

The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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F-M Area Chapter
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June 2017

Volume 34 Number 6

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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

June 8th

July 13th

Meeting Subject:

June - Balloon Release, please bring a special balloon if you would like. We will provide balloons also and root beer floats.

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

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on June 22nd @
Fry'n Pan
TCF National Conference - Orlando,
Florida July 28-30, 2017
TCF FM Chapter's Annual Walk to
Remember - August 12, 2017

LOVE GIFTS

Lori & Larry Wiger in memory of
their daughter, Ashley Arlene
Wiger

Anne & Carrie Snyder in memory
of son, Adam Joseph Snyder
Tjaden, Andrea, Jackson, Brielle,
Thornton & Everett Sinclair in
memory of daughter/sister Lola
Elise Sinclair

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 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 June 22nd. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylc13@msn.com.

Fargo Chapter's Annual WALK TO REMEMBER

WHAT: Annual Walk to Remember and Pot-luck

WHEN: Saturday August 12, 2017 at 10:30 am.

WHERE: South Shelter at Oak Grove Park (Main Shelter)

The Compassionate Friends of Fargo-Moorhead will hold its 9th Annual Walk To Remember, on Saturday, August 12, 2017 at the South Shelter at Oak Grove Park, 124 N Terrace in Fargo.

The Walk To Remember begins at 10:30 am. We will walk from Oak Grove Park 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) - 701-491-0364, email-patkylene@hotmail.com

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

Check our web page www.tcffargomoorhead.org for ongoing info.

A FATHER'S THOUGHTS

Our son, Jacob, has been gone for 10 months now and it seems like 10 life times. There are moments when I find it so difficult to continue doing anything and it seems like life is so out of balance now. My wife and I only had two children, both boys. Jacob was the younger and he died June 29, 2002. Just six weeks to the day before Jacob died, my mother died. While at her wake, Jacob and his mother were sitting outside the funeral home in the twilight, and in that quietness, Jacob said to his mother, "Mom, just look at the thousands of fireflies coming up across the cemetery." And there were, filling the fading light with lights of magic. Jacob said, "Mom, this is probably the most spiritual moment I have ever had. All the fireflies rising from the ground are like the spirits of the deceased joining together in celebration." My wife and my son enjoyed that special time. And then, six weeks later we lost Jacob. The light of my life has been extinguished.

After Jacob's funeral, my wife would spend many, many evenings sitting on the back porch watching the fireflies and remembering that special moment with her son. But the fireflies would always keep a distance and then one evening, just one flew on the porch and blinked its light at my wife. All she could do was cry and say, "Hi, son. I knew you were OK." And now, for the first time this season, not even a year since Jacob left, the fireflies have returned to the woods behind our house. And my wife and I sit on the porch in the stillness of the early evening and watch. We watch the fireflies dance in the woods, waiting for that special one who will come to our porch, blink his light, and once again we will know that Jacob is doing well as an angel in training that one day we shall joyfully join.

I miss my son, Jacob, so much that it hurts. Everyday I hope it gets better, but so far it has not ... but the firefly is back and some joy can be found in that.

~ John Drollinger, TCF/Marietta/Sandy Springs GA, Proud
Father of Jacob and John

THE WAVES OF GRIEF

I watched the waves break on the shore
I heard them crash and pound and roar,
Some broke a long way out at sea
And some washed right up over me.

And as I watched them ebb and flow
They seemed quite like the grief I know
They never stopped, yet there were those
Which carried me with them as they rose.

Other waves were very calm
And I could stand and not fall down.
While I watched the tide went out
And "Grief" retreated without doubt.

I knew that it would come again
And I would feel that awful pain,
But maybe not so often now
Will I be overwhelmed somehow.

Since David died the grief has changed
Not dimmed, but rather rearranged.
The waves of grief I'll always have
But this I know - I have survived.
~ Barb Patterson, TCF/Coquitlam, Canada

Is It Father's Day Already?

Well, it's that time of year again. That awkward, often over-hyped day in which Dad is suppose to "relax" and spend time with the kids. We wake up sometimes to breakfast in bed, a card and a small gift or two (often a tool or gadget of some kind), and then are faced with the rest of the day. After the first hour most kids are bored and want to get on with whatever they had planned that morning for themselves. But they are reminded that this is a "Father's Day" and Dad decides what we are doing.

Before Stefanie died, this "holiday" was taken very lightly without much planning ahead of time. Since then it has taken on new meaning and starts to take on significance around the time Mother's Day arrives. We are being prepared for our day. As the day draws nearer we get more and more uneasy as we try to figure out what to do. Play golf?... Watch a ball game?... Work around the house? These are the stereotyped "dad things to do" on this "special day".

Well, this day is quite special to our bereaved fathers for many different reasons. The first few years can be quite difficult to face if one hasn't planned ahead of time. There is this incredible void of our other child or children who should be there with us. This is where the careful planning comes into play as I try to make this day special for my other daughter Hillary while keeping Stefanie's presence with us too. The best way to do this is to try and plan something new that involves the natural beauty we have around us. Taking a hike on a new trail, kayaking in the bay, playing golf with the family and not alone with the guys, a bike ride or maybe a day trip to the beach exploring tidal pools.

The options are endless if you use your imagination. The nice thing about doing something outside as opposed to say, a movie, is that it allows you to "feel" the presence of your other child. Places like Monterey, Point Reyes or anywhere along the coast give me a real sense of peace. If it happens to be foggy, then head inland towards some of the back roads of wine country. The sun is very important on this day, our day.

So rather than dreading this day, use it as a chance to reflect on all the wonderful memories of our children. Share the day with your family and allow their warmth, support and comfort to be a part of us.

~ Rob Jacobs, TCF/Marin, CA

Upward, Inward, Outward

We are not born into relationships. We enter life with both hands up in the air and fists clenched tightly. We are born emptyhanded. There are no hands to hold but our own. We learn to reach out, but only after we have had a chance to reach inward and upward. It is the upward reach of the spirit and the inward reach of the soul that enables the outward reach of the body.

Our losses change us and change the course of our lives. It's not that one can never again be happy following an experience of loss. The reality is simply that one can never again be the same.

~ Ann Kaiser Sterns

With what a deep devotedness of woe
I wept thy absence - o'er and o'er again
Thinking of thee, still thee, till thought grew pain,
And memory, like a drop that, night and day,
Falls cold and ceaseless, wore my heart away!
~Thomas Moore

A Father Mourns Too

I just watched another TV commercial for cologne, which is the first sign of the approach of Father's Day. Like other fathers, I know the gift I'd like to get this Father's Day, just as I know there is no way that it will happen—my son's life, an opportunity not to hurt when I see boys who are his age, a chance to dream those dreams for that little boy again.

But that's not going to happen. Instead I will get up on that day, having called my own father the night before to wish him a happy Father's Day, and I will go to the cemetery to place flowers on my son's grave. I will stand alone and cry for a time and then return home to my wife and new infant son.

This year we will have a greater measure of peace because of the birth of our son, but I shall always have a hole in my soul, a longing that I know I will have until I die.

Like many bereaved fathers, I have felt misunderstood about how a father should mourn and for how long. I do not understand how a society can have such a belief in the strength of maternal love and do such a good job ignoring the intensity of paternal love. From the people whose only question at my son's memorial service was how was my wife dealing with this tragedy, to the longtime friend who didn't understand my choking up after watching a Hallmark commercial, it seems that many around us have difficulty understanding a father's grief.

So, support and love is needed and needed badly. Of course, we have Compassionate Friends, but something more personal and closer to home is needed. I hope that bereaved fathers will not be forgotten on Father's Day. It is often said that we don't often talk of our emotional needs and are reluctant to show our pain, but we too need love when we hurt.

Please remember us on Father's Day and remember that the cute little commercials that hurt mothers in May take their toll on fathers in June.

~ Doug Hughes, TCF/Las Vegas, NV

I AM A MAN

Jim Brown, in *Grief Relief Magazine* (1987)

I hunt, fish, camp, drive a fast car, play football, basketball and baseball. I am tough! I went to war. I am the toughest two-legged mammal alive. I am a MAN!

While our son was still in the hospital, I cried alone so my wife wouldn't see me. At home I cried alone, in the shower, in the back yard, anywhere but in front of my wife. I had to be a rock.

After our son died, I helped support my wife in the best way I knew how. I was a rock for her to lean on. I was invincible. The rock caused more trouble than good. Soon we were not talking or getting along with each other and I didn't understand why. My wife became angry. She told me, "You act like you don't love J.J." (Because I didn't appear to be grieving.)

The rock became mush. I then realized what I had done. I had played MAN instead of just being a father and a husband. You see, a mother doesn't need a rock with no emotions. She needed me to show her I did indeed love our son and that I was hurting after his death, and that I did cry.

My wife comforted me that night, after we talked. I cried, she cried. We both needed it. I found out that it was good for me to cry and let my wife help me. I am a MAN. I am a grieving man, who now does not mind crying in front of anyone. I cry for myself and for our son J.J.

This Mixed-Up Grief

Have you ever noticed the many mixed-up, confusing emotions involved in grieving? On the one hand, you feel restless; on the other hand, you feel like you don't want to move at all. You feel desperately alone, yet you don't want anyone around. You feel scatterbrained, forgetful, and yet frantically meticulous. You feel like crying at nothing, and sometimes laughing at anything. (Or do I have that backwards?) Being in a crowd of people is fine as long as they don't talk to you. And yet, if they don't talk to you, you feel as if nobody cares. You want so desperately for someone to mention your child, to remember the life that once was. And yet it can make you furious if ALL they want to talk about is the dead one, and never even mention the living ones.

Grief settles over you like a hot blanket. You're as cold as the winter snow. Grief presses on you like a steamroller. You're floating in a bubble above yourself. Grief boxes you in on four sides and introduces you to a pain no one should have to know. But then, once again, you begin to feel compassion. You relate to other parents who have had an experience similar to your own. And eventually, in a moment as sharp as a sunburst, you hear yourself saying your child's name with an unfamiliar smile on your face. You remember some of the funny times and feel laughter building in your throat.

One morning you notice the sun is shining. Many days, months, and possibly years have passed unnoticed—and somehow, you are still here. Even though your child is still—there. You feel your heart swell with a love you never even knew could exist. And you find a place in your life for something called (dare I say) peace.

And then, ever so gently, the memories enfold you in a warmth as soothing as a cool shower on a hot summer day, so you find you WANT to remember. And tender memories of love lift you to unreachable heights, to the brightest of stars, to the loveliest touch of your child.

~ Dana Gensler, TCF/Kentucky

LONELINESS and HOW TO OVERCOME IT

Why are there times when a bereaved parent feels lonely even though surrounded by loving people and people the bereaved parent loves?

Loneliness is the outgrowth of separation from one who has given meaning to life. Yes, other relationships offer meaning, but it is normal for the searing pain from the loss of one's child to supersede the pleasure from other experiences.

Part of yourself had been invested in another person. When that person has died, in a sense, you are lonely for a part of yourself that has been destroyed. At times you look around you and think that no one else is experiencing the pain you are feeling, no one's world has been shattered.

This self-centeredness is a natural part of the grief process. Do not deny it, but DO NOT HOLD ON TO IT AS A WAY OF LIFE. Give yourself permission to accept help from others and then to reach out and help others.

Although your child is not here to give continuity to your life, by having lived and having given purpose to your life, your child can be the bridge to your continuity with life as a thinking, loving and active person. ♥

~ Ruth Eiseman, TCF/Louisville, KY

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
AKSEL JAMES BIRCH.....	6.....	STACY & AARON BIRCH
RILEY MARK DAHLBERG.....	14.....	BLAKE & CHRISTINA DAHLBERG
JULIE M ERICKSON.....	48.....	JANET ERICKSON
DAVID MICHAEL HELFTER.....	49.....	MARK & HELLA HELFTER
JARED SCOTT HELGESON.....	34.....	LYLE & TAMMY HELGESON
JEFF KADLEC.....	57.....	FRANK & MAXINE KADLEC
GAIL DIANE LARSON.....	59.....	DALE & MARILYN LARSON
JACOB RIEDMAN.....	24.....	KASEY & JON SKALICKY
CHERYL L SAMSON.....	54.....	HENRY (DUKE) & PATRICIA SAMSON
CRAIG A SCHEER.....	49.....	WILLIAM & ELAINE SCHEER
DOUG E SCHENCK.....	53.....	HAROLD & IRENE SCHENCK
DUANE SCHMITCKE.....	59.....	MARY ANN SCHMITCKE
LOLA ELISE SINCLAIR.....	2.....	ANDREA & TJADEN SINCLAIR
ADAM JOSEPH SNYDER.....	34.....	ANNE SNYDER
JANE N SNYDER.....	56.....	JIM & PHILOMENA NELSON
CHAD WOLD.....	52.....	TOM & BONNIE WOLD

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
DAVID GRAFSGAARD.....	10.....	ERNEST & BERDINE GRAFSGAARD
KENT ALAN HANSEN.....	1.....	DOUGLAS HANSEN
ALLEN HARRIS.....	7.....	DELORES HARRIS
RYAN DEAN NELSON.....	18.....	BECKY NELSON
LOGAN F RINKE.....	2.....	TIM & PAULINE RINKE
JOSEPH PETER ROEL.....	10.....	ROBERT & SANDRA ROEL
TOMMY ROESCH.....	3.....	DAVID & LINDA ROESCH
MICHAEL ROBERT SACKMAN.....	19.....	ROBERT & GLORIA SACKMAN
CHRISTIANA N SANDSTROM.....	4.....	ANDREW & SHAYNA SANDSTROM
JANE N SNYDER.....	2.....	JIM & PHILOMENA NELSON
KINLEY SNYDER.....	5.....	JEREMY & TERI SNYDER
TYLER JAMES THOEMKE.....	14.....	JAMIE & SHERI THOEMKE
ASHLEY WIGER.....	3.....	LARRY & LORI WIGER

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 is not an easy word for grievers.
But we, more than most others,
need to understand
what hope can mean for us.
Hope means finding the strength
to live with grief.
Hope means nurturing with grace
the joy of remembrance.
Hope means embracing
with tenderness and pride our own life
and the gifts left to us
by those we have lost.♥

SIBLING PAGE

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.
~ Laura Carpenter, TCF/Onancock, VA
The Sibling Newsletter, Summer 1993

Monarch Butterflies



When we were children, Joe, you and I
were like caterpillars. We formed ideas,
learned our lessons, and wrapped our
cocoon.

Then, as young adults, taking our values,
we emerged like butterflies set free.

Never losing faith and always remaining patient, we sought the
flowers of our youth. The golden sun warmed us.

We flew side by side until you became sick with cancer. Your
soul remained strong.

Your spiritual wings glowed of the joys of Heaven. You flew
away with the angels, as I prayed for the strength to watch you go.

Then, I remembered, you are a Monarch in the presence of God.
My brother, Joe, you have become the most glorious butterfly of
all.

~ Mary Lario, TCF/Williamsport, PA

A Brother Means so Much

The gift of a brother
Is a precious treasure.
It is the love, tears, and
Joys of a friendship that
Has unbreakable bonds.
The beauty of a brother
Cannot be described,
Measured or defined.

For it is a wonderful legacy
That will always be carried
In a sister's heart.

~ Jill Hricik, TCF/Pittsburg, PA

What Candice Would Say

I'm sorry big sister, I can't play with you.
I'm sorry grandpa, I can't go to the zoo.
I'm sorry daddy, you can't kiss me goodnight.
I'm sorry mommy, you can't hold me tight.
No one knows why, no one can guess.
But I can't play right now,
I've gone to rest.

~ Mary Lingle, TCF/Tyler, TX

Memories of my brother

Why is it so very hard
Accepting you are gone;
I guess the thought is unbearable
And I am not that strong.
I am too afraid to face the truth
And scared to feel the pain,
Of never seeing your sweet face
Or hearing your voice again.
Sometimes I see you in my dreams
And picture you still here, till I awaken dreadfully
To watch you disappear.
You were always happy and carefree,
And I don't understand
How you can seem so real to me,
As your grasp slips from my hand.
The sixteen years of life you had
Somehow do not compare,
To the tragic, senseless death you faced
And the cross you had to bear.
I try to think of pleasant times
And childhood memories,
But guilt and sorrow haunt my soul
And I cannot break free.
I am sorry for the times we fought
And for treating you so badly.
I am sorry for ignoring you
And wasting the time we had.
You were and are my brother still.
When you took your last breath,
A part of me went on with you
And I shall mourn your death.

~ Jennifer, TCF/Ellicott City, MD

A Letter to My Brother

Suddenly you're gone. I'm still here. Why? How can this be?
Someone tell me the reason, the answer. How can I fill the void,
the space once so full of life? What will I do? How will I be strong
for others when the sting of pain is so real, so near? Though
everyone seems calm, my soul screams at the injustice, the
unfairness of losing you. I miss you. I think of you every day
and feel you in my heart always. Whatever the reason for your
leaving, I know your living had a reason. Despite the brevity of
your life, you lived a lifetime's worth. You blessed us with your
presence, your specialness. I have only to think of you to feel the
joy you've left as a legacy. You shaped the purpose of my life. I
can see the world through your eyes.

~ Robin Holemon, TCF/Tuscaloosa, AL

LISA

What do I do I ask myself,
As I look at her picture standing on the shelf.
She was always laughing and so pretty,
why must it happen to her, why not me?
I am going to miss her oh so much,
that kind, gentle, loving touch.
God has now called Lisa to come,
up high into his beautiful kingdom.
I know that I will see her again,
in God's beautiful home known as heaven.

~ Michael Oetken, TCF/Sioux City, IA
In honor of my sister, Lisa Renae Oetken 1984 - 2002

WHEN FATHERS WEEP AT GRAVES

I see them weep
the fathers at the stones
taking off the brave armor
forced to wear in the work place
clearing away the debris
with gentle fingers
inhaling the sorrow
diminished by anguish
their hearts desiring
what they cannot have--
to walk hand in hand
with children no longer held--
to all the fathers who leave a part
of their hearts at the stones
may breezes underneath trees of
time ease their pain
as they receive healing tears
...the gift the children give.

~ Alice J. Wisler, For David, in memory of our son Daniel

Dad

I've watched his eyes grow tired, Liquid full with pain
from having to put dreams aside.

I recall leathery hands, large and warm as they
covered mine. I now realize caring that hid behind a
stone face, and hopes that patiently waited as I
searched for my own space.

I still hurt from times I couldn't succeed, I beg for
more time to show him the respect he needs. I see
his eyes, they still hold their light and I
Want him to wish me a million more good nights.
by Scott McFarlane 1965 to 1996

ARE YOU A GRIEF VICTIM OR GRIEF SURVIVOR?

Being a victim is a state of mind dictated by others.

A survivor dictates their own state of mind.

A victim fears the moments of grief.

A survivor welcomes those moments!

A victim knows about feeling down and tries to stay up.

A survivor knows feeling down is okay.

A victim tries hard to hide the tears.

A survivor never leaves home without kleenex.

A victim struggles to maintain a state of normalcy.

A survivor knows normal no longer exists.

A victim gets caught in isolation.

A survivor reaches out when they need to.

A victim is afraid they, in time, will forget.

A survivor knows they never will!

A victim sometimes feels guilty laughing.

A survivor laughs through their tears.

A victim tries at times to block out the memories.

A survivor embraces memories of all kinds.

A victim wants someone to cure their grief.

A survivor just wants someone to share their journey.

A victim struggles to get over their grief.

A survivor fights to get through it.

A victim tries to get on with their life.

A survivor lives their life knowing nothing will ever be the same.

A victim says, "Oh I'm okay..." then secretly cries.

A survivor openly cries... and says, "I'm okay."

-- Author Unknown

"DON'T STEAL MY GRIEF"

Don't try to make me feel better,
By quipping your cute jokes.
Don't try to rob me of my pain,
When I need it as my cloak.
I know you probably think,
You're doing me a favor,
But what you don't understand,
Is that my sadness is my savior.
Don't try to steal my right,
To express my grief in my own way.
You see, I lost my child,
And grief is the price that I must pay.
I need to feel the hurt and pain,
As it beats inside my chest.
Don't try to steal my grief,
When it's the only feeling I have left.

~Faye McCord, Co-Chapter Leader, TCF/Jackson, MS
In loving memory of my son, Lane McCord (1965 - 1998)

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Love – Gratitude

The agony is so great and yet I will stand it. Had I not loved so
very much, I would not hurt so much. But goodness knows, I
would not want to diminish that precious love by one fraction of an
ounce. I will hurt and I will be grateful for that hurt. As it bears
witness to the depth of our meaning – and for that I will be
eternally grateful.

~ Shirley Holzer Jeffery

A Bereaved Mother

Do not judge the bereaved mother. She comes in many forms. She
is breathing, but she is dying. She may look young, but inside she
has become ancient. She smiles, but her heart sobs. She walks, she
talks, she cooks, she cleans, she works, she is, but she is not. She is
here, but part of her is elsewhere for eternity.

~Author unknown

Many people will walk in and out of your life,
But only true friends will leave footprints on your heart.

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: _____

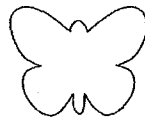
Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____

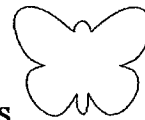
Date: _____

(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.

Vacations Are a Challenge

I'll bet that you never dreamed that there would be a time when you would not welcome vacation from work ... and the daily hassles of routine living. If you are a newly bereaved parent, you are probably not looking forward to the slow pace of summer, cook-outs, softball, and all the hoopla of summer, which probably includes a vacation or getaway.

Surrounded by summer fun, a bereaved parent need only to look around, and there are painful memories everywhere. When we are faced with all the living, loving, happy families with their children, the anger boils within, and we feel cheated. So this year we don't feel like going back to the beach cottage we visited for years or the favorite mountain retreat where we laid around for a week or two and relaxed, or the family-oriented amusement park where the kids had to ride every ride and see every attraction despite the temperature.

Those of us who have lost adult children also don't look forward to time away. Yes, we fear our memories, too much time to think--too many young people with their families and friends. We don't want to feel the emotions and pain this conjures up.

Yes, vacations can be a challenge to those of us who are newly bereaved and those of us who have been at it a long time. It takes effort to make plans and even feel good about going away ... and it won't ever be the same again without your loved one. While there are many suggestions to follow, ultimately all of us have to determine what is best for us.

For Brenda Holland and her family for the first few years, she consciously changed some of her routines in order to deal with her fears. She could not visit the same places she and her family visited when their son, Todd, was with them. So they tried new experiences, with new people, and in new places. That isn't to say that there were not some down times; however, the faster based vacations worked better because "I could not allow myself too much time to think."

For the first few summers, Brenda had to "dig in the yard, repaint lawn furniture, rearrange the garage, and took on a multitude of busy projects that were put off for lack of time. That was a better vacation for me, then forcing myself to go somewhere and be miserable."

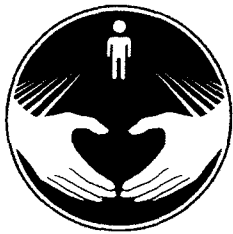
If you can find some enjoyment and relaxation, relish it...you deserve it, and it does not mean you don't care. It simply means you are healing. After nine years it has gotten much easier. Now, I walk down the beach and enjoy the solitude, or laugh when I see a toddler, or listen to the joy of kids laughing. It warms my heart. Yes, I miss Todd, but I know he enjoyed every minute of this season. I know that's what he would want for me ... and thank God I can do it once more!

~ Brenda Holland, TCF/Concord, NC & Barbara April, TCF/Pittsburgh, PA

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
 OF THE F-M AREA
 PO BOX 10686
 FARGO ND 58106

NON-PROFIT
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 PERMIT #1625
 FARGO, ND

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**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	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 & son, 45-cancer)... 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.