



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

Volume 27 Number 9

Fargo ND/Moorhead MN

September 2010

PLEASE NOTE OUR MAILING ADDRESS ON THE BACK PAGE  
REGULAR MEETING: 7:30 P.M. SECOND THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH

This month's meeting is on September 9<sup>th</sup>

Next month's meeting is on October 14<sup>th</sup>

*There will be a guest speaker at the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Therefore, this month's meeting will begin a half hour early at 7 p.m.*

*The speaker will be Marshal Olson and his topic is about "Signs from our loved ones."*

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH - 127 2ND AVE E - WEST FARGO, ND

Please enter on the West side (Elevator entrance). Our meeting is in the Fellowship Hall - lower level, west side.

If you have topic ideas for future meetings, please let us know.

The Compassionate Friends National Office, P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

Phone number: 877-969-0010 - E-mail: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org) - Web Site: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

Website for the Fargo/Moorhead Chapter - [www.tcffargomoorhead.org](http://www.tcffargomoorhead.org)

If you have any pictures, stories, or poems of your child/grandchild/sibling that you would like to share on our website, please submit them to Sheryl Cvijanovich at [sherylc13@msn.com](mailto:sherylc13@msn.com)."

Help us save money and paper.....

To receive the newsletters via email in a pdf format, please send an email to the newsletter editor, Nancy Teeuwen at [FMTCFNWLTR@LIVE.COM](mailto:FMTCFNWLTR@LIVE.COM). Please be sure to include your name in the email. Also add this email address to your contacts, so when the newsletter is sent to you, it does not go to your junk mail.

\*\*\*\*\*SEPTEMBER LOVE GIFTS\*\*\*\*\*

Billy Olafson & Shandra Malheim in memory of their son, Zandyn Larry Malheim Olafson 7/2010 - 7/2010

Paul & Kara Bailey & family in memory of their son/brother, Nick Bailey 1/1993 - 9/2009

Clara J Lock & family in memory of their son/brother, Charles (Chuck) Lock 9/1969 - 11/1995

Jerry & Anne Barbee in memory of their friend, Matthew Gaffney 9/1982 - 2/2005

Gerald & Delores Beyers in memory of their daughter, Tammy K Chaput 2/1959 - 8/2006

We are deeply grateful for the LOVE GIFTS given this month.

Our chapter and all chapters, are financed solely through your Love Gifts.

Donations make this newsletter, postage, books, tapes, etc. possible.

Thank you for your tax deductible gifts.

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

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS. ©2007**

For information on other chapters: TCF National Office.....877-969-0010

## To Know Me

To know me, is to know I worry. I worry even though I know I shouldn't. I worry even though I know it is completely unproductive. I worry, as I breathe.

I was faced with raising four sons as a single mom. Sons that seemed to get into every kind of scrape imaginable, and I found myself facing emergency room visits for stitches & broken arm or two. I began to restrict their activity, fearful that when they rode their bikes something "bad" could happen, or when they roller skated, or when they just played rough as boys often do. I became the over-protective mom I didn't want to be. I saw other mom's letting their kids build skate board ramps, and taking them dirt bike riding...but I was too fearful. Sports? Oh heavens, you know they could get hurt don't you? So, to a degree I sheltered them from the experiences that they should have enjoyed. Fear robbed them of some of their childhood experiences.

The thing I worried about more than any other was that one day, I would have to bury one of my children. I was so fearful that when they went out, I would literally make myself sick with the "what ifs". Go to sleep before they got home? Never happen. Fear would paralyze me at times.

"You'll break the worry habit the day you decide you can meet and master the worst that can happen to you." Arnold Glasgow. God knows, I DID NOT want to have to meet and master this fear...but it happened and I had no choice but to deal with it.

Shane was a safe, cautious driver who took it so very seriously. He would readily volunteer to be the designated driver so that everyone would safely return from a night out. Shane's life ended on a stretch of road that is flat and clear for miles and miles. Flat everywhere except for the tiny spot that took his life...an overpass. Shane's life ended when at the top of this tiny hill, he was met head-on with a drunk driver who got on the freeway going the wrong direction. A minute or two later, or a minute or two earlier, and he would had the opportunity to see it and react. BUT, he was killed instantly and I was faced with my worst fear.

In the six years since Shane's death, I have learned that what everyone said about worry was true. WORRY is such a waste of time. I spent hours, hours and hours fretting about something that happened anyway. Did any of that worry make it not so? Absolutely not. Did any of that worry make it easier to bear when it did happen? Absolutely not. Did any of my protective measures stop it from happening? Absolutely not.

I coped. I believe it was God and a band of angels that saw me through, but I coped better than all those worries I had conjured up in my brain. It was then I realized I would not live the rest of my life worrying about every little thing. A worrier will never stop worrying completely, let's be realistic. BUT, I don't restrict myself, or my boys, from enjoying life out of fear. If it's going to happen, it will happen whether I worry about it or not. The only thing that worry does is rob us of today's joy, while it instills a fear of something that may or may not happen tomorrow. I wish I never had to face this fear. I wish more than anything Shane was still here, however, from this day forward, instead of living by fear and worry, I remind myself of a better motto...Carpe Diem (Seize the day).

~ Judi Barkman, TCF/Redland, CA

~Tears are the silent language of grief~  
Voltaire

Worrying is like sitting in a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere.

English Proverbs



### Please, don't ask...

Please, don't ask us if we're over "it" yet.  
We'll never be over it.  
Please, don't tell us they're in a better place.  
They aren't with us.  
Please, don't say, "At least they aren't suffering".  
We haven't come to terms with why they had to suffer at all.  
Please, don't tell us you know how we feel unless you have lost a child  
Please, don't ask us if we feel better.  
Bereavement isn't a condition that clears up.  
Please, don't tell us, "At least you had them for a time".  
What year would you choose for your child to die?  
Please, don't tell us, "God never gives you more than you can bear".  
Please, just tell us you are sorry.  
Please, just say you remember our children, if you do.  
Please, just let us talk about our children.  
Please, mention our children's names.  
Please, just let us cry.

~ Rita Moran

### Daily message from Healing After Loss

by Martha Whitmore Hickman

We found that our circle of friends shifted....We were surprised and disappointed that people we thought were good friends became distant, uneasy, and seemed unable to help us. Others who were casual acquaintances become suddenly close, sustainers of life for us. Grief changes the rules, and sometimes rearranges the combinations.

### " I wish for you..."

*Comfort on difficult days,  
Smiles when sadness intrudes,  
Rainbows to follow the clouds,  
Laughter to kiss your lips,  
Sunsets to warm your heart,  
Gentle hugs when spirits sag,  
Friendships to brighten your being,  
Beauty for your eyes to see,  
Confidence for when you doubt,  
Faith so that you can believe,  
Courage to know yourself,  
Patience to accept the truth,  
And love to complete your life.*

Author unknown

## SIBLING PAGE

### DID YOU KNOW

Did you know:

you need to rip up sheets  
to make a kite that flies.  
That you cannot build a fort  
without a tree with Y's.  
That matchbox cars run better  
when they are full of paint.  
Or, if you hold your breath too long,  
you probably will faint.

Did you know:

a baseball bat  
makes a terrific gun.  
And, yes, an egg can really fry  
when left out in the sun.  
And cardboard boxes seem to make  
the most terrific trains.  
And you can swim in puddles  
after gentle summer rains.

Did you know:

that baseball cards  
clipped upon your bike  
will make the awful clicking noise  
that parents never like.  
A crabtrap can be used to catch  
the most exquisite birds  
and pig latin  
serves to provide  
a private world of words.

And Did You Know My Brothers?

They died a few years back.

They taught me all these marvelous things

That sometimes sisters lack.

*Kathie Guthrie - TCF/Cape May County, NJ*

### BROTHERS

Brothers grow together with wind in their hair, wild  
schemes in their heads, and with mud in their raggedy  
pants.

They look back into one another's eyes, with spirits  
burning from a common flame. They wrestle life with such  
similar hands.

No tree is too tall or hill too high to climb, for those whose  
bonds are flesh and set together through time.

Yet the song ever told us that dragons live forever but  
not the little boys.

Suddenly one of us is all alone, clinging to the memories of  
wind and mud and hills of stone.

We're still together in our own way, if not but in a  
burning little flame.

~ Ken, TCF/Salem, OR

*Death leaves a heartache no one can heal.*

*Love leaves a memory no one can steal.*

*Found on a headstone in Ireland*

### *Siblings - Tribute to My Sister*

You always held within your heart a strength and  
purpose that few others would have known. My success  
in life and joy I owe to you for helping me along the way.  
In the eighteen years that I was blessed to have you in my  
life, you taught me so many things. You gave me new  
challenges, and a new place was created in my heart the  
day you were born. You were there when I stumbled and  
fell, and you gently helped me up again. Your little hand I  
held while rocking you to sleep at times. At darker times  
it was you who held my hand, always a beacon of light for  
me to focus on. And, always, when I needed a friend, you  
were there.

Throughout the years you were always my family. You  
honored me with your love and trust, and though different  
than you, always accepted me just as I was. More than my  
own flesh and blood, you were my sister, and I will always  
cherish the time we had together. We have laughed,  
complained, and sometimes wept, but we always  
persevered. The good times, the bad times, the joy and  
sorrow, will always bind our hearts as long as I am able to  
draw my breath.

We traveled together for awhile and our journey was  
fulfilling, but now our paths have diverged and we had to  
say goodbye. To my years with you, I bid farewell.  
Ahead of me lies a life without you, a new definition of  
myself. For all that I may someday become, you will  
always be a part of me.

On some distant day, when something reminds me of  
you, I will lovingly think of you and remember the smile  
you had. From time to time, I will remember the years  
spent with you and what we have shared. I will always  
miss your sweet voice and your unconditional support and  
endless companionship. May we carry that beyond the  
grave.

For all the smiles and tears, for all of the love and  
laughter, and, above all, for being the person that you  
were, I will carry you in my heart. I will always, always  
love you.

~from Lisa Sockwell Meredith, Snellville, GA

### AS LONG AS I CAN

As long as I can, I will look at the world for both of us.

As long as I can,  
I will laugh with the bird,  
I will sing with flowers,  
I will play to the stars,  
For both of us.

As long as I can, I will remember how many things

On this earth were your joy.

And I will live as well

As you would want me to live,

As long as I can.

~ Sascha

## *My Turn* by Gregg Williams

Did you ever see a movie before your child died and get one perspective and then see it again after your child died and have a completely different view? The other night I watched *Falling Down* again, but for the first time since Morgan died. I remember seeing it originally and thinking that if you go through life following the rules and life throws you a curve, you just fight back and maybe in the span of one day, "get even", with all of the anger you have built up in you. That was about it since I never used to be a deep thinker when it came to movies. And, I didn't cry.

This time when I watched I again noticed the part about following the rules, getting thrown a curve and fighting back. Basically, being fed-up. However this time I also noticed deeper issues in the story line. For instance, how Robert Duval's character as a police Sergeant carried around a picture of a little girl that I instantly guessed was his daughter. I didn't notice that before. Also, how he did anything for his wife who had declined in spirit since the loss of their child. I didn't notice that before either.

I really noticed this time how Michael Douglas' character was focused on getting home to see his little girl for her birthday. What I didn't notice before is how he made it through the tough obstacles of life just to be with his child. How decisions needed to be made, choices considered and the willingness to live needed to persevere or otherwise he would not get to see her.

Seeing the movie this time around, having already visited the lowest part of my life, I instantly plugged Morgan into both the roll of Robert Duval's deceased daughter and Michael Douglas' living daughter. I understood what it was like to love something that was not there and to love something that is there. I did not previously understand that the two were interchangeable. This time I cried.

We all visited the lowest part of our life when we lost our child. We all understand better than anyone that life is not fair. We need to all understand that we have choices to make along our grief path and that we have done our "*Falling Down*". But for those who are new to the grief process and those who are struggling to decide if the pains are worth it, don't quit.

**The head learns new things, but the heart forevermore practices old experiences.**

—Henry Ward Beecher

## **I SAID I COULD NOT DO IT... BUT I DID**

**E**xactly 8:05 A.M., Friday, July 9, 1971, was the last time I looked at my eight year old daughter with her eyes open. I walked beside her as they rolled her down the hall to the elevator that would take her down to the operating room for her simple, routine tonsillectomy.

At exactly 1:30 that afternoon, I was told that she was dead. I said then, I could not live a day without her. I just could not do it.

### **BUT I DID**

During the drive home, I said I would never be able to walk in that house without her. I said I could not do it.

### **BUT I DID**

As I walked in that empty house, someone quickly ran and shut her door—the door to her room, where she kept all the things she loved. The room where she played and slept. I said I could never go in there again. I said I could not do it.

### **BUT I DID**

When they said, "Come, let's go to the funeral, the Rosary, the Mass," I said I could not do it.

### **BUT I DID**

When, a few weeks later, a dear friend came to my door and said, "Come, let's go out and enjoy lunch." I said I could not do it.

### **BUT I DID**

For months that followed, I just knew my life would never be the same, and it wasn't. All the things I could not do, did get done. All the life I said I could not live, did get lived, differently, but I did live. Now comes today—16 years later. I have to admit, I had to look it up to be sure. Sixteen years. Palmer Ann would have been 24 years old. I had to stop and think about that, too.

I stood before her portrait and stared a long, long time, and yes, I remembered the pain with total recall of July 9, 1971. I reached out, touching what's left of my memory of her and I offered up a prayer of thanksgiving to God—a prayer of gratitude, for giving me such a beautiful eight years with a lovely daughter, and most of all, the opportunity to be able to stand there and realize that I could not do it, but I did.

### **YES I DID**

And each month when I come to a Compassionate Friends meeting with you, the new member, I share the pain that I know you are feeling—that hopelessness of the future. I smile quietly to myself, because inside I know a secret—you will be okay. You will touch again, love again, laugh again, and live again. After all, I said I could not do it but I did and

### **YOU WILL TOO!**

Betz Crump - TCF/Fort Lauderdale, FL

Love never goes away. It just grows and grows and grows — if we let it.

*Footsteps Through The Valley* - Darcie D. Sims

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

**MISSION STATEMENT:**  
 The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.



THE  
 COMPASSIONATE  
 FRIENDS

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..... 701-282-4794	Secretary-Treasurer	Sheryl Cvijanovich..... 701-235-8158
Librarian		Initial Contact	Kylene Milligan ..... 701-282-4794
Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen..... 701-730-0805	Newsletter Database	Mike Cvijanovich..... 701-235-8158
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).....	701-282-4794
Duane Skramstad (daughter, 20 - car accident; son, 2 - drowning) .....	701-437-2507
Cheri Eraker (son, 23 - accident) .....	701-451-0045
Carol Nelson (son , 13 - leukemia) .....	218-346-3854
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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 \_\_\_\_\_