieties delay a normal (so-called) grieving period until after the culprit has been found, tried and sentenced. After these three things happened, I do know a terrible burden was lifted from our shoulders and we could restart living our lives. Somehow we survived.

How did we survive? After much reflecting, I firmly believe we survived by recalling the positive aspects of Anne's life and character. Each individual is endowed with certain instruments, and we hear the music of their lives long after they are gone.

Anne's instrument of love of life was a blessing, and we still can hear the melodies of her song in the night. These melodies cannot be taken away, and they are more valuable than diamonds to us.

Anne's instrument of hope for a future in which to achieve her goals and have some effect on society was the backbone of her dream. The songs of hope in work, in life and the goodness of heart cannot be destroyed by evil or circumstances. Today is gone, but we still hear the songs of hope for tomorrow. These songs of hope, heard in the night, sustain us.

Anne's instrument of faith that she would lead a productive life and achieve both her spiritual and material goals was music in her heart. The faith she had in herself, her family and her friends transmits to us, urging us to proceed with our lives. The music of her faith is still a beacon in the night.

We will not believe Anne's dreams have ended, but we believe they will find their place in the world to come. The music that was set in motion by her love, hope and faith will move, everlasting, in sweet memories forever. The wounds from the loss of a loved one cannot be healed by words or deeds. These terrible burdens are borne by each of us in our own way and, hopefully, we survive.

~ Bill Boggs, TCF/Atlanta, GA
In memory of Anne

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED *BIRTHDAYS*

CHILD		PARENTS
BRIAN BJERKEN	44	DENNIS & SHIRLEY BJERKEN
SHERI PETERSON BJORGAN	53	DEWAYNE & ARLENE PETERSON
KELLY ANN BOYES.....	35	KAREN BOYES
TAMERA KAY CHAPUT	57	GERALD & DELORES BEYERS
CODY DEAN CONNER.....	34	DEBORAH & BRAD FRASER
BRIAN W FOSS.....	56	ED & ELSIE FOSS
BRENT GANGNES	39	LARRY & LOIS GANGNES
WADE HAAKE	40	RANDIE HAAKE
LEE A HALVORSON.....	58	DOREEN HALVORSON
TODD ALLAN JOHNSON.....	46	RUSSELL & ANNE JOHNSON
BRANDON WILLIAM THOMAS KLUTH.....	33	BRENDA KLUTH
BENJAMIN KOTTA.....	33	ARLEN & JULIE KOTTA
STAFF SGT. DAVID KUEHL	36	KEITH KUEHL
.....		LAURA KUEHL
WENDY KUEHL.....	39	KEITH KUEHL
.....		LAURA KUEHL
MATTHEW MILLIGAN-OLSON.....	41	JOHN & KYLENE MILLIGAN
JONATHAN LEVI POITRA.....	34	SUZIE & JAMES HILL
JOSEPH PETER ROEL.....	48	ROBERT & SANDRA ROEL

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
NATHAN BEACH.....	2	LISA BEACH
JOSEPH T BOLGER.....	4	LOWELL & PRISCILLA BOLGER
ROBERT (BOB) TODD DUGGAN	10	GARY & CAROL DUGGAN
DANNY LEE FOWLER	3	CAROL & LIONEL KAIM
MATTHEW JOHN GAFFNEY	11	JOHN & JILL GAFFNEY
BRENT GANGNES	15	LARRY & LOIS GANGNES
DILLON T KAPAUN	4	TODD & SUZIE KAPAUN
ROY DANA RICHMOND.....	7	THOMAS & AUDREY RICHMOND
DUANE SCHMITCKE	4	MARY ANN SCHMITCKE
ALICIA SPURR	17	TAMMY SPURR
DAVID J VOLK.....	6	JACK & JUNE VOLK

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

"When you come to the edge of all the light you know, and are about to step off into the darkness of the unknown, faith is knowing one of two things will happen: There will be something solid to stand on, or you will be taught how to fly." -Barbara J. Winter

SIBLING PAGE

Angel From Above

Inspired by Kyle Janssen

written by Kyle's brother, Trevor Janssen

In one single night, I lost my best friend, my brother, and my companion.

I thought the world had ended; this wasn't how I planned it. Everything was blurry, and I was scared to death, how could one evening, take his last breath.

I wanted to wake up, as though it was just a dream, but God had called him up to join his Holy team.

At such a young age, I didn't understand, why the God that watches over us, could take my brothers hand.

So much life to live, and so much to share, what was God thinking, does he even care?

Kyle was our family, and now God has torn us apart. How do we mend all our broken hearts?

Kyle is so dearly missed, to this very day. He is always in our thoughts and every time we pray.

We know that we will be with him soon, but it is still not soon enough. We go through everyday trying to be touch.

One prayer that God has answered is the angel from above. She is filled with joy and laughter and overwhelmed with love.

This angels name is Anna and she has blessed us with her grace. No one in the world could take this angels place.

She has given us the strength to carry on each day. No matter how hard times get, we know well find the way.

I know our Lord Jesus, is filled with nothing but love, I especially know it now, because he sent us our "Angel From Above".

I CAN'T REMEMBER

I don't remember his face, although I have seen many pictures. I don't remember his eyes, although I've heard about them. I don't remember his laugh, although they tell me I heard it a lot. I don't remember much; I was only thirteen months old.

I do remember his love. I still feel his love. I know he is always with me, watching over me and protecting me. He is my big brother, the one that died eleven years ago.

But I don't remember much. That is what hurts more than anything, not knowing a big part of me. They say I act and talk like him - but I don't remember. I know some day I will remember - it will be a glorious day. The day I will meet my big brother.

~ Kelly Castellon, Walnut Creek CA

That's What Little Brothers Are For

To tease,

To please.

To ignore,

To be there for.

To talk to,

Be there for you.

To share,

To care.

To play,

To pray

No one else knows
The pain when he goes.

~Author Unknown

For Pete's Sake

You left behind a great many

Who loved you very much.

You didn't stay very long,

Yet so many live you touched.

Your beaming smile I remember,

Your laugh was one of a kind.

My biggest regret,

Is that we spent so little time.

Although you had your troubles

Like many of us do,

I never met another

Who was a friend so true.

In our hearts you'll always be there,

You speak from beyond the grave.

I know that God needed you,

Although I wish you could have stayed.

When life gives me troubles,

And I'm feelin' kind of bad,

I feel your wings surround me,

And no longer am I sad.

I know you didn't want to leave us,

You knew God needed your help.

You always thought of others

Before you thought of yourself.

Although I never got a chance

To say how much I care,

I find comfort in knowing

That you'll always be there.

You're in a better place now,

With more important work to do.

I just wanted to take a chance

To tell you how much we love you.

~ Nic Bosworth, for his cousin Peter, TCF/Salt Lake City, NV

THE SIBLING PRAYER

Beneath the amber glow of the newly rising sun,

Or standing on the hillside when the day is done,

Riding down the highway when my work day is at an end,

or sitting on a park bench, talking to a friend -

No matter where I am in life, no matter what my task,

Please give me peace of mind, dear Lord, that is all I ask.

And when those haunting memories of the night have passed away,

Please come rushing in my broken heart, please do not delay.

Remind me that he is in a far, far better place.

And grant me a glimpse of his hazel eyes and sweet angelic face.

Please grant me reassurance that we'll someday meet again in

Heaven's bright tomorrow. In Your Name I pray.

Amen.

~ Laur Carpenter, TCF/Onancock, VA

The Sibling Newsletter, Summer 1993

I can't let grieving become a way of life. If I allow my grief, even one day of it, to dominate me, then I will have missed whatever today might have been. Then death piles upon death... one day after another. All missed because I was too busy reliving a hurt... too tied up in memories to gather in today...

"Footsteps Through the Valley" By Darcie D Sims

There's No Law Against Grieving--Even for Men

Two years have now passed but I still remember that day like it was yesterday.

If you are reading this, then you have probably lived that day, too. It may have been slightly different—but still the same.

Even though there was a bunch of relatives and friends in the waiting room with me, it was like I was completely alone. I had been called to the hospital less than an hour before. There had been a car accident. My wife was injured but not in danger. But no one would tell me anything about my 8 year-old Stephanie or 5 year-old Stephen who were riding in the car with her.

I had been led to a waiting room, hoping for word from the emergency room doctor. The minutes seemed like hours. Then the doctor came in. Stephanie was in critical condition and would be flown to Children's Hospital. But they were unable to revive my precious Stephen.

The words echoed over and over in my brain.

"Your son has died." The shock and the grief struck me at the same time. I had expected them to come in and tell me the kids were injured but would be just fine thanks to the excellent efforts of everyone involved. After all, that's the way it always happens on "Rescue 911".

But that wasn't the way it happened this time!

I only half remember being led back to my wife where I broke the news to her.

A moment later when I had been led into the corridor, someone asked me if I wanted to see my son. I don't even remember my response—just walking down the hallway, a nurse on each side holding my arms. All I could take were little half steps. My legs had no strength. Through the tears I could see all the nurses and hospital personnel stop everything they were doing and stare at us. Apparently they hadn't seen a grieving father before.

Finally we reached the emergency room at the end of what seemed like the longest corridor in the world. The door swung open and I spotted my son lying on a table at the far end of the room. I was helped to him and then left alone.

Waves of grief overcame me as I looked at Stephen's sweet face, laying there as if asleep. And the realization that I would never hear his laugh, I would never see him smile, I would never feel his kiss again.

After a few minutes a nurse came back and told me I would have to go because my daughter was being loaded into the helicopter and I should give her some words of encouragement, even though she might not be able to hear me.

I did that and I was driven to Children's Hospital where Stephanie died later that night.

The grief that I felt was so intense. The shock was incredible. This couldn't be happening. Both of my children were dead.

I remember the newspaper reporter who showed up at my house the next day. I had gone home to get some clean clothes and take a shower. On my way into the house she approached me. We sat on the porch and both cried and grieved as I related to her the story of the wonderful life I had spent with my children. This reporter never once stared at me with that critical look that I have seen from others. If translated into words, it would be "Men don't cry".

So often men are not allowed by society to grieve. They have to be strong for their wife and their remaining family. How many bereaved mothers have told me that "He holds it all in. He never cries. He never talks about our dead child." They want me to meet their husband because maybe I can get him to understand it's okay to open up and feel grief.

I was fortunate that I grew up in a family where it was okay to let my feelings show. If I was beaten up by the school bully, my father and mother let me know it was okay to cry. When the first person I was really close to died, my grandmother, no one told me it wasn't alright to grieve.

And this upbringing stuck with me. If I'm in a store and Bette Midler's song "God is Watching Us From a Distance" (Stephen's favorite tune to sing) comes on, I've given myself permission to cry, right then and there. If I read a poem that touches me, I've given myself permission to let it all out. And if I hear about the death of another child, I've given myself permission to feel my grief all over again.

The only thing bad about men grieving is that society looks down on us because we are not "strong". After losing both my children, I really don't care what society thinks. Less than one percent of them have had a child die—and that one percent understands my feelings. The rest of them don't. And, God willing, they never will.

If you are a man and having a hard time allowing yourself to grieve, look at your inner being. Are you better because you haven't grieved? Or are you worse? Have your feelings of frustration from not grieving affected your relationship with your spouse or remaining children?

Our deceased children would, no doubt want us to accomplish something meaningful with our lives. They would want us to go on living.

Maybe it is time to grieve so that we can move on with our lives.

~ Wayne Loder, TCF/Lakes Area, MI
In Memory of his children, Stephanie and Stephen Loder

At the finest level of my being, you're still with me.
We still look at each other, at that level beyond sight.
We talk and laugh with each other, in a place beyond words.
We still touch each other, on a level beyond touch.
We share time together in a place where time stands still.
We are still together, on a level called LOVE.
But I cry alone for you, in a place called reality."

~ Richard Lepinsky

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)



Butterfly Decals

"Butterflies are the heaven sent kisses of an angel." ~ Author Unknown

Butterfly decals are available to help personalize our trailer. The trailer is used to carry items to and from our Walk to Remember and other chapter events. It has also given us some visibility in the Fargo/Moorhead community. Each butterfly decal holds the first and last name of one of our beloved children.

Butterflies are available in five colors (yellow, pink, red, blue and green). The cost is as follows: \$25 for 1 butterfly, \$50 for 2 butterflies, \$65 for 3 butterflies and \$80 for 4 butterflies. If you wish to purchase more than 4 butterflies please contact John Milligan at 701-491-0364.

Butterfly orders should include the child's first and last name (middle name is optional) and the 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.

Waterbugs and Dragonflies

Down below the surface of a quiet pond lived a little colony of water bugs. They were a happy colony, living far away from the sun. For many months they were very busy, scurrying over the soft mud on the bottom of the pond. They did notice that every once in awhile one of their colony seemed to lose interest in going about. Clinging to the stem of a pond lily it gradually moved out of sight and was seen no more.

"Look!" said one of the water bugs to another. "One of our colony is climbing up the lily stalk. Where do you think she is going?" Up, up, up it slowly went....Even as they watched, the water bug disappeared from sight. Its friends waited and waited but it didn't return...

"That's funny!" said one water bug to another. "Wasn't she happy here?" asked a second... "Where do you suppose she went?" wondered a third.

No one had an answer. They were greatly puzzled. Finally one of the water bugs, a leader in the colony, gathered its friends together. "I have an idea". The next one of us who climbs up the lily stalk must promise to come back and tell us where he or she went and why." "We promise", they said solemnly.

One spring day, not long after, the very water bug who had suggested the plan found himself climbing up the lily stalk. Up, up, up, he went. Before he knew what was happening, he had broke through the surface of the water and fallen onto the broad, green lily pad above.

When he awoke, he looked about with surprise. He couldn't believe what he saw. A startling change had come to his old body. His movement revealed four silver wings and a long tail. Even as he struggled, he felt an impulse to move his wings...The warmth of the sun soon dried the moisture from the new body. He moved his wings again and suddenly found himself up above the water. He had become a dragonfly!!

Swooping and dipping in great curves, he flew through the air. He felt exhilarated in the new atmosphere. By and by the new dragonfly lighted happily on a lily pad to rest. Then it was that he chanced to look below to the bottom of the pond. Why, he was right above his old friends, the water bugs! There they were scurrying around, just as he had been doing some time before.

The dragonfly remembered the promise: "The next one of us who climbs up the lily stalk will come back and tell where he or she went and why." Without thinking, the dragonfly darted down. Suddenly he hit the surface of the water and bounced away. Now that he was a dragonfly, he could no longer go into the water...

"I can't return!" he said in dismay. "At least, I tried. But I can't keep my promise. Even if I could go back, not one of the water bugs would know me in my new body. I guess I'll just have to wait until they become dragonflies too. Then they'll understand what has happened to me, and where I went."

And the dragonfly winged off happily into its wonderful new world of sun and air.....

From: "Waterbugs and Dragonflies : Explaining Death to Young Children"
by Doris Stickney

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
 OF THE F-M AREA
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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
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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.