



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
 January 14th
 February 11th

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on January 28th @ Fry'n Pan
 TCF National Conference - Scottsdale, AZ July 8-10, 2016

LOVE GIFTS

Sharon Wateland in memory of Tracy Ann Wateland & Bernie Wateland
 Persys Piersall in memory of her son, Rand Piersall
 Patti Pratt in memory of her daughter, Nancy Pratt Coash
 Donation from Newspaper - Nancy & Tom Kassman
 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.

Though life is not as it was before,
 And never will be again,
 Our memories are much richer,
 Than if love had never been."
 -- Author Unknown

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

Holiday Angels that were not listed in December's Newsletter

<u>Given By</u>	<u>In Memory of</u>
Joe & Vincent Leggio	Annie Page Leggio
Harold & Irene Schenck.....	Doug E. Schenck
Rory, Karen, & Terry Hunter	Tabatha Hunter
Anne & Carrie Snyder	Adam Joseph Snyder
Bob & Gloria Sackman.....	Michael Robert Sackman
Richard & Denise Eskildsen	Jason Eskildsen
Frank & Maxine Kadlec.....	Jeff Kadlec
Peter & Christine Murch.....	Valerie Murch
Jim & Phil Nelson.....	Jane Nelson Snyder

"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 Fry'n 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, January 28th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylev13@msn.com.

"Friends are those rare people who ask how we are and then wait to hear the answer."

- Ed Cunningham, TCF/Savannah, GA

Riding the Beast

In grieving the loss of our child, we ride a wild, screaming beast. Suddenly out of nowhere we are forced to mount and ride until the day we reach the end of our own lives. The beast is a frightening, ugly, apocalyptic horse, a raging, unrelenting atomic animal. We cannot get a grip, no matter how we try to cope, rationalize, or pray. We wonder where and how our lives came to be like this. What happened? How is it that one day we are basically OK; we go to bed as we normally do and wake up to a hellish nightmare? How is it that we were going merrily along (more or less) in life - and now, in one fell swoop, we are attached to this beast forever? No matter how much this monster bucks or how high it rears its black mane, we cannot fall off. Occasionally we feel that the animal might quieten, but at any moment it may also try to throw us with a vengeance as (if not more) forceful as before. We know that even as it tries, we cannot be dislodged. We are bound with straps that are as unbreakable as the love that bonds us to our child in the first place; a love forged before our child was conceived. We have no choice; the beast must be ridden just as the work of grief must be done. It is only when we are able to guide the beast to the final stable that we will be reunited with our child and our Creator. Until then, we must continue to ride.

By John Harris - TCF/Potomac, MD
His daughter Nichole Ashley Harris, died in 2002

To All Parents

"I'll lend you for a little time a child of Mine," He said.
"For you to love him while he lives, and mourn for when I
come to claim him.
It may be six or eight years or twenty-two or three.
But will you, till I call him back, take care of him for me?
He'll bring his charms to gladden you, and should his stay be
brief,
You'll have his lovely memories as solace for your grief.
I cannot promise he will stay, since all from Earth return,
But there are lessons taught down there I want this child to
learn.
I've looked this wide world over in my search for teachers
true,
And from the throngs that crowd life's lanes, I have selected
you.
Now will you give him all your love, nor think the labor vain,
Nor hate Me, when I come to call to take him back again?"
I fancied that I heard them say, "Dear Lord, Thy will be done.
For all the joy Thy child shall bring, the risk of grief we'll
run.
We'll shelter him with tenderness, we'll love him while we
may,
And for the happiness we've known, forever grateful stay.
But should the angels call for him, sooner than we've
planned,
We'll brave the bitter grief that comes and try to understand."
by Edgar Guest

I SAID I COULD NOT DO IT...BUT I DID

Exactly 8:05 A.M., Friday, July 9, 1971, was the last time I looked at my eight year old daughter with her eyes open. I walked beside her as they rolled her down the hall to the elevator that would take her down to the operating room for her simple, routine tonsillectomy.

At exactly 1:30 that afternoon, I was told that she was dead. I said then, I could not live a day without her. I just could not do it.

BUT I DID

During the drive home, I said I would never be able to walk in that house without her. I said I could not do it.

BUT I DID

As I walked in that empty house, someone quickly ran and shut her door—the door to her room, where she kept all the things she loved. The room where she played and slept. I said I could never go in there again. I said I could not do it.

BUT I DID

When they said, "Come, let's go to the funeral, the Rosary, the Mass," I said I could not do it.

BUT I DID

When, a few weeks later, a dear friend came to my door and said, "Come, let's go out and enjoy lunch." I said I could not do it.

BUT I DID

For months that followed, I just knew my life would never be the same, and it wasn't. All the things I could not do, did get done. All the life I said I could not live, did get lived, differently, but I did live. Now comes today—16 years later. I have to admit, I had to look it up to be sure. Sixteen years. Palmer Ann would have been 24 years old. I had to stop and think about that, too.

I stood before her portrait and stared a long, long time, and yes, I remembered the pain with total recall of July 9, 1971. I reached out, touching what's left of my memory of her and I offered up a prayer of thanksgiving to God—a prayer of gratitude, for giving me such a beautiful eight years with a lovely daughter, and most of all, the opportunity to be able to stand there and realize that I could not do it, but I did.

YES I DID

And each month when I come to a Compassionate Friends meeting with you, the new member, I share the pain that I know you are feeling—that hopelessness of the future. I smile quietly to myself, because inside I know a secret—you will be okay. You will touch again, love again, laugh again, and live again. After all, I said I could not do it but I did and

YOU WILL TOO!

~ Betz Crump, TCF/Fort Lauderdale, FL

"Wishes For Bereaved Parents For The Coming Year"

by Joe Rosseau, Former National TCF President

- * *To the Newly Bereaved*, we wish you patience - patience with yourselves in the painful weeks, months, even years ahead.
- * *To the Bereaved Siblings*, we wish you and your parents a new understanding of each other's needs and the beginnings of good communication.
- * *To Those Of You Who Are Single Parents*, we wish you the inner resources we know you will need to cope, often alone, with your loss.
- * *To Those Of You Who Are Plagued With Guilt*, we wish you the reassurance that you did the very best you could under the circumstances and that your child knew that.
- * *To Those Of You Who Have Suffered Multiple Losses*, those who have experienced the death of more than one child, we wish you the endurance you will need to fight your way back to a meaningful life again.
- * *To Those Of You Who Are Deeply Depressed*, we wish you the first steps out of the "valley of the shadow."
- * *To Those Experiencing Marital Difficulties* after the death of your child, we wish you a special willingness and ability to communicate with each other.
- * *To All the Fathers*, we wish you the ability to express your grief, to move beyond society's conditioning, to cry.
- * *To Those With Few or No Memories Of Your Child*, perhaps because you suffered through a stillbirth, a miscarriage, or infant death, we wish you the sure knowledge that your child is a person and THAT YOUR GRIEF IS REAL.
- * *To Those Of You Who Have Experienced The Death of An Only Child or All Your Children*, we offer you our eternal gratitude for serving as such an inspiration to the rest of us.
- * *To Those Of You Unable To Cry*, we wish you healing tears.
- * *To Those Of You Who Are Tired*, exhausted from grieving, we wish you the strength to face just one more hour, just one more day.
- * *To All Others with Special Needs* that we have not mentioned, we wish you the understanding you need and the assurance that you are loved.

Remember

When you remember me, it means that you have carried something of who I am with you, that I have left some mark of who I am on who you are. It means that you can summon me back to your mind even though countless years and miles may stand between us. It means that if we meet again, you will know me. It means that even after I die, you can still see my face and hear my voice and speak to me in your heart.

~ Frederick Buechner, "Whistling in the Dark"

Like the Butterfly

It fluttered above my head
Weightless in the soft breeze.
I reached up my hand
It lit on my finger.
Waving glistening wings gently,
It looked at me for timeless moments.
I smiled, reaching deep and
Finding all those cherished memories.
As it flitted off through the sunlit morn,
I knew we had said hello once more.

~ Leslie Langford, TCF/North Platte, NE

Just For Today for Bereaved Parents

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 in this world 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 some-thing 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 allow myself to be happy, for I know that I am not deserting my child by living on.

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

~ Vickie Tushingham

Promises of Rainbows

I promise not to offer
Rainbows after storms
Or silver linings beyond the clouds,
But if you have tears of sorrow,
I will share them.

If you have words of anger,
I will hear them.
If you have moments of confusion,
I will help you through them.

Perhaps
Your tears of sorrow today
Will water the seeds
Of tomorrow's garden
Of spiritual growth, of worthy priorities,
Of loving relationships and genuine
Understanding and compassion.

My sad friend, your weeping is not fruitless.

~ Nancy Williams, TCF/Marlbor, NJ

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD	PARENTS
BENJAMIN GORDON ASHER.....30	JERRY & BONNIE ASHER
NICHOLAS LEE BAILEY23	PAUL & KARA BAILEY
KIRSTIN ELIZABETH CANTLER-BOOKE ... 7	CHRIS & DAWN CANTLER (Grandparents)
KONNIE JEAN CHAFFEE.....43	MARK & JEAN CHAFFEE
NANCY PRATT COASH.....57	PATTI PRATT
BRIELLE DEUTSCHER5	LYNN & DONNA MICKELSON (Grandparents)
DANA DAWN KEBLAR38	DEBORAH FACEY
TARA LEA KELLAR.....37	CATHY & GREG GRONLAND
DAVID VICTOR LAMBRECHT54	VICTOR & LORETTA LAMBRECHT
MICHAEL L LIVDAHL.....22	ROBERT & TANYA LIVDAHL
CHRISTIANA N SANDSTROM.....3	ANDREW & SHAYNA SANDSTROM
MATTHEW AARON THIBEDEAU42	MARY & GALEN SCHROEDER
THOMAS LEE THOEMKE.....40	JEAN & BILL THOEMKE
GABRIEL "GABE" THOMPSON35	FRANK & JANE THOMPSON
MATTHEW ALLEN WINTER29	CAROL & DAN WINTER

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD	PARENTS
NATHAN ANDERSON.....15	DIANE & JAY FENSKE
SHERI PETERSON BJORGAN16	DEWAYNE & ARLENE PETERSON
ANDREW HOWARD BRAUN10	CRAIG & DEANNA BRAUN
SANDRA DIANE CASELLA.....4	RICHARD & DIANE MACGREGOR
ZACHARY COLE.....4	JERRY & DEB COLE
MATTHEW ISAAC CVIJANOVICH11	MICHAEL & SHERYL CVIJANOVICH
TYLER JUSTIN EICHOLTZ.....13	STEVE & LISA EICHOLTZ
WADE HAAKE7	RANDIE HAAKE
CORRINE HOEPKER13	MARY VASECKA
WENDY KUEHL.....6	KEITH KUEHL
WENDY KUEHL.....6	LAURA KUEHL
DAVID VICTOR LAMBRECHT54	VICTOR & LORETTA LAMBRECHT
CHRISTOPHER LOE3	MARGARET "MUGS" LOE
SONYA L NANKIVEL.....1	DELORES COOPER
ERIC JOHN SCHAFFER.....1	BILL & LOIS SCHAFFER
BRUCE C THORNBY7	JANET & HOWARD GALLAGHER

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

SIBLING PAGE

On Sibling Grief From a Grieving Sibling

I am a surviving sibling. Fifteen months ago I was not even familiar with the term...now I am one! How am I doing? What are the guidelines to measure my progress? Why can't I remember when I was told of my brother's death...or the days following the accident for that matter? Did I go crazy? Was it yesterday, or was it over a year ago? Did I laugh just today when I never thought I would laugh again? What is this peaceful feeling that I feel from time to time? Is it healing?

Lee, 29, was my little brother. I remember trying to alternately protect or tease him, make him laugh or make him cry. He was like having a real live baby doll to play with since I was 10 years older than he. (Our Mother said he was the cleanest little boy in the neighborhood. I guess having 3 older sisters is the reason for that!!!)

How can I explain the pain I felt on learning of his accident. I wanted to go to him right away to see that he was OK, but our cousin, Judy, said that wasn't possible. I guess that was when I was told that he was dead...but I don't remember that. I only remember screaming.

When was it that I began to heal? Probably at the same time that I thought I was going totally, certifiably crazy! Then, someone told me about The Compassionate Friends and what they did. I wondered if they could help me but doubted that they could. After all, how could they understand how much I hurt at having lost my precious baby brother or how close we had always been and how he always helped me. Why should they even care about me? But, you know what...they did help. With the help and support of this group of wonderful caring people, I am alive today and working toward a fruitful life. I will never be the same as I was before June 18, 1992, but I truly believe I have become a better person.

While Lee's life taught me so much, his death taught me some invaluable lessons. I have learned to become more aware of life and my own mortality and am more attuned to other needs. I no longer take anything for granted. I miss him terribly but take solace in the belief that he is happy in his new world and that one day we will be reunited.

Sibling grief takes a tremendous amount of time and work. Sometimes just thinking of my brother, looking at his picture, or hearing his favorite song, "God Bless America," reduces me to a teary mess. Sometimes these same things make me smile. But, I am surviving and have developed a new perspective on life. I am closer to and cherish my family more than ever and realize how very important they are. I am dedicated to helping other surviving siblings work through their grief. I pray daily for peace, not only for myself and my family, but for everyone making this journey through grief.

One thing that I have found to be most helpful during the past fifteen months of grief work has been to talk about and to be honest about my feelings. I encourage siblings (and parents) to try to hook up with a support group such as The Compassionate Friends to talk out your feelings and concerns. After all, we've already paid an extremely high price to join this group...the life of our loved one...so why not take advantage of what they have to offer.

You may even find yourself helping someone else (even though you might not believe that now.)

~ Sunday Lee Stanton, Wyoming Valley, PA

Questions/Answers from Bereaved Siblings

Why am I so mad at my sister for dying? She left me alone. I know it wasn't her fault, but I feel so guilty for being angry.

At some time everyone is angry at the person who dies. Anger does not mean you loved them less, it means the loss is so great that you want the terrible pain to end.

I have terrible nightmares. Sometimes I dream I am dying. I can't tell anyone because they will think I am crazy. Am I?

Some grieving people experience intense dreams. Dreams serve as a healthy outlet for the intense feelings during the day. As time goes on and you deal with your feelings, your dreams will become less frightening.

Suddenly my parents expect me to parent them. I just can't handle it.

This is truly one of the most unfair positions your grief puts you in. Try to share these feelings with your parents. Hopefully you will be better able to understand one another.

This Healing Journey
An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings

WE WON'T FORGET YOU

We won't forget you.-
Every night before we sleep,
We say a little prayer,
In hopes that when we're sent to heaven
We will find you there.
If only you could send a signal,
A bright shining star above, a quiet little whisper,
A laugh or a cry,
A signal of your love.
If only you could be here
To sing and say your cute little rhymes
To be here when we're saddened for you
To help us through our troubling times
To be here when we need a hug,
Or to see your big bright smile shine through.
Not being able to hear your laugh
Just makes us feel so blue.
For anyone else it's hard to understand
Just what we are feeling inside,
But as long as we pray and know you
Here, in our hearts you'll always abide.
~ Rhonda Desormeau, TCF/Prince Albert, SK
(Rhonda lost her youngest sister to leukemia, in 1991, just 1
year after being diagnosed.)

MEMORIES

As I watched her leave
There is a place
That we call Memory.
A province by itself
which, though unseen,
is home and haven
to the heart.
and there,
in peace and beauty
waiting,
are those with whom
we shared our yesterdays.
~ Nancy Cassel, TCF Holmdel, NJ

“YOU HAVEN’T CHANGED A BIT”

Someone I haven’t spoken to for over six years rang me a while back and, during the course of a conversation peppered with exclamation marks, she said, “You know, Linda, you sound exactly the same.” The same as what, I wondered. And when we met, some days later, she confused me even further by shrieking (with obvious relief), “Oh, you haven’t changed a bit!”

Who was she kidding? She was lying through her teeth! *But she wasn’t!* Because she saw what she wanted to see -- and to be fair, she saw what I allowed her to see: The “me” of the day! And she was vastly relieved that I hadn’t dressed in black. That I didn’t weep into the iced coffee, produce photographs of my son, or have a soggy tissue tucked up my sleeves.

We reminisced and giggled. And studiously skirted the fact that Joel had died since I last saw her. She knew it. I knew it. And I was fascinated by the way she managed to avoid all mention of him. But I didn’t feel a need to steer the conversation towards my child. There was a sense of control in that. And freedom.

I was pleased with myself. A year before, her determined refusal to acknowledge my son’s absence from my life would have angered and hurt me. It was good to find that this silly kind of thoughtlessness couldn’t get to me any more.

But something rankled, and I couldn’t put my finger on it. I sat and watched her prattling on. Her life was so removed from mine. Untouched by tragedy, she was the same as she had always been. And there it was: It was SHE who hadn’t changed, not I.

Joel’s death was the single, most immense, mindaltering experience of my existence. I remember the madness of those days: exhausted nights of hypnotic rocking to and fro, muffling the sounds of pain with a pillow; those huge, hot limitless tears embarrassing me everywhere, clouding my vision in rush-hour traffic; the confusion (How could he be dead? Had he ever lived? Here? With me? How long ago, now?) Everything measured in terms of this time last week, last month, last year. I remember the raging, frightening wildness of it all.

And she dares to say I haven’t changed!

I have stood at his grave, thrown back my head, and roared at the injustice of living longer than my child. I have whimpered his name over and over, feeling it upon my lips, fearing I may never hear it in reference to him again. And I have prayed deep, urgent prayers, trying desperately to reach some intrinsic part of him in me.

These are experiences that change the very soul. For nobody could go where I have been and not be changed. I have been forced to examine and question my faith and my priorities. She has not. My depths and values have been challenged, not hers.

I could not have stayed the same. I would not have wanted to.

For each small alteration in my life carries the signature of my son’s being -- that one little person’s presence in my world. I am willing to learn and grow, to seek and explore, so that I may better understand the responsibility I bear towards all life, my own included. And so that his life should not have been for nothing.

So I pushed back my chair and said goodbye to her. She seemed un-pressed for time. But I had things to do.

~ Linda A., TCF/Johannesburg, South Africa

Healing is possible once unrealistic hopes for a lost future are given up, grieved for and moved beyond.

~ by Darcie D Sims
“Footsteps through the Valley”

The Scream

The smile you see is not all of me,
For I'm not what I seem.
I laugh and smile but all the while,
My smile holds in a scream.
For when I see a little girl,
So innocent and free,
I think about my little girl,
Who died at seventeen.
And then the scream comes welling up,
From in my soul so black,
And so my smile must block it in,
And laughter hold it back.
I saw her born and watched her grow,
from child to blooming lass,
But through the years I couldn't know,
I'd have to see her pass.
The suffering within my heart,
I hide from all the world.
I do my job, I play the part,
And miss my little girl.
A song about a father's love,
So sweet with tenderness,
Awakes in me the horror of,
My loss and loneliness.
So, if they say "He takes it well,
He'll be OK we all can tell.
How well his life continues on,
It's almost if she wasn't gone."
Remember that I'm not so sane,
Playacting, keeping up the game,
My nightmare life trapped in a dream,
You see, my smile holds in a scream.

~ Steve Tutt, TCF/Tyler, Texas

THE TACO TREE

The morning sun of spring smiled on
The little boy of three
With chocolate eyes and impish grin
Beneath the Taco Tree.
The gentle summer breeze caressed the
Spirit wild and free
The ten year old with cream puff dreams
Beneath the Taco Tree.
The bold young man, not quite eighteen
To keep his country free
Packed up his bags and waved good-by
Beneath the Taco tree.
Scarce the first cord had begun
Till his life's song had been sung
Gone the child of ten and three
gone the dreams that used to be
Barren is the Taco tree.
On misty days and stormy nights
I close my eyes and see,
The chocolate eyes, the impish grin the
Spirit wild and free,
And through the mist or through the storm
These words waft down to me,
"I'm waiting for you Mother,
Beneath the Taco tree."

- Alice Osborn, TCF/Rolla, MO

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: _____

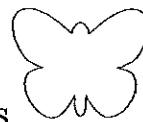
Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

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.

Reflections on a New Year

We begin a new year, one that many of us enter with reluctance. After all, it means another year away from our child and another year to be lived without the physical presence of the one we have lost. Apprehensive about any new challenges that we may be called upon to face in our broken condition, we call out, "Wait, I'm not ready yet!"

The death of our child changed the course of our life; nothing will be the same again. But it also has shaped us into who we are today. And it will continue to do so as we learn to incorporate this loss into who we are to become.

Have you found that you have already begun to live differently? Compassion toward others is more profound. Trivial things are no longer important. Appreciation for life, and those in our lives, is paramount. We're living the same life—differently.

Tragedies, disappointments, and heartaches combine with beauty, love, and joy to fashion our life. These are all a part of life, and our challenge is to incorporate them into our world. The difference that our child's life has had upon the world continues through us.

So, rather than being fearful of the challenges that lie ahead, perhaps a better question to consider at this time might be: What opportunities will present themselves in the coming year to honor this loss that is already a part of our life? Our child has become more integrally entwined into our being than ever before. We bring him or her to every situation that we encounter. How can we make that situation better because of this bond?

The start of a new calendar year is a good time to remember that we are in the midst of life. It is not perfect. Nor is it one that we might have chosen. But, our struggles do not put life "on hold." Rather they are a part of life itself! Our life is ours to make the most of, with many gifts that we can share with others. There is no better time than the present to gather up the pieces and recognize the uniqueness that we each call "me"—a uniqueness made more wonderful because of our child's presence in the life we choose to live.

Paula Stasiunas Schultz
In Memory of Melissa and Jeff

We Need Not Walk Alone, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends

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
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.