



The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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May 2015

Volume 32 Number 5

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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

May 14th

June 11th

Meeting Subject:

June - Balloon Release, everyone is welcome

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on May 28th @ Fry'n Pan
TCF National Conference - Dallas, TX July 10-12, 2015
TCF FM Chapter's 9th Annual Walk to Remember - August 8, 2015
TCF Regional Conference - Rochester, MN October 2-4, 2015

"Some say you're too painful to remember. I say you're too precious to forget."

Our Mom's group has been meeting on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Fry'n Pan Restaurant, 300 Main Avenue, Fargo. Our gatherings are informal as we come together to talk about our children, books that we've read, recipes we've tried, our jobs and whatever else comes up during the course of the evening. We all have times where the listening heart of another mom or grandma is welcome (and necessary). Please join us this month on Thursday May 28, 2015. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylev13@msn.com.

LOVE GIFTS

Neil & Kathleen Prochnow in memory of their son, Neil Prochnow Lyle, Tammy, Justin, Stacy, Hunter, Jersey, Jamie, & Jordyn Helgeson in memory of their son/brother, Jared Scott Helgeson
Lynn & Donna Mickelson in memory of their daughter, Allison Deutscher
We are deeply grateful for the LOVE GIFTS given this month. Our chapter and all chapters, are financed solely through your Love Gifts. Donations make this newsletter, postage, books, tapes, etc. possible. Thank you for your tax deductible gifts.

OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE.

WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS. ©2007

A Bereaved Mother Is...

A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who stands at a grave wondering how she is going to live the rest of her life without this child.
A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who thinks she will spend the rest of her life with this horrendous feeling inside.
A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who has to learn how to live all over again.
A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who wishes they would take Mother's Day out of the calendar.
A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who has to learn to accept the loss of her beloved child and uses what she has learned to help others.
A BEREAVED MOTHER IS someone who can again learn to smile, to look forward to the future and get excited again because her Compassionate Friends were there when she needed them.

--Zel Hester, TCF/Atlanta, GA

WRITING...ONE WAY TOWARD HEALING

By Donald Hackett - TCF, Hingham, MA

What I write mirrors the pathways of my thoughts. It brings some order out of confusion. More than this, each line is a milepost. When all within is chaos, I read the path to re-discover where I have journeyed, hoping to avoid encountering again those hurts already confronted. (Written five months after Olin's death).

Sadly, for most of us, the time of grieving the loss of our children seems like forever, often encompassing years. It does not matter how our child has died. It is only the loss that is significant. We claim our children in both their living and dying. We own life and death in our own beings, living on as often-reluctant survivors.

Life is no longer the same. For a long while, we seem to move in slow motion, wrapped in a merciful cushion of shocked dullness, cocooning the mind and all sensibilities.

Most of us, when that time is over, begin to seek ways to help ourselves. We frequently feel lost and even the desire to live is muted. Yet life pressures us to proceed with its business, and family and friends usually find it impossible to help us find our way. We are on a lonely journey, with few companions or none, and we need to find the means to resolve some measure of our unremitting pain.

I know. My son and only child, Olin, died in 1982. I have felt the utter emptiness of life and walked in our own shadowed valley. What is offered here did not spare me the darkness. Nothing can do that. But I have found this to be one way to help govern what is happening inside at a time when we have been reminded that we have no real control over the most important elements in our lives.

It would probably be best if we all had at least one friend to help us bear our hurt and grief over a period of several years. But friends are few and we must recognize that, for them, life has suffered only a partial interruption.

If we are able, we may see in ourselves the receptive friend we need, not to the exclusion of others, but in all the empty times we face. Through writing we can move feelings outside ourselves, onto paper, and in reading the work back to ourselves become the listener. We gain a perspective entirely apart from the echo chamber of our minds.

As long as one can write the word, 'I love you', externalizing feelings in this manner is possible. It becomes almost a problem solving method:

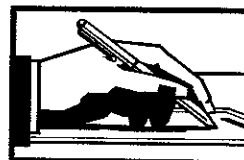
1. This feeling or thought is haunting my thinking.
2. In any words, series of sentences or phrases, record it.
3. Disregard spelling, grammar and structure.
4. Expand upon it if able. In the early months I could not do this. Just writing it down was enough.
5. Read it back out loud.
6. Change it if it doesn't sound right. It may not adequately express the feeling or the emotional content.
7. Read it aloud again to be certain that what is felt can be heard.
8. Even if it seems awkward or even a little absurd at first, continue and practice the method. It takes a while to perfect it, to become comfortable with it.
9. Share the writings or simply keep them. Do not throw the work away. At a future time this phase of grief may be confronted again. Knowing how it was handled before can help in working it out anew.

Often we are unable to find a safe place to vent our horror and anguish, thus trapping it inside to fester and infect what little seems to be left of us. But we can write at almost any time, and any excuse will provide at least a few minutes of privacy (even using the bathroom if necessary) to read it aloud.

In this communication of self to self through a concrete medium we have ourselves created, we develop an exchange that has the potential for profound results. It has certainly been this way for me, to such an extent that, from time to time, I have actually recorded feelings about writing itself.

Though these occasions were rare, I offer two in the paragraphs that follow, the first written five months after Olin's death and the second nine months afterward. I hope they will indicate how valuable it has been to me to be both talker and listener.

The compulsion to write is the visible desire of the mind to evaluate itself. From the page the mind can explore its own shallows and shoals, its depth and darkness. In writing the mind seeks its perspective...at once the tablet whereby thoughts may become clay and be re-written.



It has been five days since last I wrote and so eagerly does my hand and mind reach to paper, I now realize that all other methods of working this anguish through are secondary to the discipline of framing my thoughts, fears, guilts and loss in the structure of written expression. It is right for me and even as I record these words I sense a lessening of tension, rigidity and stress.

This act is almost as much process as it is expression. I am forced to categorize, concentrate and channel the chaos of my thoughts, thus increasing self-control. My inner atmosphere is altered and, for the time of writing, I am again empowered in this world where all my abilities to control have been shattered.

Today I need to say clearly that I have felt confined for five days. I have craved just a little freedom from the cell of my sorrow. Armed with pencil or pen I am capable of picking my prison's lock. Standing at last outside, the silent rush of words throws back my inner adversaries for but awhile, yet long enough to win another skirmish in this complex struggle to find hope and renewal on the battlefield that is now my life.

Where tongue has failed me, where tears leave me still unclean where mental wrestling leaves me spent and vanquished, the ability to write provides my release.

Thus, in grieving, this manner of externalizing grief has been absolutely essential. I could not deal with the confusion inside and had to find some way in which to work it out. On paper I could scream, cry, curse and flail against fate in any way I chose. It is vital to find a way to do this if only to seek enough sanity to live from day to day.

I began writing two days after Olin died, providing the eulogy for someone else to read. I waited a month before writing again. Since then I have written literally volumes of poems, short statements, letters to Olin, essays and many other things not even worthy of a name. Only a small portion of all this writing has ever been shared, because only this amount had any element of quality.

There is no magic in writing or in any other method. Nothing that we can write will alter the reality that our children are dead. In life as we know it, we will not hold or behold them again. Death is irrefutable, final and forever to all of our physical senses.

We will never think or live again with the same element of fullness. But we are alive and though living is harder, there can and should remain purpose. Our lives can carry the blessing of our child's love, its beauty enhancing our living, or we can let our personal diminishment be the only memorial we offer. The choice is our own.

Writing has provided me a vehicle to perceive the clarity. Through what I write, I can see where and what I am, the distance I have come and the direction I need to follow. I will continue to write. The road to recovery is long and there will always be moments of sadness. In recording these along with the beauties of joys remembered, I provide for myself a journal that speaks the story of my love for Olin.

It is my hope, that in sharing this method and a few samples of my own efforts, another tool will be available to help others meet life once more. In spite of its unspeakable difficulty, life can flow anew for all of us if we will resolve to try.

We have labored under a heavy burden just to survive. We must ultimately work as hard to live. If the situations had been reversed, as we had died, we would expect our children to diligently strive for life and renewal. Surely we cannot ask less from ourselves.



The moment a child is born, the mother is also born. She never existed before. The woman existed, but the mother, never. A mother is something absolutely new.

-Rajneesh

Someday

Someday, it won't hurt so bad and I'll be able to smile again. Someday, the tears won't flow quite as freely whenever I think of what might have been. Someday, the answers to "why" and "what if" won't be quite as important. Someday, I'll be able to use what your death has taught me to help others with their grief. Someday, I'll be healed enough to celebrate your life as much as I now dwell on your death. And someday, maybe tomorrow, I'll learn to accept the things I cannot change.

But for today ... I think I'll just be sad.

~ Steven L. Channing, TCF/Winnipeg, MB

A Day

A laugh a day keeps the heart pumping.

A tear a day keeps the mind clear.

A smile a day gives joy to others.

A hug a day gives the hopeless hope.

A thought a day brings loved ones near.

A memory a day brings you closer to me.

Laughs, tears, smiles, hugs stitched with thoughts and memories--

They're all in my days without you.

~ Pam Burden, TCF/Augusta, GA

Guidelines for Grieving Couples

Realize the death of your child will hurt more than you imagined. It will rearrange your life and world view. Your relationship with your partner will be stretched. There are some things you can do to reduce strain on your relationship.

You and your partner will grieve differently. Let go of the assumption that you "ought" to do it alike. Respectfully make room for each other's style.

Realize you cannot meet all your partner's needs. You have limits. You are both overextended. Do seek appropriate outside support when you need it. Focus on what you need. Let go of trying to get your partner to do something different about his or her own grief.

Grief takes its time and is not very predictable. Let go of trying to conform to anybody else's idea of how you ought to be doing.

Women, if you don't see "Dad" grieving in ways you recognize, stay clear of the trap of deciding this means he doesn't care about the baby (or you) very much. Ask him what he does with his sadness and sense of helplessness. Remember you both hurt. You will both feel it and show it in different ways.

Men, if your partner needs to talk about the baby and her grief is more than you can absorb, encourage her to find additional places to talk. Show her you care in other ways. Keep clear of the trap of thinking you aren't doing it "right". Let go of trying to get her "through it" easier or faster.

Remember other parents have survived this much pain. Life will be meaningful again. Keep remembering, life will become meaningful again

from "Coping with infant or fetal loss: The Couple's Healing Process" by Gilbert and Smart

Ritual

A gaze thru blurry window

When did it start to rain?

Then realize it's just the eyes

They're crying once again

Emptiness is mighty

Deep within begins the ache

Intense, this pain that surely

Will cause a heart to break

Shoulders gently tremble

A moaning soft and low

Arms tightly wrapped about oneself

Body rocking to and fro

A ritual of comfort

A numbing of the mind

A cleansing of the tortured soul

A knowing eye made blind

Thus begins the healing process

Of this I know so well

Without you, I fall victim to

This mindless cast of spell

~ Donna Gerrior, TCF/ Pasco County, FL

In Memory of Rob

Memory

Memory is a form of immortality

Those you remember never die

They continue to walk and talk with you

Their influence is with you always.

~ Wilford A. Peterson, TCF/Kansas City, MO



OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD

PARENTS

LUCAS ALLMENDINGER.....	34	DEAN & JO ALLMENDINGER
KEEGAN M DERHEIM	35	RICK & TAMMY DERHEIM
DANNY LEE FOWLER	46	CAROL & LIONEL KAIM
DAVID MARK KLEINGARTNER.....	51	NORBERT & LUELLEA KLEINGARTNER
MICHAEL LEALLEN KRAIG.....	19	JILL KRAIG & BRYAN MOFFET
BRANDON KUCK	28	CRAIG & TARA KUCK
ERIC LARSON	28	DALE & MARILYN LARSON (Grandparents)
JOSEPH CHRIS LARSON	58	DALE & MARILYN LARSON
VALERIE MURCH.....	36	PETER & LARAE MURCH

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD

PARENTS

KONNIE JEAN CHAFFEE.....	3	MARK & JEAN CHAFFEE
COLE HALLAND.....	5	STEVEN & JOAN HALLAND
JARED SCOTT HELGESON	5	LYLE & TAMMY HELGESON
DAVID KUEHL.....	8	KEITH KUEHL
STAFF SGT. DAVID KUEHL	8	LAURA KUEHL
REED JOEL PROCHNOW.....	16	NEIL & KATHLEEN PROCHNOW
CRAIG A SCHEER.....	3	WILLIAM & ELAINE SCHEER
MATTHEW AARON THIBEDEAU	6	MARY & GALEN SCHROEDER
JEFFREY D VOLK.....	8	JACK & JUNE VOLK
HEATHER WREN.....	4	DEB WAYMAN

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

Parents: A Thank You

By Darcie Sims

Everyone has one, but not everyone is one. Sometimes we love them. Sometimes we hate them. Sometimes they feel the same about us. Sometimes we are embarrassed by them, sometimes they'd rather not claim us. Sometimes we can hardly wait to talk with them. Sometimes they call us, while sometimes the hugs go both ways. Was your childhood filled with laughter and smiles or sadness and tears? They are a part of our past, part of our present and a whisper of our future. And now in this season of blooming days and gentle nights, it is time to remember our mothers and fathers. Mothers day and fathers day are days to remember those who gave us life. Perhaps they did not give you happiness, but you are in charge of that anyway. They gave us breath and that's enough. The rest of the story is ours to write. And so, on this Mothers Day, and on this fathers Day, I will say "Thank you" for giving me life and all of it's challenges. I learned about love from my mother and father, though they taught me in different ways. We each have been given a gift, an opportunity to live. And know too, that perhaps you are not alone on your journey. Are you following or leading? We were once someone's future, then we became the present and perhaps we are the past for someone new. Thanks Mom for the meatloaf. Thanks Dad for the stories.

SIBLING PAGE

Healing the Bereaved Child

Support groups help bereaved kids by:

*Countering the sense of isolation many bereaved children experience in our shame-based, mourning-avoiding culture.

*Providing emotional, physical and spiritual support in a safe, non-judgmental environment.

*Allowing them to explore their many thoughts and feelings about grief in a way that helps them be compassionate with themselves.

*Encouraging members to not only receive support and understanding for themselves, but also to provide help to others. (We know that children do not like to be different from peers and often resist being singled out for purposes of receiving help.)

*Offering new ways of approaching problems (e. Q. how to respond to the peer who makes fun of the fact that someone in their life has died).

*Helping them trust in what, for many, seems like an unsafe, uncaring world.

* Providing a supportive environment that can rekindle their love for life and living. In short, as bereaved children give and receive help, they feel less helpless and are able to discover continued meaning in life. Feeling understood by their peers and effective adult leaders brings down barriers between the bereaved child and the world outside. Our mourning-avoiding culture often invites children to keep their grief internalized and to adopt ways of avoiding the painful, but necessary, work of mourning. Support groups instead foster the experience of trusting and being trusted and have the potential of doing wonders in meeting the needs of bereaved children.

Excerpts from Dr. Alan D. Wolfert Bereavement Magazine
March/April 98
Bereavement Publishing, Inc.
8133 Telegraph Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80920

Twin Rainbows

Yesterday, I saw a glorious sight, a true vision of nature. I saw a double rainbow. The first rainbow, closest to earth, was very bright, colors clearly defined. The second rainbow, the one closer to heaven, was misty and loosely formed.

My dear brother, I thought of you. You represented the second rainbow. You were sent down to show me your presence, to show your closeness to me. I was told in a dream that you are never far away from me.

My life has changed. I have had to redefine and challenge myself - to make strong my weakness, because you always "took up the slack" for me. You always did for me what I could not do for myself.

This past year, one of our friends finally let go of his sorrow. He was able to talk and hug me, without breaking down or weeping over the memories of us. It has been difficult for our friends and family to separate you and me. They still say our names together. They have commented: "Where you see one, you'll soon see the other."

It has been hard for me to help all of these folks to heal; to let them know that they can still love me. I am the same person, but without you. At times, it has seemed an overwhelming task, but I can only try and be the friend that you taught me to be. Then, maybe, they'll see you are still here. All that you are - your spirit, love, and friendship - live through me.

Love, your sister,
Merla Rae Martin, Swinomish, WA

MOTHER OF SORROW

I hate to look at my mother
To see her in so much pain
Wrinkles hiding her countless tears
That would otherwise pour like rain.

I hate to see her hurt so much
But silently hold it in
Struggling to beat the heartbreak
When she knows that she can't win.

I hate to listen to her cries
Which she tries so hard not to show
Grasping on to everything
I wish she could let go.

I hate to watch her smile so bright
And know that it's all fake
Sure she's "Happy" every day
But she's acting for our sake.

I hate competing with the sorrow
And I can't bring back my brother
Drew is up there watching you
He living, loving and laughing--
Mother.

~ Kristy Sheldon, TCF/Ashtabula, OH

The Unfinished Path

When we were young, under your wing I was kept.
As I grew older, on your shoulder I wept.
With a problem I could come to you, day or night.
Just knowing your answers would always be right.
You joined the Marines and "*Semper Fidelis*" you barked.
I could see right then my path was marked.
It was a path to perfection or so I thought.
To be like you is what I sought.
Since your prints have ended, I don't know where to go.
I've asked Mom and Dad, but they don't quite know.
So I ask your advice just one more time.
Because your prints have ended,
The rest must be mine.

~ Tim Maloney, USMC, TCF/Hingham, MA

Printed with permission by the author

WHEN....

when we finally realize that you
are always going to be smiling
and dancing in our hearts,
then, our pain shall turn to joy.

~ Bob Walters, TCF/South Lake Tahoe, CA

REST, MY BROTHER

Rest, my brother, you now have peace.
The wars within you all have ceased,
And with the rising sun each day,
Upon the heaven you will play.
Until that day we meet again,
Know I love you, my brother, my friend.

~ Sandra Evans, TCF/Kearsarge, NH

*A Message for My Husband...
From a Grieving Mother*

My world has turned upside down since the death of my child. I am writing this to you because I know that my grief is difficult for you to understand. All bereaved couples probably have challenges in this regard, but our situation is complicated by the fact that my child was not your biological child.

You have asked how you can help me. This is what I need:

Acceptance. The enormity of my pain is incomprehensible to you, even though you have experienced the death of other family members to whom you were close. In addition, you were not part of my child's early life, so our relationship to him is very different. You can't know what it feels like to lose a child. I need you to accept that fact and listen to me when I want to tell you what it is like for me. I don't need advice or solutions —just a willingness to hear my feelings. I know that men and women grieve differently and although talking may not be helpful for you, it does help me understand my loss.

Patience: No matter how much you love me, you cannot cure my grief. I have to do this in my own way and in my own time. I need your patience because although I want this pain to go away quickly, I know it will not. I don't have control over when it hits me or how long it lasts. I need you to know that I am not intentionally wallowing in my grief, I am just trying to get through it the best way I can.

Flexibility. I understand your fears that since I am not "myself" right now, I am not the person you married and you want the old "me" back. I am less efficient and less able to concentrate and remember than before the death occurred. The small things that used to be important to me just don't seem to matter anymore. I have been assured that I will regain my ability to think and remember. Yet, things will never be the same as they were before my child died. I will never be able to view the world in the same way. You and your love are still incredibly important to me. I need you to be flexible as we gradually create a new normal for our family.

Support: Though I try to be strong, I have given myself permission to seek help and understanding from others who have experienced a similar loss. It is important that you support my efforts to attend counseling sessions or parent support group meetings, for I need these other people in my life right now. This does not mean that I love or need you less.

Openness and Understanding: I know that sexual intimacy is an important part of our relationship, but right now my heart and my soul are consumed with grief and my body simply cannot respond. I need your understanding as we work on openly communicating our needs to each other.

Please know that I truly appreciate your offers to help. Know, too, that I have faith that there will again be a time when our family will experience happiness and joy.

~ Catherine Johnson, Enumclaw, WA

(Catherine Johnson, M.A., is a Certified Grief Therapist and Death Educator who does individual counseling as well as facilitating a parent grief support group as part of an ongoing aftercare program for Weeks Funeral Homes in Washington state. She has published several articles and chapters on topics related to bereavement, made presentations on the national level, and serves on the Board of Directors for the Association for Death Education and Counseling.)

Mother's Day

The person who first thought up Mother's Day knew that it was a good idea. But ... did they realize that:

It could cause great pain for mothers whose arms ache to hold the one who once called them "Mother"?

In order to get the title of Mother, one would have to be willing to risk great pain?

They don't print greeting cards for mothers from kids who can no longer send one?

Mothers would treasure and save little notes and scribbled pictures that say "I Love You, Mom"?

There would be mothers who sigh as they wait for the phone call that won't be coming?

Instead of getting flowers, some mothers would be giving them?

And, did they realize that, YES, even if we knew ahead of time that our hopes and dreams would be smashed and broken...we would do it again? We would, again, take that little one under our wing, wrap them in our deep, incredible, unrelenting love, and...give them all that we have to give.

Mother...another name for love.

Alice Monroe, TCF/Mesa, CO

HOW TO HELP ME GRIEVE

Be there for me:
I feel alone, in pain.
I need a friend.
Share my sorrow:
Speak from your heart.
I have to talk about my feelings.
Let me grieve:
Listen to me, I need to cry.
We all grieve in our own way and in a different time frame.
Keep the memory alive:
It is always on my mind.
I have so many memories.
I need your help:
Help me, call me. pray' for me.
Do whatever you can.
Don't desert me:
Don't desert me after the 1st or 2nd week.
I need you especially on holidays.
Take care of yourself:
I need to depend on you.
Help me heal:
Involve me, listen to me months later.
I need your interest and invitations.
Be my friend:
Don't be afraid of me or my grief. It's okay to cry.
Lastly, please don't criticize until you've walked in my shoes.
Instead: Pray for me.

~ Vivian Sagert, TCF/Minitonas, Manitoba, Canada

You have to believe
the buds will blow,
Believe in the grass
in the days of snow;
Ah, that's the reason
a bird can sing.
On his darkest day -
he believes in Spring.

~ D. Mallode

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: _____

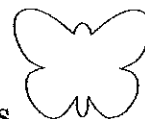
Date: _____

(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



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

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

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

THOUGHTS ON MOTHERS' DAY

I saw my friend standing, staring at a picture of my son and daughter, and I joined her. Instinctively we put our arms around each other as we stood there together.

"Loving him was worth the pain of losing him, wasn't it," she said. It wasn't a question. It was a statement of fact and we both knew the answer was "yes, yes, thousand times yes."

My friend is childless, but not by choice. I know how hard Mothers' Day is for me, but I can only imagine how difficult and empty it must be for her. For me there are the memories of the months I nurtured that child beneath my heart. Will I ever forget the time he actually kicked a purse off that bump I called my lap? And the times he hiccupped? Even if he had died at birth, I would still have those memories to treasure.

Then, there were those wonderful toddler days when he told the world all our family secrets and amused a whole airplane full of people when he said in his loudest three-year-old voice, "Tell the maid I want a coke!"

School brought a mixed bag of memories. Some good, some bad, but all a part of a boy growing up. How we loved him as a teenager. "I'm half kid and half adult," he said, "and the kid comes out on Saturday night." We lost him during those years, but sometimes I've consoled myself with the thought that 16 would be a magical age to be forever.

"Yes," dear friend, "loving him was worth all the pain of losing him, and more. Much, much more."

~ Judy Osgood, TCF/Central Oregon Chapter

Compassionate Friends Unveils "Create a Memorial Website" Program

When you ask bereaved parents their greatest fear, you're likely to hear that they're afraid their child will be forgotten.

That fear can now be put to rest through The Compassionate Friends new "Create a Memorial Website" program. In partnership with online memorial leader Legacy.com., the new Compassionate Friends program allows you to easily create an online memorial website so that your child, sibling, or grandchild will always be remembered. A portion of the proceeds from the memorial website you create will also go to support The Compassionate Friends and its many national programs designed to aid families going through the natural grieving process following the death of a child.

With these unique, easy-to-create memorial tributes, you can: customize the design, yet create a site in five minutes using Legacy.com's four-step process; include photos, videos, stories, and more; add music; invite family and friends to contribute and join in celebrating the life of the child you're remembering; and much more.

There is a 14-day, free-trial period and 25% discount off the first year's sponsorship. To learn more and to take advantage of these offers, visit www.compassionatefriends.org and under "Resources" click on "Create a Memorial Website."

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.