



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

FARGO/MOORHEAD AREA CHAPTER

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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www.compassionatefriends.org

F-M Area Chapter
P.O. Box 10686
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www.tcffargomoorhead.org
July 2012

Volume 29 Number 7

Chapter Leader - John Milligan (701) 282-4794

Newsletter Editor - Nancy Teeuwen (701)730-0805

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
July 12th
August 9th

If you have any pictures, stories, or poems of your child, grandchild or sibling that you would like to share on our website, please submit them to Sheryl Cvijanovich at SHERYLCV13@MSN.COM or mail them to the PO box listed on the back of the Newsletter. Anything sent to the PO Box will be scanned for the website and returned.

LOVE GIFTS

Sharon Wateland in memory of her niece, Tracy Ann Wateland
Grace Wolf in memory of her son, Justin Jay Wolf
Ralph & Ethel Hest in memory of their daughter, Nancy Diane Hest
Lowell & Priscilla Bolger in memory of their son, Joseph Bolger
Shandra Malheim & Bill Olafson in memory of their son, Zandyn Larry Malheim Olafson
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.

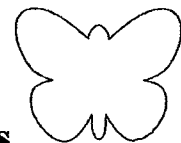
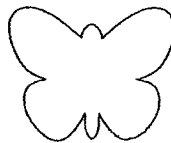
When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure. ~Author Unknown

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



Butterfly Decals

The F-M Chapter has recently purchased a trailer, in order to transport materials to our chapter activities. We are selling butterfly decals, which will be placed on the trailer. The butterflies are 4 x 6 and available in five colors: yellow, pink, red, blue and green.

Each butterfly will contain the first and last name of a child.

If you wish to purchase a butterfly in the memory of a child, please send your name, the name of the child, butterfly color, and a check payable to TCF of Fargo-Moorhead, P.O. Box 10686, Fargo, ND 58106.

Butterflies are \$25 each, 3 for \$65 or 4 for \$80. If you wish to purchase more than 4 butterflies, please contact our chapter leader, John Milligan.

Dates to Remember in 2012

July 20-22 in Costa Mesa, CA - 35th TCF/USA Natl Conference
July 28, 2012 - Fargo Chapter's 6th Annual WALK TO REMEMBER

The Myth of Closure

"When will I begin to feel better? When will I return to normal? When will I achieve some closure?" grievors often ask. Closure, our culture tells us, will bring about a tidy ending, a sense of completion. Some grievors hope that the desired magical closure will occur after the funeral or memorial service. Others are confident it will come once they have cleared out their loved one's room. Or maybe after a special personal ritual. Or perhaps after the first anniversary comes and goes—"surely then, we will have closure," we think. We pray.

The reason we long for closure, of course, is because we would like to neatly seal away all of this pain. We would like to close all of the sad, confused, desperate, angry feelings out of our life. We would like to put all of this behind us.

Closure. What an odd concept really, as if we could truly close the door on pain—turn the lock and throw away the key. The truth is far more complex, of course.

Closure is for business deals. Closure is for real estate transactions. Closure is not for feelings or for people we love.

Closure simply does not exist emotionally, not in a pure sense. We cannot close the door on the past as if it didn't exist because, after losing someone dear to us, we never forget that person or the love we shared. And in some ways, we never entirely get over the loss. We learn to live with the loss, to integrate it into our new identity.

Imagine if we really could end this chapter in our life, completely. It would mean losing our memories, our connections to those we love. If we really found closure, it would ironically hurt even more because the attachment would be severed. And this attachment is vital to us—the memories are treasures to be held close, not closed out.

Perhaps it is better to think in terms of healing. Yes, we can process our pain and move to deeper and deeper levels of healing. Yes, we can find ways to move on and channel our pain into productive activities. Yes, we can even learn to smile again and laugh again and love again.

But let's not ever think that we'll close the door completely on what this loss means, for if we did that, we would unwittingly close the door on all the love that we shared. And that would truly be a loss too terrible to bear.

~ Ashley Davis Prend, ACSW, Hospice of North Idaho

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

As Long As I Can

As long as I can, I will look at the world for both of us.
As long as I can, I will laugh with the bird, I will sing
with flowers, I will play to the stars, for both of us.
As long as I can, I will remember how many things on
this earth were your joy. And I will live as well as you
would want me to live, as long as I can.

~ Sascha Wagner

TOGETHER WE'LL WALK THE STEPPING STONES

Come, take my hand, the road is long,
We must travel by stepping stones.
No, you're not alone, I'll go with you.
I know the road well, I've been there.
Don't fear the darkness, I'll be with you.
We must take one step at a time
But remember we may have to stop awhile.
It is a long way to the other side
And there are many obstacles.
We have many stones to cross,
Some are bigger than others,
Shock, denial, and anger to start,
Then comes guilt, despair and loneliness.
It's a hard road to travel, but it must be done.
It's the only way to reach the other side.
Come, slip your hand in mine.
What? Oh yes, it's strong.
I've held so many hands like yours.
Yes, mine was one time small and weak, like yours.
Once, you see, I had to take
Someone's hand in order to take the first step.
Oops, you've stumbled, go ahead and cry.
Don't be ashamed, I understand.
Let's wait here awhile and get your breath,
When you're stronger we'll go on, one step at a time.
Say, it's nice to hear you laugh.
Yes, I agree, the memories you shared are good.
Look, we're half way there now,
I can see the other side.
It looks so warm and sunny.
Oh, have you noticed, we're nearing the last stone,
And you're standing alone.
And look, your hand, you've let go of mine,
We've reached the other side.
But wait, look back, someone is standing there,
They are alone and want to cross
The stepping stones,
I'd better go, they need my help.
What? Are you sure? Go ahead, I'll wait,
You know the way, you've been there.
Yes, I agree, it's your turn, my friend—
To help someone else cross the stepping stones.

~ Barb Williams, TCF/Fort Wayne, IN

You give yourself permission to grieve by recognizing the need for grieving.
Grieving is the natural way of working through the loss of a love.
Grieving is not weakness, nor absence of faith.
Grieving is as natural as crying when you are hurt, sleeping when you are tired or sneezing when your nose itches.
It is nature's way of healing a broken heart.

~ Doug Manning

When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.

~ Helen Keller

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED



Birthdays and Anniversaries have been removed from the Internet version of our newsletter for security purposes





Fargo Chapter's 6th Annual WALK TO REMEMBER

WHAT: 6th Annual Walk to Remember and Potluck

WHEN: Saturday, July 28, 2012 at 10:00 am.

WHERE: South Shelter at Oak Grove Park (shelter #1)

The Compassionate Friend of Fargo-Mhd will hold its 6th Annual Walk To Remember, on Saturday, July 28, 2012, at the South Shelter at Oak Grove Park, 124 N Terrace in Fargo.

The Walk To Remember begins at 10:00 am. We will walk from Oak Grove School to the Angel of Hope statue in Island Park and then back to Oak Grove. If you bring a balloon we will have a balloon release at Island Park. For those who prefer to walk one-way, rides from Island Park back to Oak Grove will be provided. There will be a pot-luck lunch following the walk. Please bring your favorite dish and join us for good food and conversation.

If you have any Questions please contact:

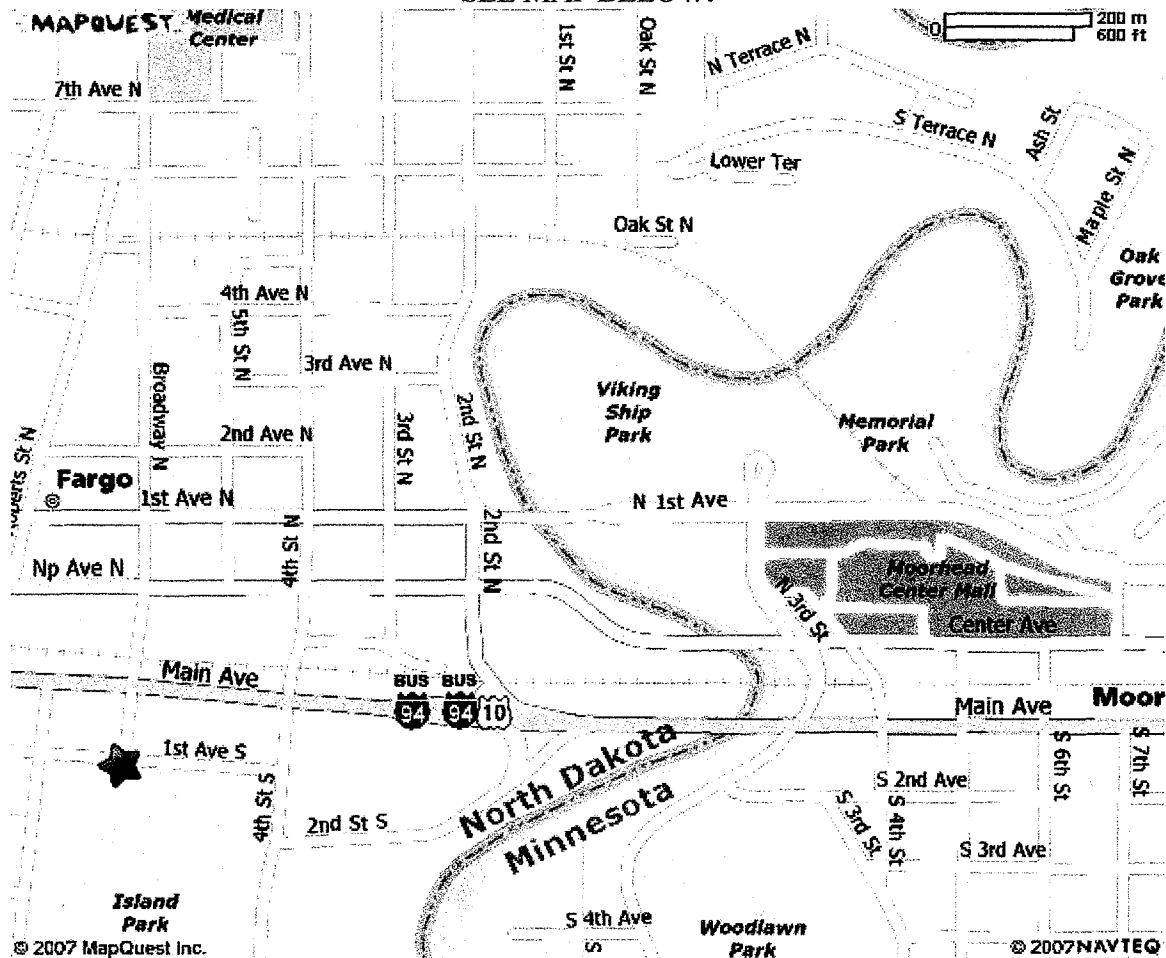
John Milligan (Chapter Leader) - 701-282-4794, email-patkylene@hotmail.com

Sheryl Cvijanovich - 701-235-8158 or email-sherylc13@msn.com

Lois Gangnes - 701-282-4083

Check our Web page www.tcffargomoorhead.org for ongoing information.

SEE MAP BELOW.



We will also have "Walk To Remember" t-shirts available for \$5.00 each while supplies last. Everybody is welcome; everybody has someone to remember that has been lost. The total walk is about three miles round trip.

SIBLING PAGE

MY FIRST FIVE YEARS AS AN ONLY CHILD

I've been without my brother for five years. I guess the hard part is over now. Sometimes I think I have aged 30 years in the past five. In a strange way, these past five years have been the best and worst years of my life. I have accomplished the many things of a typical young adult learning to drive, graduating from high school, going to college, and starting a career. Every one of my accomplishments has been clouded by the fact that my brother George is not here to share each milestone, and is not achieving any more milestones for himself. He was cheated of so many things. He will never graduate, get married, have children or travel. He will never grow old, and I will never have a brother to grow old with. I'll never have nieces and nephews. The sibling relationship, usually the longest relationship of one's life, has been cut short for us. In these five years, although I have learned to accept that he is not coming back, the difficult part is dealing with it day by day.

My relationship with George ended just when we started to become friends. The childish fights and other annoyances of having a big brother were changing to real conversations and to having an occasional ally. I am angry about all the things that we have missed and all the things that will never be, and I guess I always will be. Five years heals a lot of wounds, but the hurt will always be there, no matter how many years pass. In these past five years, I have been forced to grow up too fast. I have been forced into a new outlook on life. I have felt lonely and alone. I now realize that I will never be the same person as before. Maybe I am a better person because of what I have been through. Five years ago I never thought I would survive, but I am still here dealing with it every day. I don't know what the next five years will bring, but at least I have made it this far.

~ Kristin Steiner, TCF/Staten Island, NY

MY SISTER, MY FRIEND

Within our hearts, You will always be.
Our minds will be filled, With sweet memories
Your spirit and love, Will never be gone
For each life you touched, Will carry them on
~ Catherine Hall, TCF/Hinsdale, IL

Get Well Soon Poem

I know our loss is very great
but I'm sure many people can
relate
I know it's hard to say good-bye
don't hold back your tears! It's ok
to cry
Just hold my hand and we will
stand up high
We will gather strength from one
another
hugging and holding each other
we will find each other and
together we will be
once again, a family

Alyssa Flora

In Memory of my brother, Bryson

LITTLE BROTHER

Someone took you away from me
And I wonder if they cared
About the ones' they left behind
And the pain that each must bear
Why did you have to leave me
When there was so much left to do
I'm not sure if I can go on
If I have to go on without you.
But life dictates the rules
There are things that I can't change
When you left, my heart was torn in two
My life got rearranged.
I have to believe I'll see you again
It keeps the hope alive and new
So until we meet again, little brother
Never forget that I love you.
Jenny, TCF/Indianapolis, IN

REFLECTIONS

With the death of my sister came some painful realizations - that life isn't fair or predictable; that sometimes even my best isn't good enough, and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable Lessons and Precious Gifts. As a result of my sister's death - I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater Compassion for those who hurt.

I have learned to be a survivor - to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all - I have been given the gift of time - time to heal and time to replace Painful memories of death with Priceless memories of my sister's life.

~by Cathy Schanberger - "This Healing Journey - An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings"

A Wish

I wish upon a rainbow In every single dream,
And hope with my entire heart
You will be here again.
I wish upon its colors
That together we will be,
For you are my brother
And I want you here with me.
It's the way the color blends
That gets in hopes so high.
I know you didn't mean it
When you left without a good-bye.
We didn't understand your feelings
Or how sad you were inside.
You drank until it killed you
And your friend right by your side.
If only the world could be a rainbow
Maybe they would see,
But even though you're gone
You're forever a part of me.

~ Chasitie Sharp Marion, OH

Just Say "I'm Sorry"

You don't know how I feel – please don't tell me that you do
There's just one way to know – have you lost a child too?
"You'll have another child" – must I hear this each day?
Can I get another mother too, if mine should pass away?
Don't say it was "God's will" – that's not the God I know.
Would God on purpose break my heart, then watch while my tears
flow?
"You have an angel in heaven – a precious child above."
But, tell me, to whom on earth shall I give this love?
"Aren't you better yet?" Is that what I heard you say?
No! A part of my heart aches – I'll always feel some pain.
You think that silence is kind, but it hurts me even more.
I want to talk about my child who has gone through death's door.
Don't say these things to me, although you do mean well.
They do not take my pain away – I must go through the hell.
I will get better slow but sure – and it helps to have you near.
But a simple "I'm sorry you lost your child" is all I need to hear.

~ Gail Fasoloe, TCF/St Albert, AB
Cape Cod and the Islands Chapter
July-August 2010

Why Don't You Call Me Anymore?

She calls to talk and asks how I am
And so I tell her: gut-wrenching days,
Questions of "why"?
Longing to hold my son again.

Quickly, she lets me know how she is
Parties and vacations,
New friends and clubs and hanging up,
I miss what I had and loathe what I am.

I read the books,
I meet others like me
Who yearn to kiss their cherub's face
Who exist in this horrendous, bottomless pit.

And I learn life is: cruel, unfair, senseless
But through it all I become more real.
Holding a deeper faith
That works even in this pit.

After time, I call her
To see how she is and want to tell her
About Death and Living
But life is still an extended picnic.

So, we have a pseudo conversation,
I cannot explain
For she is not able to understand the beauty of who I am
And now I accept why my phone doesn't ring.

From We Need Not Walk Alone
Spring, 1998

A thousand words can't bring you back
I know because I tried
And neither can a million tears
I know because I cried
~ Sarah Ratliff

To the Newly Bereaved

As the years pass, we see new members come into our chapter,
and we try to help them with their grief as we progress in our own.
Over and over again I have seen newly bereaved parents come to
their first meeting totally devastated and convinced that their lives
are over. Through the months (and years) I have seen them
struggle and suffer and try to find meaning in their lives again.
And they do! Through all the anger, pain and tears, somehow the
human spirit is able to survive and flower again in a new life –
perhaps a changed life and possibly a sadder one, but a stronger
one nevertheless.

We feel so weak and crushed when our beloved children die,
but I know- because I have seen it countless times in the years I've
been involved with The Compassionate Friends – that we can
make it together. When you walked through the door for the first
meeting, you were frightened and nervous; but with that first step
you made a statement about your life. With that first step through
the door, you said you wanted to try, you wanted to find a reason
for living again, that you weren't willing to be swallowed by your
grief. You wanted to go forward, and those first steps into The
Compassionate Friends began your journey.

The journey will be a long one, for you loved your child with
all your heart and soul. When that child died, a part of you was
ripped away. It takes time to repair that large hole. The journey
will not always be steady or constant; there will be many setbacks.
Those of us who have taken the journey before you can assure you
that, while there may be no rainbow at the other end, there is
indeed "light at the end of the tunnel." We want to help you as we
were helped, but in the beginning and in the long run, you must
help yourself. You have to want to get better, to talk about your
loss, to struggle through the grief. We will listen, suggest, share
and laugh and cry with you; and we hope, at this time next year,
you'll be several steps along in your personal journey through
grief. Then you can begin to help others.

~ Karen Schendel, TCF/Houston, TX

Prayers

Each morning
When I awake and rise
I thank the Lord above
For my time in the girls lives

Each day at noon
I take a moment alone
To thank the Lord above
For the strength to carry on

Each evening
When I get home
I thank the Lord above
That Loral and Macy are not alone

Each night at bedtime
I ask the Lord above
To please hear my prayers
Then send Macy and Loral my love

PawPaw
~ Donald Moyers, TCF/ Galveston County, TX
In Memory of Loral and Macy

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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 701-282-4794	Secretary-Treasurer	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Librarian		Initial Contact	Kylene Milligan 701-282-4794
Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen 701-730-0805	Newsletter Database	Mike Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Newsletter Printing	Joyce at Olivet Lutheran Church	Mailing Committee	Contact Us to Join

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)	701-282-4794
Duane Skramstad (daughter, 20 - car accident; son, 2 - drowning).....	701-437-2507
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.