

The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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The F-M Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
127 2ND AVE E
WEST FARGO, ND
Please enter on the West side. Our meeting is in the Fellowship Hall - lower level, west side.

Upcoming Meetings
October 13th
November 10th

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on October 27th
@ Fry'n Pan
Angel of Hope Candle Lighting -
December 6th
Worldwide Candle Lighting -
December 11, 2016 @ 7 p.m.

LOVE GIFTS

Sandy & Chuck Klinkhammer in memory of their son, Alex B. Klinkhammer
Joan & Steve Halland in memory of their son, Cole Halland
Robert Poehler in memory of his son, Ron R. Poehler.
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.

"There is a light in the world, a healing spirit, more powerful than any darkness we may encounter. We sometimes lose sight of this force, when there is so much suffering and too much pain. Then suddenly, the spirit will emerge through the lives of ordinary people who care and answer in extraordinary ways."
Mother Theresa

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

"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 October 27th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylcvl3@msn.com.

Our children were a part of our lives and no matter how brief or how long their life span, we shared in their lives as we anticipated their arrival, shared their entry into the world, or grew with them as they grew. They existed, they were, and they will always live in our hearts and in our memories. No one can ever take away that specialness of having been allowed to give life to our children, who, in death, have given the miracle of life more meaning.

What if we had not had them at all?

~ JoAnn McAliley, TCF/Dothan, AL

Dear Bereaved Father

I am very sorry about the death of your child. When my son died, I remember thinking there are no words to describe the myriad of powerful feelings. I have also learned that there are no words I can share to take the pain away or give meaning to your sense of loss. The truth is, the future will be forever different and your grief... well... will be with you forever, though I believe eventually you'll learn to live with it. And you will learn to go on living.

What advice do I have? First attend to your grief. Someone wrote, "The pain that is unavailable cannot be healed." After my initial outpouring of grief, I felt I needed to be strong for my wife. I buried my son in the ground and buried myself in busy-ness. I discovered much later that my wife concluded I didn't really care about my son. I did not listen to the chaplain's advice. He said "Who said you have to be strong to be supportive? Go have a good cry on each other's shoulder."

I discovered that grief is one of those "pay me now or pay me later" realities. Let the tears flow. Seek a healthy outlet for your anger. Share your feelings of guilt. Give your sense of helplessness and depression time and space.

Mothers and fathers grieve differently. Her grief is not better or worse, just different. Her coping style is different. Be patient with her and yourself. Grief is a roller coaster of emotions. You will not ride the ups and downs at the same time. You cannot take her grief away, but you can share it. You cannot prevent her from suffering, but you can prevent her from suffering for the wrong reasons. Be a loving listener. Share your feelings. Hold each other tenderly and often.

Men often have trouble reaching out for support. Certainly many have trouble offering support to men. I got so tired of hearing, "How's your wife doing?" I rarely heard "How are you doing?" I cannot stress how important I believe it is for you to find and use one or more support persons. No one can do your grieving for you; no one grieves well alone! I urge both of you to join a bereaved parent support group. Consider reading – together – a book about grief.

Your child has died. Your dreams and memories will never die. Death demands that you let go, though that is no easy process. Letting go is not forgetting. Letting go is ultimately forgiving this tragedy, experiencing acceptance along with sadness and having the courage to risk living and loving again. I wish you a healthy journey through your grief – from another bereaved father.

Chaplain James Cunningham
TCF Victoria, Inc. Australia

What am I

I have only one son.
And I am grateful to be so lucky.
But to others that one is none.

What am I?

He has a day of birth.
But he did not move, he did not cry.
He never had a life on this earth.

What am I?

Now I have nothing.
No dirty diapers, no midnight feedings.
But I have the pain the death of a child can bring.

What am I?

My son did live!
For those nine long months inside of me.
We learned because he had so much to give.

I am a mother!

~ Page Hassman, TCF/Austin, TX

Those of us who have walked through our grief—and found there is a future—are the ones who must meet others in the valley of darkness and bring them to light.

~ Rev. Simon Stephens, Founder, TCF/Coventry, England

OUR LOVE

We created you, With our love...
We cared for you, With our love...
We nurtured you, With our love...
We honored you, With our love...
We buried you, With our love...
We remember you, With our love.

~ Alice & Otto Weening, TCF/Cincinnati, OH

A Grandparent's Point of View

The death of a child is the most tragic thing that can happen to anyone. It affects so many lives – family, friends, and even strangers.

I lost my grandchild through death, and only a grandparent can understand the love a grandparent has for a grandchild and the loss that is felt when the child dies. For a grandparent, it is a double loss. Not only is your grandchild gone, but you also watch your child die each day. The smile that was always on her face is no longer there.

The hurt is so deep and the questions so many. You feel helpless as a parent. You can't kiss the hurt away as you did when she was a child. You have no answers for her questions, for you don't understand the many feelings that you are experiencing yourself. Each day you hope and pray for a little ray of sunshine to show on her face. You search for a little something to say or do that will comfort her. It seems that there is no end to the suffering.

As time goes slowly by, the healing process begins. In time, a ray of hope will show on her face and a smile will make her eyes light up again. She will turn to you for what little comfort you can give her. There will always be a part of you that is gone, but in time you can learn to live with the part that is still here.

~ Ruth Eaton, TCF/Savannah, GA

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

Free From Bondage

Your spirit is so soft
even through tragedy all around.
Your body is a temporary sign
of your existence.
Your essence is of pure love,
which relieves all suffering.
Your spirit is almost free from this life
free to fly as an angel to unknown dimensions,
Most will never know.

~ Lisa Melaerts, TCF/Las Vegas, NV

The Winds Of Change

The wind of change blows through our lives, bringing many changes

The North wind blows icy winds, and our lives it rearranges.

The East winds blows turmoil, bringing unsettled emotions to bear

The West wind blows moisture, with many tears to share.

But the South wind blows warm, a healing to our life

Easing up the pain of a broken heart of strife.

Wind from all direction brings a mixture into our lives, blowing on the wind of change

Some are gaunt and icy, some warm and healing, they come in every range.

If the North wind blows upon your life today

Hold on, a wind of change is coming, waiting to blow healing gentle winds your way.

Hoping gentle breezes for your day.

~ Sheila Simmons, Dallas, GA

October Chill

The October evening chill makes me feel even more lonely for you and as the leaves fall from the trees, so do my tears fall. For some reason I never really cared so much for Halloween, but what I would give to see you in a princess or bunny suit dressed so cute. I'd love to be worried if you would be warm enough in your little outfit and concerned you would eat too much candy and have a tummy ache. But instead of Trick-or-Treat, we have an anniversary date - five years now since you died and so I buy flowers for your grave instead of a cute costume and candy. Life is not fair! But no matter how many more Octobers come & go, one thing will remain, you are mine a part of my life, in my heart, and bound to my soul. As the leaves of the trees turn crimson & gold, your memory and love warm me from the inside out and I imagine we would be out jumping and playing in a big pile of leaves with giggles & hugs and with no notice of the October chill.

To Suzanne from Mommy
Vickie Smith, TCF/Bend OR

~ I loathe a friend whose gratitude
grows old, a friend who takes his
friend's prosperity but will not
voyage with him in his grief ~

~ Euripides

My Cover-Up Mask

I wake in the morning with tears in my eyes. I have to face another day without my child. I prepare to go to work and put on my "cover-up mask" as I go out to face the world.

I get my work done and even chat and sometimes smile at my co-workers. And they say, "My, how well she seems to be handling her loss." If they only knew what I am suffering under my "cover-up mask." My work day is over, and I go home and remove my "cover-up mask," and the tears come again.

I go to bed, as the darkness of night envelopes me and sleep eludes me, the tears come again. I have gotten through another day with my child. I have learned I must take one day at a time for the rest of my life, since it will never be the same again.

~ Joan Watson, TCF/Salisbury, MD

Don't let death cast ugly shadows,

But rather warm memories of the

Loving times you shared.

Even though death comes,

LOVE NEVER GOES AWAY

~ Darcie Sims

What about Parents of Troubled Children?

At one of our meetings we discussed a subject that is not new. "Why did MY child have to die? He was so good. I was a good parent, a good person. There are so many 'bad' kids out there whose parents probably wouldn't care. Why couldn't it have been one of them?" Those thoughts probably sound familiar to many of us. Let's look at them from a different perspective.

Perhaps the child was especially good or gifted. However, it is quite common, in our grief, to remember only the good things, sometimes even putting the child on a pedestal.

In the beginning, there is nothing wrong with that. We need all the comfort we can find. But it is wise for us to remember some of the trying times which humanize our dead children yet do not diminish our love for them one bit.

What about the parents of a troubled child? Do they really hurt less or care less? I think not. It is the nature of a parent to nurture, to care for and to love their offspring. To love them more than life itself. The parent of a troubled child might have a harder time adjusting to their loss. Their parenting job may have been very difficult and heartbreaking. Their list of "if onlys" may be longer than ours.

What are their memories? The immediate ones may be very sad and painful. They may have to dig deeper into the past to remember the good times. For these parents, the desire to go back in time may be very intense.

Guilt may also be more intense. We all make mistakes, some wrong decisions; we are not perfect. Why do we expect it of ourselves? We are human beings, subject to all the human frailties. So, if some children go through rebellious times, it does not make them bad kids, or their parents bad, either. Learn to forgive yourself for being human!

We tend to forget that our children's lives are influenced by many things outside the family. Peer influence and pressure is tremendous. Once children enter school, it becomes more difficult to "control" and influence them. They are pulled from all directions. Yet parents assume responsibility for all of the problems.

I hope that parents who have gone through troubling times with a child who has since died will realize that no harm is meant by bereaved parents expressing thoughts such as those cited earlier. There is not one bereaved parent who would wish this pain on anyone else. Although we hear those words spoken, what we are really hearing are the sounds of pain and anguish. Another form of the old question "WHY?"

No matter how your child lived, and no matter how he died, our hearts go out to all parents who are suffering. The bottom line is, we love our children no matter what. That is what unconditional love is all about.

~ Mary Ehmann, TCF/Valley Forge, PA

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
QUENTIN LEE CLEMENTS.....	2.....	JAMIE KUROWSKI
TYLER JUSTIN EICHOLTZ.....	32.....	STEVE & LISA EICHOLTZ
TABATHA HUNTER.....	28.....	RORY & KAREN HUNTER
DILLON T KAPAUN.....	23.....	TODD & SUZIE KAPAUN
ALEXANDER BRENT KLINKHAMMER.....	29.....	CHARLES & SANDY KLINKHAMMER
AMY CHRISTINE LARSON.....	31.....	DALE & MARILYN LARSON (Grandparents)
SUE ELLEN LARSON.....	53.....	DALE & MARILYN LARSON
JAYME ELIZABETH LASSLE.....	31.....	SHERRY LASSLE
KAREN LAUMAN.....	45.....	FRANK LAUMAN
SONYA L NANKIVEL.....	56.....	DELORES COOPER
SOPHIA GREY-LYDIA PERRINE.....	9.....	LACEY PIKE
NICHOLAS J SADEK.....	30.....	JOHN & TAMMY SADEK
ALICIA SPURR.....	32.....	TAMMY SPURR
ALLISON SPURR.....	32.....	TAMMY SPURR
JASMINE ROSE WILSON.....	8.....	KAREN WILSON

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
JASON ESKILDSEN.....	17.....	RICHARD & DENISE ESKILDSEN
JOHN CLAYTON JACKSON JR.....	3.....	NORMA JACKSON
JAY JOHNSON.....	3.....	BRUCE & BEV JOHNSON
JEFF KADLEC.....	5.....	FRANK & MAXINE KADLEC
DANA DAWN KEBLAR.....	17.....	DEBORAH FACEY
DAVID MARK KLEINGARTNER.....	12.....	NORBERT & LUELLA KLEINGARTNER
ANNIE PAGE LEGGIO.....	18.....	JOSEPH LEGGIO
VALERIE MURCH.....	16.....	PETER & LARAE MURCH
MATTHEW ALLEN OLSON.....	9.....	DICK & LINDA OLSON
JUSTIN OLSON.....	3.....	CHERIE HARLAND & BILL BARTHOLOMAUS
ALIVIA LEA PLUTOWSKI.....	1.....	TIFFANY & JARED PLUTOWSKI
ALLISON SPURR.....	32.....	TAMMY SPURR
KATHY STRAND.....	2.....	MURIEL LYONS
BRUCE ALLEN ZAESKE.....	8.....	ALAN & CHARLEEN ZAESKE

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

Anniversaries of the Heart

"The holiest of all holidays are those kept by ourselves silent and apart;
The secret anniversaries of the heart."

-- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

SIBLING PAGE

My First Five Years as an Only Child

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

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

--Kristin Steiner, TCF/Staten Island, NY

JUST FOR SIBLINGS: WHAT SIBLINGS THINK

These thoughts were recorded by a TCF sibling group as they explored their feelings about the death of their sibling. I will print their comments here to help siblings know they are not alone and parents to better understand what their surviving children are feeling.

I would like my father to know:

- It helps to talk.
- What really happened.
- That if anything happened to him, I would feel the same way.
- He is not alone and I want to laugh and cry with him again.
- That his son/daughter knew that he loved him/her.
- That it's okay to talk about my brother or sister when I'm around.
- I do cry, not a lot but I do cry.

I would like my mother to know:

- I love her.
- It's okay to cry and I'm there for her to talk to.
- That I will always love her.
- She has been my example of giving and love.
- That my sibling is at peace with God.
- It's okay to talk about the past.
- I cry.
- I knew my sibling in a different way.
- I think about those times and smile through my tears.

Sibling Group - TCF Lehigh Valley, PA

AN EMPTY CHAIR

The first wedding was two years after Alan, my twin-brother, passed away. My second oldest brother was getting married. I was waiting for the question, "When was I going to get married?" I was never asked so I couldn't use my prepared response, "When Alan could be my best man."

I thought if I did get married I would have an empty chair next to me. If Alan couldn't be my best man, I didn't want anyone. My brother's name would appear in the program (that he would have designed) as honorary best man.

This year I turned thirty-six, it was my sixth birthday without Alan. At the restaurant we had made a mistake, the reservation had been made for one too many. I had ended up sitting next to an empty chair.

Although I thought, I was doing better, no longer crying at family events. I now realize that I will not have an empty chair at my wedding, if I can ever bring myself to get married without Alan being there. The loss I feel will always be there but it's much worse seeing an empty chair

Daniel Yoffee

It's the Thought That Counts

Often in times of trouble we
don't know what to say,
So we choose to say nothing,
and sometimes run away.
When friends are really hurting,
we don't know what to do,
So we offer weak excuses
or say we're hurting too.
It really doesn't matter
what kind of gift we bring;
We only need to be there
if we don't bring a thing.
It truly is amazing
what a hug can do,
When heartache numbs the senses,
and friends depend on you.
There's comfort just in knowing
that you are not alone,
When tears are overflowing,
and hearts are cold as stone.
It's the loving prayers of others
that balance our accounts,
For when we measure love,
it's still the thought that counts.
~ Clay Harrison, TCF/North Shore Boston

TO COLLEEN

To a wonderful sister, who was special in every way.
I miss you greatly, but know you are with me every day.
We had many good times together; those memories
I will treasure forever.
What happen is hard to believe, because it was
much too soon for you to leave.
God needed another angel and we had no clue, all
those years he was watching you.
Now you are in heaven, eternal paradise a place that
always sounded so nice and where we
will meet someday.
Until then, for each of us you will pray, because God
wanted it that way.

Love always, Shaun Hingham - TCF

HALLOWEEN MEMORIES

My Ian was 20 when he was killed in a work accident. I had my children very young and grew up along with them. Since Halloween dress-up had always been one of my favorite, most creative times, I suppose I passed along my excitement to Ian.

We didn't have much in the way of money, so we made our own outfits. We threw together a real "winner" (He won first prize!) in first grade when he came to me at 8PM the night before and said... "Mom...I gotta have a costume for school tomorrow for the Halloween contest!" Before long, he was transformed into a "lobster monster"...with cardboard head, body, claws, protruding eyes....I don't know how he made it to school on the bus! Or how he saw to get around that day! But that blue ribbon was quite a prize for us both!

I found Ian on the back porch one day passing along the family tradition to his little sister...He was painting her face with some kind of creamy goo so she could be a "ghost"...The resulting photograph is one of my favorite "partner in crime" shots of the two kids.

About 3rd grade, he decided to make his own costume...a "punk". He quickly went out of the house with friends after a mischievous glance at me and a coat over his shoulders. We discovered when he got back from knocking on all our neighbor's doors that he had torn up a t-shirt and written obscenities all over the shirt. I'm sure the old ladies on our street were mortified!

He continued to celebrate Halloween even into his teens and would always ask, "What're we gonna do for Halloween, Mom?" He would spend hours carving a pumpkin or setting up spooky music to freak the kids on our street...and would end up going out to enjoy the candy frenzy with all the other "kids," even though he was 6 feet tall. His last Halloween was spent away from us with friends. He had been talking about dressing up as "Braveheart" and finally found a kilt and a wig. We were told he was the life of the party, meeting everyone at the door and threatening to lift his kilt...only to show off boxers with hearts on them! We finally saw a photo of him in that outfit after the funeral...what a treasure!

Ian enjoyed life to the fullest and I feel so lucky to have been a part of his amazing time on earth. So, "what am I gonna do for Halloween this year?" I've made my own costume (Mona Lisa) and will be partying with friends....

Live life one day at a time....and make each one a masterpiece!

~Love, Becky Ian's proud mom, TCF Atlanta

THE FIX-IT MAN

Being a "jack of all trades and master of none" all my life, our children thought I could fix anything that they broke. I myself thought that anything that was made could be fixed, and maybe even fixed better than when it was new. Many times one of our children would bring me something that had broken, thought they didn't know how it got broken, and asked me if I could please fix it. Most of the time, I would attempt to fix whatever it was, and one way or another, I would succeed.

Then one day, something "broke" that I never will be able to fix. One of our children died. This time, the something that broke, I could not fix. There are no tools to bring a dead child back to life.

All I can think and wonder is, how and why did I end up with something I cannot fix? Since that time, it is hard for me to fix something that breaks. It brings to mind the one big thing I will never be able to fix, the death of our child.

Bill Krieglestein, TCF, Fox Valley
Gratefully lifted from St Paul MN TCF Website

HIDING BEHIND THE MASK

I think we as bereaved parents wear masks 12 months out of the year, not just on Halloween...perhaps on Halloween we should just wear our own grief-stricken face and not be noticed.

How many masks do you wear – even in a week...or a day?

Do you wake up in the morning feeling the pain, with the knowledge that your child is no longer here? Do you "mask" that face with your old normal face to say good morning to your spouse? You can take the mask off and cry in the shower...it somehow feels so good to release

some of those tears. Time to wake the children for school, put on the cheerful, positive mom/dad mask. After dropping the children off at school you can once again remove the mask and feel. Soon you will be pulling into the parking lot at work...get the next mask out...the mask of competent professional. WOW! That is a lot of mask changing in a short time!

Strange, isn't it, how the MONSTER pain of grief makes us put on masks to cover the pain often to those who really care and who perhaps are putting on their masks to cover their pain when they see us. Maybe we could all be so much better off if we removed our masks and let the monster pain out.

- Lovingly lifted from Bereaved Parents USA

Season of Many Feelings

Autumn is here once again, as it comes every year, and with it comes my falling tears. This time of year is the hardest of all. My heart is still breaking, once again it is fall. Memories once so vivid are seeming to fade. My time spent with you seems some other age. This season reminds me of grief and of pain, yet teaches of hope and of joy once again. For the trees are still living beneath their gray bark, and you my sweet child are alive in my heart!

- Cinda Schake, TCF/Butler, PA

Candles in the Night

Candles flame in darkness,
flicker, steadily glow,
bringing light from shadows
and help to soothe me so.
My daughter, like the candles,
gave my life true light.
I use the candle's beacon
to connect us in the night.

As I light the candles,
my wish and my request
is that she'll see my signal
and know my love's expressed.

As her light joins my lights,
our worlds touch and flame.

As I snuff out the candles,
I softly say her name.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry
from *Stars in the Deepest –
After the Death of a Child*

Hope is a rare gift that, if we are lucky, comes to us with the power to heal our lives. I've come to know that the deepest sense of hope often springs from the hardest lessons in life. It is in the darkest skies that the stars are best seen.... perhaps it is divine irony that within the darkest moments we are capable of revealing the greatest light, demonstrating what is best with humanity.

~ Richard Paul Evans

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: _____

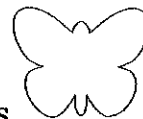
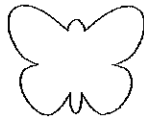
Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

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.

WHY WE STILL GO TO TCF

"Are you still involved with that group? Aren't you over it yet? Why do you go?" These are questions I often hear now that it has been more than seven years since Mark died. I suspect you hear them too. There are easy answers.

But not everyone understands, unless you have been there. Here are ten I can think of:

1. Because we never want the world to forget our child, so what we do we do in his or her name.
2. Because when we reach out to help someone else, we also help ourselves.
3. Because someone was there for us when we needed it most; now the best way to say "thank you" is to pass it on by being there for others.
4. Because it is the one thing we do that can bring something positive out of tragedy.
5. Because we have found in TCF better friends and closer bonds than we ever thought possible. Here we can cry and hug people even if we don't know their last name or what they do for a living. And it doesn't matter.
6. Because few people are qualified to walk up to a newly bereaved family and say, "I know how you feel." And because we can, we must.
7. Because sometimes we need to talk, too, and to remember and share. We are further along than many around us, but we never forget.
8. Because many of us believe that one day we will meet our child or brother or sister again, and he or she will ask, "So what did you do with your life after I left?" And we will have an answer.
9. Because our presence might help newly bereaved families understand that they will survive and even laugh again.
10. Because we love cold coffee, cookies, and hard metal chairs.

~ Richard Edler, TCF South Bay/L.A., California Chapter

BROKEN DREAMS

As children bring their broken toys with tears for us to mend,
I brought my broken dreams to God because He was my Friend.

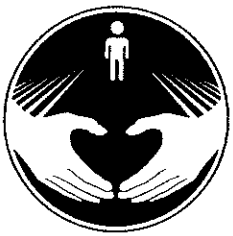
But then instead of leaving Him in peace to work alone,
I hung around and tried to help with ways that were my own.
As last I snatched them back and cried, "How can you be so slow?"
"My child," He said, "What could I do? You never did let go."

- Author Unknown

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	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 & 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.