



The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

TCF's National Office
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook IL 60522
Toll-free (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

F-M Area Chapter
P.O. Box 10686
Fargo ND 58106
www.tcffargomoorhead.org
October 2017

Volume 34 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 12th
November 9th

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on October 26th @ Fry'n Pan
Annual Worldwide Candlelighting - December 10, 2017 7 p.m. local time
TCF National Conference - St. Louis, Missouri July 27-29, 2018

LOVE GIFTS

Brenda Kluth in memory her son, Brandon Kluth
Paul, Kara, Ashley, Kyle, Chase and Arianna Bailey in memory of their son/brother, Nick Bailey
Charles & Sandy Klinkhammer in memory of their son, Alexander Brent Klinkhammer
Patty Ruch in memory of Patrick Ruch

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.

Happiness is a butterfly, which when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.

~ Nathaniel Hawthorne

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 Fryn' 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 26th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylc13@msn.com.

A Name for My Pain

I have given a name to my pain—
it's called "Longing."

I long for what was,
and what might have been

I long for his touch and smell of sweat;
I long to hold him one more time.

I long to look on his beautiful face
and impress it upon my memories and heart.

I long to return to the day before
and protect him from his death.

I long to take his place,
so he may live and have sons too.
I long for time to pass much faster,
so my longing and pain will lessen.

Will they?

~ June Williams-Muecke, TCF/Houston West Chapter

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

The Seashell

As the seashell holds the song of the ocean
So will I hold you constantly, gently
within.

And those who listen closely enough
will hear your voice in mine

And know I sing for two.

For you have filled me full.

You continue to live deep in me,

And I will keep you always, quietly, surely,

As the seashell keeps the sea.

~ Anonymous

AUTUMN

What a strange time is autumn.

More than a season,

Autumn can be like a mood
Softness and warmth and abundance
Drift from the sky like a smile.

And you remember the seasons
Before the children died.

They do seem faraway sometimes,
Those seasons, now.
But not the children -
they are always here

In this strange time, this autumn,
When the softness
And the warmth
And the abundance
Of unseen children

Drift from the sky like a smile.

~ Sascha Wagner, TCF/Des Moines, Iowa

A Mule Pulling a Plow

It's been almost four years now
The day is still the same
My heart is still broken
My life is still aflame

I live in mere moments
Awkwardly trying to get by
One moment I'll smile
The next moment I'll cry

Still bearing this great loss
I stagger forward somehow
With this burden upon me
I feel like a "Mule Pulling a Plow"

I know the day will come
When I leave those fields of hurt
The plow, I'll no longer pull
As my body turns back into dirt

With purpose and reward
My soul will soar above
There, I'll rejoin them
Altogether, in everlasting love

~ Donald Moyers, TCF/Galveston County, TX

Grief over the death of a child is the hardest work that most of us will ever do. While we all wish for the pain to stop, we need to remember that we grieve intensely because we loved intensely. It is unrealistic to expect the grief to ever totally go away, because the love we have for our child will never go away. Our grief is an act of love and is nothing for which we should be ashamed.

~ Elaine Grier, TCF/Atlanta, GA

Father's Love

Father weighed us once a month
And totaled up the pounds
Then he weighed the dog and cat
(As silly as that sounds)
He then included their weight, too,
And with pride and joy he'd say,
"Hmm. Yes. I do believe
Here's what we have today"
There's thirty-five and forty-eight
And Jim weighs eighty-nine,
Spot and Puss weigh twenty-four
And all these pounds are mine!"
Father loved us not by age
Nor virtues that he found
He gathered all his children in
And loved us by the pound.

~ Dee L. McCollum, TCF/Atlanta, GA

1st Prize Light Verse Award - North Carolina Poetry Society

ON NOT SAYING IT

I never got around to saying it.
There was always tomorrow,
When the time would be more appropriate.
Besides, you hated "embarrassment,"
Or was the embarrassed one really me?
Now I say it a lot,
To the sky, to your photo, to a gravestone.
Knowing facts say you cannot hear it,
But believing, inside me, you can.
When a child, a youth, then a young man,
I remember how you watched my face.
First as your god, then as your monitor,
Finally, I hope, as a friend.
But "I love you," as years went by,
Were words we kept bottled inside.
Now that you've left, the bottle overflows.
Until I, too, cross the Divide,
I have to believe you knew.
And forgave me for not saying it.

~ Leonard Ruppert, TCF/Atlanta, GA

STANDING

People say
"Oh you are doing so well,
you are so strong,
you are an inspiration!"
We do not feel strong.
We feel shaken to the core,
Saddened beyond belief,
Pain beyond comprehension,
Forever changed.
What do they see that we cannot see?
"That a horrible storm,
unexpectedly ripped through
our lives and we are
still standing"
They are amazed
We are paralyzed
Still Standing

~ Julie Short, TCF/Southeastern Illinois Chapter
In Memory of Kyra

TERRIBLE TWOS

Jenny,

Since your death, you have missed:
2 birthday anniversaries,
2 Halloweens,
2 Thanksgivings,
2 Christmases,
2 summers and swimming pool sessions,
2 school openings,
2 sizes of shoes and clothing,
2 children who died of heart conditions and
2 pictures of them now sit beside yours,
too many children who died
too soon
too young.

Your Mom

~ Susan Privett

In Memory of Jennifer Privett

THE TEARS

The tears streamed down, and I let them flow as freely as they would,
making a pillow for my heart. On them I rested. Thank you, Lord, for
the healing gift of tears.

Augustine

"Confession" IX:12

Wearing a Mask

Halloween is a great time to pretend to be someone else. You can
be mean and nasty even though you're usually a pretty nice person, or
you can be scary when you usually are the one that gets scared. You
can pretend to be strong and powerful or beautiful or mysterious or
famous. You can pretend to be anything on Halloween. It isn't fun,
though, to try to always wear a mask. Sometimes for a person who is
grieving, it seems like you need to always pretend to be your old happy
self. Your friends and others may want you to forget about your loss
and go on as if nothing much has changed. But it is really hard to mask
your true feelings all the time. It is much better for you if you can "take
off your mask" and just be yourself sometimes. If you let your feelings
out, then you are being honest with yourself and others. By taking off
your mask and revealing your true self, you will be a much more REAL
person. It's better to save masks for Halloween.

From the Inside Fernside Newsletter

Treasured

What I love most is
Waking to the dew of
The grass upon my boots
What I love most is
Smelling the end of
The day upon
My shirt, holding
My child
What I love most is
Something I don't see
Everyday or smell or
Touch
What I do love most is
The memories of those
Moments if only buried in
My dreams

~ Scott Newport, TCF/Royal Oak, MI

**OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED
BIRTHDAYS**

CHILD	PARENTS
TODD TIMOTHY CLARK.....45	JEFFREY & ANNA MARIE CLARK
QUENTIN LEE CLEMENTS.....3	JAMIE KUROWSKI
TYLER JUSTIN EICHOLTZ.....33	STEVE & LISA EICHOLTZ
TABATHA HUNTER.....29	RORY & KAREN HUNTER
DILLON T KAPAUN.....24	TODD & SUZIE KAPAUN
ALEXANDER BRENT KLINKHAMMER.....30	CHARLES & SANDY KLINKHAMMER
AMY CHRISTINE LARSON.....32	DALE & MARILYN LARSON (Grandparents)
SUE ELLEN LARSON.....54	DALE & MARILYN LARSON
JAYME ELIZABETH LASSLE.....32	SHERRY LASSLE
KAREN LAUMAN.....46	FRANK LAUMAN
NICHOLAS J SADEK.....31	JOHN & TAMMY SADEK
ALICIA SPURR.....33	TAMMY SPURR
ALLISON SPURR.....33	TAMMY SPURR
JASMINE ROSE WILSON.....9	KAREN WILSON

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD	PARENTS
JASON ESKILDSEN.....18	RICHARD & DENISE ESKILDSEN
JOHN CLAYTON JACKSON JR.....4	NORMA JACKSON
JAY JOSHNON.....4	BRUCE & BEV JOHNSON
JEFF KADLEC.....6	FRANK & MAXINE KADLEC
DANA DAWN KEBLAR.....18	DEBORAH FACEY
DAVID MARK KLEINGARTNER.....13	NORBERT & LUELLA KLEINGARTNER
ANNIE PAGE LEGGIO.....19	JOSEPH LEGGIO
PAUL MORLOCK.....1	DELLA MORLOCK
VALERIE MURCH.....17	PETER & LARAE MURCH
JUSTIN OLSON.....4	CHERIE HARLAND & BILL BARTHOLOMAUS
MATTHEW ALLEN OLSON.....10	DICK & LINDA OLSON
ALIVIA LEA PLUTOWSKI.....2	TIFFANY & JARED PLUTOWSKI
ALLISON SPURR.....33	TAMMY SPURR
BRUCE ALLEN ZAESKE.....9	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 tcfl313@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

Older grief is gentler.
It's about sudden tears swept in by a strand of music.
It's about haunting echoes of first pain, at anniversaries.
It's about feeling his presence for an instant one day while I'm dusting his room.
It's about early pictures that invite me to fold him in my arms again.
It's about memories blown in on wisps of wood smoke and sea scent.
Older grief is about aching in gentler ways, rarer longing, less engulfing fire.
Older grief is about searing pain wrought into tenderness

~ Linda Zelenka, TCF/Orange Park, FL

SIBLING PAGE

"A Completed Journey"

We're all searching for the one moment,
That one sparkling place in time
That answers our questions.
Change is in the wind
Confidence is upon the sand
I realize as I stare out at the ocean
This is my moment
I embrace it, take it in
And lose myself in the infinity of Utopia.
I've found the answers
Now I am reborn, perfect
A child of the sand, wind, water and stars
Never look back
Never to return.
~ Jed Hutcheson - For my brother Jacob

My Sister

If she's here,
Where is she?
Mom, where is she?
You said she's here.
So where is she?
We had fun together,
I remember that.
Oh, that's where she is,
In my memory
So even if I move,
I'll still be with her.

~ Sara Bundock, Cheshire, CT

I REMEMBER YOU

I remember the way you laughed,
You meant so much to me
I remember the way you smiled,
You were the way a Christian should be
You were so smart,
Your presence could light up any room
We all miss you so much,
We wonder why you left so soon
Memories of you make me smile,
While others make me cry
I wish you could have stayed for one more day,
Now all I have is the question, "Why?"
The day that you were called
Was sad for everyone,
We tried and tried to save you
But nothing could be done
I know that you are in Heaven,
And I know that you are free
But when I'm sad I stop and wonder,
Do you remember me?
Now all that I have left,
Are memories of what you would do
Some are happy, some are sad,
But I remember you.

Sara Knauss, TCF/Phoenix, AZ
In memory my brother, Dalton William Knauss
1984 - 1999

The Elephant in the Room

There's an elephant in the room.
It is large and squatting,
So it is hard to get around it.
Yet we squeeze by with "How are you?" And "I'm Fine."
And a thousand other forms of trivial chatter.
We talk about the weather. We talk about work.
We talk about everything - except the elephant in the room.
There's an elephant in the room.
We all know it is there.
We are thinking about the elephant as we talk together.
It is constantly on our minds.
For you see, it is a very big elephant. It has hurt us all.
But we do not talk about the elephant in the room.
Oh, please say her name. Oh, please, say "Barbara" again.
Oh, please, let's talk about the elephant in the room.
For if we talk about her death,
Perhaps we can talk about her life?
Can I say, "Barbara" to you and not have you look away?
For if I cannot, then you are leaving me
Alone... In a room... With an elephant

~Terry Kettering

MY FRIEND

At one time you were my world.
As the years passed us by, you were my brother, my friend.
The older we grew, the closer we drew.
We lived our lives and suffered many sorrows, together.
But to suffer this one alone, I just don't know.
You made your own rules, you conquered the world, and more--
Heaven's door.
The world will forever be a little emptier, a little colder, and yet
Heaven is so much richer.
Blessed God, please watch over my friend until I can join him;
we'll all join him soon.
I love you still, my friend.

~ Lori Boyle, TCF/Wellsville, NY

A Season of Many Feelings

Fall is a season of many feelings
Autumn is here once again
As it comes every year.
And with the leaves
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.
But yet teaches hope
And joy once again.
For trees are still living
Beneath their gray bark,
And you my sweet child
Are alive in my heart.

~ Cinda Schake, TCF/Butler, PA

A Box of Coins

My husband Bruce and my stepdaughter Jess drove to our son's apartment to retrieve his things shortly after his death. They returned with clothing, bed linens, lots of CD's, his backpack, and a computer desk that he and I assembled together at his new apartment. They brought back the computer, kitchen items, and a New Balance shoebox.

I recognized the box. We gave him shoes as a parting gift as he left for college that fall. His college expenses stressed our budget. I second guessed most purchases but not the shoes. He needed them. I wondered why he had kept the box.

It was filled with coins and a red cup. Jess said the cup had been on his desk. Apparently at day's end our son Art emptied his pockets of loose change into the cup. Eventually Arthur poured the contents of the cup into the shoebox. The boy had a savings plan.

I saved the box of coins. I could not toss them into a change counter. He had touched each one. I stored the box under a bed that he had used as a youngster.

After four years, I pulled out the box and spent a quiet evening counting coins. \$74.14. I wrote a note from Art to an anticipated nephew or niece that he would never meet and slipped it in the box. "Use these coins for college." From Art. The box slid under the bed again. I would find the right place for those coins—maybe a charity, maybe the scholarship initiated in memory of Arthur. Not now.

Last month Jess called me with a funny story about her toddler son, my first grandchild. Jess and Brandon had taught their young son to drop coins into a big red piggybank. They were scrounging for coins because their son liked the game so much.

Perfect! Those shoebox coins just found a new home! That weekend I delivered the box of coins to them. The next time I babysat, I pulled a few coins from the shoebox and handed them to my grandson, one by one. Mason giggled as he touched each one and dropped it squarely into the piggybank. We both smiled at each other.

The boy has a savings plan. Must be genetic! I am grateful for the gift of time with my son's possessions. TCF monthly meetings taught me to be patient with myself until I found my new balance. It took almost seven years. I gave away my son's coins with no regrets.

~ Monica Colberg, TCF/Minneapolis, MN
In Memory of my son Art

Mourning Is My Mode

Today I realized that I have become a shell of the person I once was. What would my child think of this? I am alone, my only child is gone, yet I know he would not be pleased with the way I have isolated myself, wrapped in invisible crepe, sheltered by a mental wall. This is not the mom he knew. I am someone different now.

What am I to do with this? I feel like a lonely, mourning swan, swimming endlessly from shore to shore. I have no direction, I want no direction, I just keep moving with no purpose. I must get a grip on myself.

I know my motions must take on some meaning. I look to others for help. Yet I realize that if I do not reach out and help myself, I will crash on the rocks with the raging tide.

I decide I will add one new thing, one new event, one new person or one new writing to each day. I will reach out to others. I will force myself to move slowly back into life.

I will spend some time with my family. I will enjoy their children. I will mentor a child. I will start putting my thoughts into a written form.

I begin to do these things. I feel better. I attend another meeting of the parents who have lost their children. I feel as if I do belong here. It has been four months since my son died. I am overwhelmed.

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

Companion Sojourners

The dictionary defines the word "sojourn" as temporary place where one may stop, rest, visit, dwell, abide and lodge. The Compassionate Friends is an organization of fellow sojourners. At our monthly meetings we stop for a while to find respite from a world that does not understand what it means to lose a child. We find a safe dwelling where there are others who are just like us. We don't need to have any special skills to be a sojourner. As bereaved parents we instinctively reach out to one another. Those of us who have been on our journey for a while are drawn to comfort the others who have more recently embarked on their path of grief. We don't need to say any special words. A discerning look, a listening ear, or a gentle touch can be balm the other person needs to give them a moment's solace. We are companion sojourners, wounded healers and compassionate friends.

~ Janet Reyes, TCF/Alamo Area Chapter, TX

Gifts from Amy

I recently had to take part in the one-year anniversary of my precious daughter Amy's death, a day that we as parents never want to take part in. I was distressed as it really sank in that this was real and very final. Last year at this time I had been in such a state of shock that now, looking back, I began to realize the daze I was in for several months. This year I was in no such daze—the pain was all too real.

What could I do with this day? How could I make it through? In my pain I remembered one of the first things I had said when Amy died. I had expressed thankfulness for all the things she had taught me by being in my life. As I thought of this now, I began to write down all the many things. Soon I found I was taking my list a step further and listing all the things I had learned since Amy's death, I began to see my list as a list of gifts from Amy. Before Amy's death I had thought of myself as a religious person, going to church, believing in God, even knowing several Bible verses by heart. I was wrong. I have only now begun to see the difference in religious and spiritual. Only now, after Amy's death, have I embarked on my very own spiritual path. What greater gift could my child have left me!

I took my list and put it in a box, wrapped it up and tied it with a bow. I put the box in my closet. This time next year I will open the box and celebrate all the wonderful gifts my daughter has given to me. And I'm sure I will add more as the years go by.

~ Suzanne Owens, TCF/West Columbia, SC
In Memory of my daughter Amy

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.

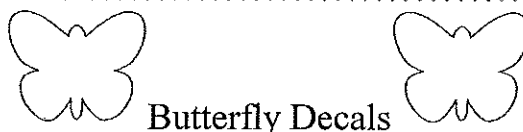
Your Name: _____

Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____

(Signature) Date: _____

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)



"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.

"Seasoned" Grievers and Small Groups

Our meetings average 35 attendees. We break into three smaller groups and tighten the circles so we are knee-to-knee. We can now hear the soft voices of grievers, and we share a sense of closeness that is so important in the circle process. A newly bereaved may feel more comfortable and is more likely to share with a smaller group. The larger the group, the easier it is for the newly bereaved to disappear into silent tears and not share. One facilitator in each group guides the discussion and acts as a "gatekeeper" to ensure that each member has a chance to speak.

At a recent meeting, I found myself in a group of six "seasoned" grievers, three of whom were facilitators; a rare happening.

So ... what do "seasoned" grievers talk about when in a small circle? What could possibly be said that the six of us have never discussed before? Our facilitator began by telling about her daughter's art book that her teacher recently found. That led to discussing the book *Elsewhere*, by Gabrielle Zevin, a young adult book with an unusual theme.

"It's difficult to imagine my daughter at age 32, but I know what she looked like when she was eight!"

The subject was a springboard for sharing memories of enjoyable experiences. We were relaxed as we spoke of remembered events. We drifted rudderless, from one thought to another, until someone mentioned gravesite visitations.

A member told of trying to grow grass on his son's grave but it always died. It turned out that some of his son's friends regularly visited the site drinking beer ...

Another member spoke of feeling comfortable celebrating Mother's Day by having a beer while sitting next to his mother's crypt.

We talked about pennies, dimes, and butterflies ... We talked about "visits" by our children's spirits.

There was laughter

There were tears.

We spoke of loneliness and moments of closeness. Of most importance was the feeling of togetherness that this small group shared. We agreed that small-group experiences like this are the very heart of The Compassionate Friends! At hour's end, we all spoke our children's names in unison: *kennydrawsabrinaariellemercerober!*

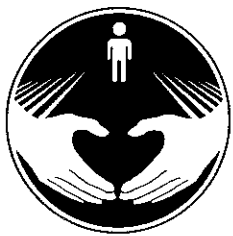
Sam and his wife, Phyllis, are coeditors/facilitators of Walking this Valley, the monthly newsletter for the Tucson Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. Their son Robert died of a sleep disorder July 2, 1997, at age 23. They have three surviving children.

~ Sam Turner, TCF/Tucson, AZ
In Memory of our son, Robert

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	Daniel Sauvegeau & Mary Bjerken
Secretary	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287	Website Administrator	Sheryl Cvijanovich..... 701-540-3287
Treasurer	Chuck Klinkhammer..... 701-298-2929	Initial Contact	Jamie Olson..... 701-219-3865
Mailing Committee	Contact Us to Join	Librarian	Contact Us to Volunteer

LIBRARY INFORMATION: We have an extensive library available. Please feel free to check materials at our next meeting.

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

HAVING A BAD DAY OR NIGHT? Feel free to call and talk to any of the following:

- John Milligan (son, 25 - car accident)..... 701-491-0364
- Lois Gangnes (son, 24 - accident)..... 701-282-4083
- Nancy Teeuwen (daughter, 15 hours - illness)..... 701-730-0805
- Mark & Hella Helfter (miscarriage, son, 35-accident & son, 45-cancer) ... 701-235-9622

Love gifts must be received by the 15th to be included in the next month's newsletter. If you wish to give a love gift please complete:

Love gift given in Memory/Honor of _____
 Name _____
 Address _____
 Relationship _____ Born _____ Died _____

NOTE: By giving a love gift, you are giving us permission to include your child(ren) in our monthly birthdays and anniversaries.