



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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Volume 30 Number 10

Chapter Leader - John Milligan (701)491-0364

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
 October 10th
 November 14th

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - October 24th
 Worldwide Candle Lighting® - 7 p.m. December 8th
 TCF National Conference - Chicago, IL July 11-13, 2014

LOVE GIFTS

Sherry Lassle in memory of her daughter, Jayme Lassle
 Lowell & Priscilla Bolger in memory of their son, Joseph Bolger
 Jill Kraig & Brian Moffet in memory of their son, Michael Leallen Kraig
 Sandra & Charles Klinkhammer in memory of their son, Alexander Brent Klinkhammer

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.

I had always thought that grief was forever and so too, it is for some. But there is a point at which one can redirect the sails of the ship. For those who do, the journey becomes vibrant and alive once again. It is a leap of faith, I suppose.....

~ by Darcie D Sims
 "Footsteps through the Valley"

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

"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 Fryn' 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 October 24th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-235-8158 or sherylv13@msn.com.

Halloween

It is here, this day of merriment
 and children's pleasure.
 Gremlins and goblins and ghosties
 at the door of your house.
 And the other children come to the door of your mind.
 Faces out of the past,
 small ghosts with sweet, painted faces.
 They do not shout.
 Those children
 who no longer march laughing
 on cold Halloween night,
 they stand at the door of your mind --
 and you will let them in,
 so that you can give them
 the small gifts of Halloween --
 a smile and a tear.

~ WINTERSUN by Sascha

For All Our Lost Children

I will see you again, in the fullness of time,
You will reach out your hand, I will take it in mine.
As together we walk, all the sorrow-filled years
Will dissolve in a cloud, in the midst of our tears.

I will see you again, we will laugh as before,
I will kiss your dear face, as I pass through the door
To a place where you are, and a bright shining sun
Will assure my glad heart that my life has begun.

I will see you again, though the journey be long,
I will try, for your sake, to sing some kind of song.
And for you, I'll endeavor to live through my pain,
'Til the moment, dear child, when I see you again.

~ Betty Kenna, TCF/UK

If love could have saved you,
You would not have died.
If tears could bring you back
You'd be by our side.
It broke our heart to lose you,
But you did not go alone;
For part of us went with you
The day God called you home.
God take us one by one
And breaks the family chain,
But somewhere in a better land
Our chain will link again.

~ John & Jill Gaffney

The death of a child is a fire in the mind. The mind burns with alternatives that never come to pass, with fantasies of remarkable recuperations, with dreams of adult accomplishment. If we let this fire burn compassionately within us, the grief of the mind, the fantasies, the burning of the spirit, begin slowly to melt away and the child comes more into our heart. Our anguish can be used to open more fully, to enter as completely as we can into this final sharing. And then, as Rabindranath Tagore wrote in the final lines of his poem, *The End*, "Dear Auntie will come with presents and will ask, 'Where is our baby, Sister?' And Mother, you will tell her softly, 'He is in the pupils of my eyes. He is in my bones and in my soul.'"

Steven Levine —From *Who Dies*

REMNANTS

Glimpses of you everywhere
Often catch me unaware.
Tell-tale remnants of the past,
Care-free days that couldn't last,
Echoes of a joyous laugh,
Comic books, a photograph

Calliopes and carousels,
Haunting songs weave mystic spells,
Relics from the past will wane,
But in my heart
You'll still remain.

~ Lily DeLauder, TCF/North Hollywood, CA

THE SCENT OF MY BABY

When we think of babies

We think of that certain scent.

The scent that newborns seem to have,
or me-that came and went.

The scent of my baby
is a different one.

It's not shampoo or baby powders

It's not that "newborn scent".

But that of fresh cut flowers.

For God chose my son to be with Him
And leave me down below.

So the flowers I place upon his grave
Are the only scent I know.

So when I smell a flower

My son always comes to mind

And the delicate scent of a flower

Seems to suit my son just fine.

For my son touched and brightened my life
Just like a flower may.

And the true beauty of a flower

Was my son in every way.

~ Debby Root, TCF/Fox Valle

ANGER

Don't tell me that you understand,
Don't tell me that you know
Don't tell me that I will survive,
How I will surely grow.

Don't tell me this is just a test,
That I am truly blessed,
That I am chosen for this task,
Apart from all the rest.

Don't come at me with answers
That can only come from me,
Don't tell me how my grief will
pass... That I will soon be free.

Don't stand in pious judgment
Of the bonds that I must untie.
Don't tell me how to suffer, And
don't tell me how to cry.

My life is filled with selfishness,
My pain is all I see,
But I need you, and I need your
love unconditionally.

Accept me in my ups and downs,
I need someone to share,
Just hold my hand and let me cry,
And say, "my friend, I care."

~ Joannetta Hendel, TCF/Indianapolis IN
Compassionate Friends newsletter
Vol 18, No. 12-Dec, 2001

HALLOWEEN, THANKSGIVING, CHRISTMAS, AND EVEN NEW YEAR'S DAY

Once again the time of celebrations is upon us. Ghosts, goblins, and a wicked witch or two express our farewell to October and prepare us for the turkey, family reunions and pumpkin pie that marks Thanksgiving. Then comes a most cherished holiday - Christmas followed by New Year's Day.

For many parents these occasions are almost unbearably difficult because our memories give us glimpses of excited costumed children voicing a timid "trick or treat" at neighbors' doors. We remember the fondness of a family Thanksgiving and chuckle at recalling best clothing smeared the color of cranberry. But, perhaps most of all, we live again the search for that favorite toy of book, or the vibrancy of a child's eyes drinking in the Christmas tree.

It is wonderful to remember, but in the first years at least, the pain overshadows most of the happiness we have in recall. But even for those along in years and growth from the time of bereavement, there is a longing that is forever barren, a hope that cannot be realized. The pain may be less wrenching, less totally consuming, but it is always there.

There are ways to help yourself if you wish, but it is very hard at first. You can curse the darkness, holding the pain close to you to protect what little seems to remain of you, and we who are also bereaved will understand, for we have gone that lonely road as well. Plan to give yourself lots of latitude and learn to tolerate your own behavior. If you spend all, one or two of these days in tears, depression or yearning, it simply means that you are not ready to face the task that the holidays have become. Perhaps in the future you will.

When I think of my son Olin, or the children we all have lost, I think of light and dreams, joy and laughter. There is no holiday memory or activity, beautiful present, or well-intentioned relative that will compensate for the life, the light, or the splendid future lost to eternity. Yet, as I grow older in my grief, I also remember that my child's light and dreams gave birth to my own joy and laughter. These wee gifts he gave me every holiday together with a limitless love that defies all time and space, even death itself.

So I have promised him a laugh back this Christmas, at least, and on the other holidays if I can. It's not a gift to put in a box or stocking and the packaging will still be the same old me. But he'll have my gift this year - a smile, a laugh, some joy from me. As I write this it seems very strange, for that gift is but a return of many he gave me, colorful packages, invisible to all but me, nestled in splendor beneath our tree.

~ Don Hackett, TCF/Hingham, MA

"You are So Strong"

Empty words
That don't touch the reality
That my life has become.
Walking through fog
Incredible pain
Searching for the beloved face I crave to see
The voice that I strain to hear over the noises
Of people who have no idea
Of what the world has lost

~ Charisse Smith, TCF/Tyler, TX

DEPRESSION

Depression is a natural result of grief. It comes to all of us. You may experience all or just some of the following. We hope that recognizing the symptoms and then working on the suggestions for coping will enable you to work through it. It can be done.

Symptoms And Solutions

A key symptom of depression is a feeling of deep pervasive sadness and hopelessness that lasts for longer than two weeks.

Other typical symptoms may be:

- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Insomnia or sleeping much more than usual
- Inability to enjoy anything
- Apathy/restless or anxious behavior
- Preoccupation with thoughts of suicide, or wishing to be dead
- Loss of interest in sex
- Difficulty in concentrating and making decisions
- Poor memory
- Can't cry/ won't cry/ can't stop crying
- Feelings of guilt
- Withdrawal from friends and relatives
- Headaches/ backaches (more frequent illness or colds)
- Self-criticism, pessimism, discouragement
- Neglect of appearance
- Irrational anger
- Alcohol and drug use to "medicate"

Some Suggestions For Coping With Depression

- Acknowledge your depression
- Accept responsibility for alleviating it
- Depression serves a purpose, face it and work through it
- Talk, it could help avoid serious depression
- Redirect energy into constructive channels to help create more pleasure in your life (trips, night out, etc)
- Exercise. It helps you to relax, work off tension and sleep better
- Lean into your pain. Allow yourself to experience the many feelings you get such as anger and guilt. Express them! Scream, hit a pillow, cry!
- Get involved with others, volunteer
- Try deep breathing, it stimulates physical energy
- Good nutrition is very important
- Think pleasant thoughts as hard as that may be, just one moment at a time
- Avoid alcohol as it is a depressant
- Work on self-esteem; do something that you do well; be kind to yourself
- Remember, you do have a choice. Depression is manageable and does not have to ruin your life

If the depression becomes so severe that suggestions such as these do not help you, PLEASE don't hesitate to seek professional help.

From *Support Newsletter POMC, Inc.*
TCF/Greater Cincinnati Chapter

"Grief is a choppy 'two steps forward, one step backward' experience."

Theresa Rando

How to Go on Living When Someone you Loves Dies

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED



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



SIBLING PAGE

My Time to Go Home

It was my time, the time for me
to go back home to be free.
A time for me to learn to fly,
with new wings above the sky.
The angels came to guide my way,
making sure I did not stray.
So many things to see up here,
I'm much at peace, I have no fear.
I see many people that I know,
all from the world I lived below.
I hear the bells when they ring,
I dance with the angels when they sing.
I know you miss me, and I miss you all
But I had to leave when I heard them call.
Please don't cry, I am so free,
try to be happy, Please for me.
I see you all from up above,
I continue to give you my eternal love.
My journey here has just begun,
I'm living my dreams I left undone.
Life is quick, you must live yours now,
I can't do it for you or tell you how.
But listen to these words, they come from my heart
they will help to ease the pain while we're apart.
We will meet again, face to face
only this time in a better place.
So you see, it was my time, it was his plan,
I was sent to learn lessons, and return when I can
Now it's time for me to move on,
But I'm always around you, I will never be gone.
And someday, you too will see,
this beautiful home made for you and me.

By Lisa McQuade for her brother, Bobby
We Need Not Walk Alone - Summer 2004

I Carried Him

I went into the school.
I felt cold, a feeling of death in the air.
My body shook, my knees gave way.
I stumbled to his locker.
The halls were empty.
I looked at the locker.
Took too many tries to open it.
In front of me were his books, jackets, and papers.
As I cleaned out his locker, tears came.
Never felt so alone.
Gathered his stuff in my arms.
Tears covered my face.
Slowly walked down the hall.
A feeling-
I felt him.
He was in my arms.
It felt like I was carrying his body.
I cried, many tears filled my eyes.
Thoughts entered my mind -
He was no more.

~ Donald Freeman, TCF/Brunswick, ME

MY BEST FRIEND

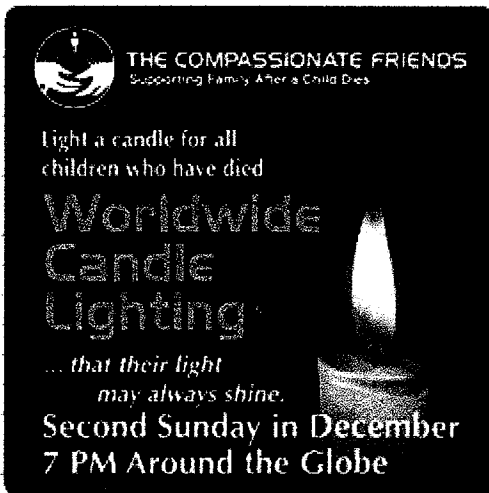
By Ryan Auch for his brother Ronny
BP/USA Augusta, GA
The fishing season's coming,
but no more fishing for me,
Because my best friend's not here,
to share his hooks with me.
We went fishing nearly every day.
Never hooked a thing.
But, oh, what fun we had,
Talking about the one that got away.
The garage holds all the fishing gear,
but I've no desire to fish.
It's not the same without him here.
Oh! If I could have one wish.
My wish would be
to bring my brother back to me,
so we could fish along the shore.
We'd have fun together,
And laugh once more.
All that's left are memories,
for me to think about.
I won't say goodbye;
I'll see you again.
But I will miss you forever,
MY BEST FRIEND.

SHE'S HERE...BUT NOT

She's here but she's there.
She's with us, but she's not.
She's right around the bend,
But then she's gone again.
She's far away but so near.
It's like she's gone but here again.
~ Stacy Sharp, TCF/Defiance, OH

YOU'RE HERE, NOW YOU'RE GONE

You're here.
Now you're gone.
It went just that fast.
Where'd it begin? Where'd it end?
Like a flash of lightning in the sky.
So bright and full of life.
Now gone and full of emptiness.
How'd it start? Why didn't it stop?
No one knows, but everyone cares.
Your spirit is flowing in the air.
You're not here, but you'll never be gone.
You will always rise with the morning dawn
You hold my heart
It will never be torn apart. ...
~ Catherine Ludlow, in memory of her sister, Cynthia,
who died by suicide in 1993.
Reprinted from Obelisk, Vol. 15, No. 45, a publication of
Catholic Charities LOSS Program, Chicago, Illinois.



Worldwide Candle Lighting

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting, held annually the second Sunday in December, this year December 8th, unites family and friends around the globe as they light candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age from any cause. As candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual wave of light, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memories of children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift from TCF to the bereavement community, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

The Journey

by Wayne Loder

There once was an old man who journeyed back to his hometown with the intent of reminiscing about the good times, as well as the sorrows he had experienced as a young father.

High on the list of places he intended to go was the elementary school his daughter had attended.

First he would walk around the huge playground where he had so often brought his daughter to play. He would stop at the slide, then the swings and finally the monkey bars, remembering the joy on his daughter's face as she had moved happy and carefree from one adventure to another.

Then he would enter the school building. His first stop there would be the kindergarten room. He could still see in his mind that memorable day almost 50 years before, his daughter's outstretched hand enclosed in his firm, yet tender, grip. As they searched for her classroom, their loving touch finally ended as she walked through the open door to a new stage in her life,

The old man's next stop would be the tiny gymnasium where his daughter had performed in the holiday pageant. How beautiful she had appeared, dressed in soft white as she sang "Silent Night, Holy Night".

Finally he would stop at his daughter's third grade classroom. The old man remembered clearly the day he and his wife had stood outside the closed classroom door, tears streaming down their cheeks. Finally, gathering their courage they entered the room to comfort and talk with their daughter's classmates who, as yet, failed to comprehend why they would never again see alive the little girl they all considered their best friend.

The anticipation grew strong as he neared the street where the school stood. Arriving at the spot, the old man wept at what he saw. The plain white concrete structure he expected was no longer there—a sleek modern building in its place. An asphalt parking lot now covered the old grassy playground.

Understanding that he would never be able to fulfill his mission, the old man started thinking about the transient nature of life - how nothing ever remains the same.

Communities change. Buildings are here today and gone tomorrow. Loved ones live - and die. Even nations rise and fall.

But then the old man had another thought: The love his daughter had passed onto him still remained within his heart - 46 years after she had died.

He realized that it didn't matter if a day, a year, a decade or a century were to pass. The candle of love would continue to burn bright in his heart.

And he thought how even an eternity from now the love he still carried for his daughter would have transcended his own death and been returned to her a thousand fold.

The old man turned his car around to head back toward the highway. Taking one last glance in the rear view mirror at the new school, he understood that memories live on not because of a building, or a classroom or a playground. They remain alive inside each of us because love outlasts even the sands of time.

A smile crossed his lips.

His mission had been completed!

We Need Not Walk Alone Winter 1996

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: _____

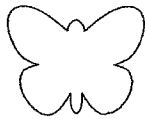
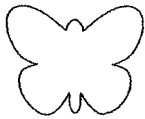
Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____

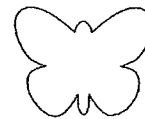
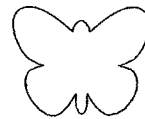
Date: _____

(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.

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.

Strange Words Welcome New Members

I am always amazed at the instant empathy we each feel as new members come to their first meeting. We have the strangest welcome for these parents: "We are so sorry you have to be here."

In other organizations the questions are probing: where did you go to school, where do you work, where do you live? All designed to "size up" the newcomer, put him or her in the proper perspective of a neatly ordered world. For us, this information is meaningless. We know the world isn't neat and orderly; we discovered that when we lost our children. We care about you, the newly bereaved parent, whose life was tossed into a cosmic blender when your child died. We care because we are you. We have been here a while, in this purgatory of pain. We have learned to live our lives in a different way, to place value on understanding and hope, the intangibles of the purest meanings of life. We have learned to value each other, to reach out and talk, to wait patiently during the silences needed to form thoughts. We listen intently as you quietly say your child's name, tell your child's story, speak of your heartbreak.

Yes, this is a different kind of welcome. But it is the most deeply sincere welcome we will ever receive. We are kindred souls, you and I. Each of us lives in the "after death" world of losing our child. Each of us has learned gradually that the hope we have attained has made life better, lessened the pain, moderated the isolation, tears, emotional devastation and pure mayhem that once overtook us. Each of us has learned this slowly, in our own time and in our own way.

Each month new parents who have suffered the most horrific loss that a human can endure are welcomed into our group. We reach out, we listen with our hearts and we remember.

Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF/Katy, TX
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen

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	Secretary	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Treasurer	Chuck Klinkhammer 701-298-2929	Initial Contact	Jamie Olson 701-219-3865
Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen..... 701-730-0805	Newsletter Database	Mike Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Website Administrator	Sheryl Cvijanovich..... 701-235-8158	Librarian	
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) 701-491-0364
- 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.