



# The Compassionate Friends

## Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

TCF's National Office  
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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**  
August 10th  
September 14th

#### Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on August 24th @ Fry'n Pan  
TCF FM Chapter's Annual Walk to Remember - August 12, 2017  
Annual Worldwide Candlelighting - December 10, 2017 7 p.m. local time

#### LOVE GIFTS

Keith & Sandra Kiser in memory of their son, Cordell A Kiser  
Clare & Richard Elless in memory of their daughter, Tari Elless Heller

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.

"As long as I can, I will look at this world for both of us. As long as I can, I will laugh with the birds, I will sing with the flowers, I will pray to the stars, for both of us."

~ Sascha Wagner, TCF/Des Moines, IA

#### 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 August 24th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or [sherylc13@msn.com](mailto:sherylc13@msn.com).

#### Fargo Chapter's Annual WALK TO REMEMBER

WHAT: Annual Walk to Remember and Pot-luck

WHEN: Saturday August 12, 2017 at 10:30 am.

WHERE: South Shelter at Oak Grove Park (Main Shelter)

The Compassionate Friends of Fargo-Moorhead will hold its 9th Annual Walk To Remember, on Saturday, August 12, 2017 at the South Shelter at Oak Grove Park, 124 N Terrace in Fargo.

The Walk To Remember begins at 10:30 am. We will walk from Oak Grove Park to the Angel of Hope statue in Island Park and then back to Oak Grove. If you bring a balloon we will have a balloon release at Island Park. For those who prefer to walk one-way, rides from Island park back to Oak Grove will be provided. There will be a pot-luck lunch following the walk. Please bring your favorite dish and join us for good food and conversation.

If you have any questions please contact:

John Milligan (Chapter Leader) - 701-491-0364, email-[patkylene@hotmail.com](mailto:patkylene@hotmail.com)

Sheryl Cvijanovich - 701-235-8158, email-[sherylc13@msn.com](mailto:sherylc13@msn.com)

Check our web page [www.tcffargomoorhead.org](http://www.tcffargomoorhead.org) for ongoing info.

## **GRIEF STILLBIRTH, MISCARRIAGE, AND INFANT DEATH**

The following information is for parents who have experienced a stillbirth, miscarriage, or the death of an infant. These guidelines have been gathered from the experiences of other bereaved parents, and from the studies and writings of professionals in GRIEF counseling.

- normal grieving, with many ups and downs, lasts far longer than society in general recognizes. Be patient with yourself.
- crying is a very acceptable and healthy expression of grief for both mothers and fathers which releases built-up tension; cry freely as you feel the need.
- consider whatever you do to be normal for you: don't be afraid of bizarre delusions (such as phantom crying and aching arms) - this is part of normal grief.
- whenever possible, put off major decisions (changing residence, changing job, etc.) for at least a year.
- when considering another pregnancy, give yourself sufficient time to mourn and to recover your physical and emotional strength.
- when you do have another pregnancy, choose new names; each child is unique and does not deserve to be a surrogate.
- because the "bonding" between mother and child begins long before birth, a father should expect the mother to have more intense feelings for a longer time; mourn with her and be supportive.
- learn to let others know how you feel and how you are working out your grief so they may be supportive to you.
- within three months, try to become involved with a group of parents having similar experiences.
- the anniversaries of a baby's birth and death can be a most stressful time for parents - be good to yourself and allow yourself some emotional space and special time for grieving.

### **BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES CAN FIND HEALING AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.**

#### **TO MY MISCARRIED BABY**

Out of our love you came,  
Planned, wanted, welcomed;  
Your announcement created excitement, joy.  
Friends and family inquired,  
Do you want a girl or boy?  
Will you take Lamaze?  
What color for the nursery?  
Then suddenly...you're gone---and silence.  
No one talks about a baby that won't be.  
Were you real or a dream?  
I feel along and empty,  
Where can I put my love  
That was for you?  
Now what does it mean?

~ Betty Butler, TCF/North Shore Chapter, IL

"Some experts estimate that in the face of a child's death, two years is a reasonable grieving period. Others double that figure. The truth is, it takes as long as it takes—sometimes a whole lifetime." ~ Elizabeth Mehren

## **A Reason To Live**

My sorrow seems endless, my grief only grows  
The life I knew ended; I'm caught in the throes  
Of bereavement so painful that life's put on hold  
As I struggle for meaning in a world now grown cold.

The delight of the past, the joy of the day  
Captured in her sweet smile have been swept away  
Now I search for a reason to live out my life  
Though my soul wails in anguish  
And each hour brings strife.  
Through ME lives her memory! I'll keep it alive  
Through my words and my pen, so her name will survive  
And each day of my life I will send her my love...  
I'll live now to remember my daughter up above.

Sally Migliaccio, TCF/Jupiter, FL  
From *Tracy, an Extraordinary Child*  
©1995 Sally Migliaccio

## **FAMILY TIES**

Every time a new person is added to the family by birth, marriage, adoption, etc., everyone begins to readjust and reorganize to new roles they must assume. Husband and wife work out the give and take necessary to establish a family system. Mothers and fathers find new roles when children enter the picture, and adjust their sleeping, eating, loving, working and being. Brothers and sisters truly learn what sharing and change are all about when a new member is added.

Everyone, in fact, becomes a changed individual in this new system. New patterns of trusting and communicating are established. Like the mobile we hang above the crib, the family works toward establishing stability; each part balances the whole.

The family mobile is susceptible to many forces of change; winds from outside and within. But blown and disturbed, each piece moves and sways until eventually the mobile becomes stabilized once again.

When one of the parts is suddenly removed, as in the death of a child, the very core is threatened. Cut off one of the parts of the mobile and it becomes frenzied, looking for stability and lost balance. It sways to and fro, bobbing and weaving, tilting up and down.

When our child dies, we are inevitably faced with this chaos in the system. How can we seek to balance our ship of life when we, as a part of that system, feel pain, confusion and imbalance? If we were the anchor before, we find ourselves adrift, unable to hold in the current. If we were the steering wheel, we begin to spin uncontrollably. The propeller shaft is bent; the spare oar is missing; there aren't enough life preservers to go around. How do you save the ship – the mobile – the family?

- Recognize the part you as an individual play in the family and work at resolving your own losses.
- Encourage the expressing of feelings in yourself and others. Know that each person grieves in his own way and at his own pace, and give them permission to do so.
- Understand that sometimes a system cannot rebalance without professional help, and seek this help if needed.
- Watch for obsessive behavior in your family, i.e. overprotectiveness, overeating, undereating, alcohol and/or drug abuse, rage and violence, etc., and offer support, sharing and help for the pain – not the behaviors.

How tragic it is when the ultimate loss, the death of a child, leads to an even greater loss; the breakdown of the family, the marriage, the individual. You, as part of the family, can work to make sure this doesn't happen.

~ Neenan, TCF/Wisconsin

## WHERE DO I GO?

Now that you're gone, where do I go  
to see your fair smile  
to hear your tingling giggle  
to smell your dank hair after a swim  
to listen to your questions  
to touch your gentle cheek  
to feel your bear hug?

Where do I go  
to share all my years of wisdom  
to find someone who'll tell me truth  
to answer the phone that won't ring  
to tell you I'm sorry  
to know that I am loved and  
to pour out my love and my tears?

I shall go  
to the pictures that hold you forever  
to the books we shared  
to the music you taught me to love  
to the woods we explored as one  
to the memories that never fail  
to the innermost reaches of my heart  
to where we are always together.

~ Marcia Alig, TCF/Mercer Area Chapter, New Jersey

### What Is Left?

When a child dies, you ask, among other questions, what is left? A beautiful, sensitive, intelligent son has chosen to end his life. What can be left after such a crushing blow?

Others will point out that you have a spouse, other children or grandchildren, perhaps relatives and friends. They are all left. Perhaps you have a career that is left. And yet how meaningless all of those are to a bereaved parent, to one who is suffering the most devastating loss of all. So you continue to search for what it is that is left.

You read books on bereavement scarcely remembering what you have read; you attend meetings, talk with others who have suffered a loss like yours. If you are fortunate you have one or two good friends who, while they cannot fully understand, are there to love and listen. Perhaps there is a therapist who guides you in your search for an answer. But for a long while everything you read or hear has little meaning and certainly cannot provide the answer to your question. Or can it? Does all that you have read and heard and experienced finally come together and answer the questions of what is left?

For me it does. The answer was 13 months in coming, but how clear it seems now. I am left. That's it! I am left and I have been left with the love of Scott. It is a new love, it is different, more intense, it is undemanding, it need not be reciprocated, there are no strings attached. I love this love of Scott's. It warms me and comforts me. It is a wonderful love, but I cannot keep it. It would be wrong to do so; this love is too precious to keep to myself.

I am left with love to spare and love to share. It will never run out. He will always be with me to replenish it. I have found my answer! I am left to share Scott's love with you.

~ Betty Stevens, TCF/Baltimore, MD

"The highest privilege there is, is the privilege of being allowed to share another's pain. You talk about your pleasures to your acquaintances; you talk about your troubles to your friends."

~ Fr. Andrew SDC - Seven Words from the Cross

## THERE'S A NEW MAN IN TOWN

My son is dead. The moment I was told my son died in an auto accident, there was a new man in town. The old man would find a way to fix "it" or at least make "it" better. The new man couldn't fix a thing. Oh, he could make arrangements, settle accounts, acknowledge condolences as though he were really there but the new man was far off, living in a protective shell hardened by disbelief and shock. Yes, he did things, but he didn't feel in the old ways, he was far off being reborn.

My wife's grief would bring the new man back, at least for a while. There was no fixing her, just acknowledgement of the hurt and pain and helplessness we both felt. I was there for her as she was there for me and we bonded in our grief at depths we did not know existed. My son did not die to make our marriage better or worse and his death did not change what it fundamentally was and is. There is however a new level where we meet to hurt and heal together.

When a baby is born there are pain and tears followed by profound joy. If that baby dies before his parents, there is pain and tears and a longing for peace. No man can anticipate the number of tears that will flow during his rebirth. The half hour drive to work each morning was a time of nothing but tears and pain and guardian angels to provide safety for myself and those around me. The new man was every bit the good driver the old man was, but he wasn't there, he was far off being reborn in those unstoppable tears. Peace was nowhere to be found.

I am not going into detail into the many ways I think I have changed. Believe me, I have changed and so have you fellow bereaved father. I cannot believe my son died to make me a better man. I do believe that my son's death shocked me into holding dear all that was always precious to me with the new knowledge that "it" can all end in an instant, and neither the old man nor the new man can ever fix "it". The protective shell is fading away and real peace is finding its way into my heart and soul. But the shell will never be completely gone and the peace will never blend into complacency. We are new men with new priorities and new things to do. This does not mean we abandon all that was of the old man, the newness is in our attitudes and understanding and acceptance of vulnerability.

~ Dave Simone, Bereaved Father, Tampa, Florida

### FOR BABY

Like a miracle, you happened  
You were there.

I was a flower, beginning to bloom, bursting with life.

Then you were gone,  
like music never written,  
existing only in my dreams.

And I love you still...

- Stacy Hooks, TCF/Savannah, GA

### The Things I Didn't Say

If I could sit and talk to you for just a little while  
To say the things I wish I'd said, like how I loved your smile.  
How much I loved the sight of you-- your voice, your eyes, your face.  
To watch you play basketball and see you win a race.  
You were so much a part of me - the part that's gone away.  
These memories you left become more precious every day.  
I pray that you can hear this and God will let you see  
The pride, the joy, the happiness that your life gave to me.

~ Pat Fennell, TCF/Montgomery, AL



## OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
HALLIE CLARE BJELLAND .....	13 .....	ANDY & RHONDA BJELLAND
ZACHARY COLE .....	29 .....	JERRY & DEB COLE
ASHLEY RAE HAINES .....	29 .....	WILLIAM HAINES III
HEIDI HELLAND .....	30 .....	JOHN & TERRI HELLAND
TARI L HELLER.....	62 .....	RICHARD & CLARE ELLESS
CORDELL ALAN KISER.....	45 .....	KEITH & SANDRA KISER
ERIC C LARSON .....	37 .....	CRAIG & BARB LARSON
KELSEY GRACE MILLER.....	24 .....	SHAWN MILLER
JESSICA FAYE MOEN .....	25 .....	BRAD & JACKIE MOEN
JOSHUAH G NELSON.....	26 .....	JOHN & DARCY NELSON
KYLE NELSON .....	23 .....	JERRY & YVONNE NELSON
BRANDI ROSE IRENE TEEUWEN .....	15 .....	JOHN & NANCY TEEUWEN
DANE TVEDT .....	29 .....	TOMMY & LEAH TVEDT
MICHELLE WARNECKE.....	50 .....	DOUG & JOAN WARNECKE

## ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
TAMERA KAY CHAPUT .....	11 .....	GERALD & DELORES BEYERS
CORDELL ALAN KISER.....	5 .....	KEITH & SANDRA KISER
MICHAEL LEALLEN KRAIG .....	4 .....	JILL KRAIG & BRYAN MOFFET
KELSEY GRACE MILLER.....	24 .....	SHAWN MILLER
TONY MILLER.....	2 .....	SHAWN MILLER
MATTHEW ROBERT SAUNDERS .....	12 .....	ROBERTS & MARY SAUNDERS
GREGORY SEARS .....	8 .....	LORI & JERRY BRADY
GREGORY SEARS .....	8 .....	PERSYS PIERSALL (Grandparent)
BRANDI ROSE IRENE TEEUWEN .....	15 .....	JOHN & NANCY TEEUWEN
SCOTT ANTHONY TOBOLT.....	14 .....	JOHN & MARY TOBOLT
AUSTIN WAYNE WAGAR.....	5 .....	JAMIE & SCOTT OLSON
JASMINE ROSE WILSON .....	6 .....	KAREN WILSON

Please check out our Chapter website's page for 'Our Beloved Children'  
([www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourchildren.html](http://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](mailto: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

### *Someday There*

Somewhere I dream to be  
Somewhere just over there  
Somewhere a place for me  
I've already paid my fare

Someday I'll take my flight  
Someday up to the light  
Someday I'll arrive and be  
Someday There, in Eternity

~ Donald Moyers, TCF/Galveston County, TX

## SIBLING PAGE

### Ten Healing Rights for Grieving Children

**Author's note:** This "bill of rights" for grieving children is intended to empower them to help themselves heal – and to help direct the adults in their lives to be supportive as well.

Someone you love has died. You are probably having many hurtful and scary thoughts and feelings right now. Together those thoughts and feelings are called grief, which is a normal (though really difficult) thing everyone goes through after someone they love has died.

The following ten rights will help you understand your grief and eventually feel better about life again. Use the ideas that make sense to you. Post this list on your refrigerator or on your bedroom door or wall. Re-reading it often will help you stay on track as you move toward healing from your loss. You might also ask the grown-ups in your life to read this list so they will remember to help you in the best way they can.

- 1. I have the right to have my own unique feelings about the death.** I may feel mad, sad, or lonely. I may feel scared or relieved. I may feel numb or sometimes not anything at all. No One will feel exactly like I do.
- 2. I have the right to talk about my grief whenever I feel like talking.** When I need to talk, I will find someone who will listen to me and love me. When I don't want to talk about it, that's okay, too.
- 3. I have the right to show my feelings of grief in my own way.** When they are hurting, some kids like to play so they'll feel better for awhile. I can play or laugh, too. I might also get mad and scream. This does not mean I am bad, it just means I have scary feelings that I need help with.
- 4. I have the right to need other people to help me with my grief, especially grown-ups who care about me.** Mostly I need them to pay attention to what I am feeling and saying and to love me no matter what.
- 5. I have the right to get upset about normal, everyday problems.** I might feel grumpy and have trouble getting along with others sometimes.
- 6. I have the right to have "griefbursts."** Griefbursts are sudden, unexpected feelings of sadness that just hit me sometimes – even long after the death. These feelings can be very strong and even scary. When this happens, I might feel afraid to be alone.
- 7. I have the right to use my beliefs about my God to help me deal with my feelings of grief.** Praying might make me feel better and somehow closer to the person who died.
- 8. I have the right to try to figure out why the person I loved died.** But it's okay if I don't find an answer. "Why" questions about life and death are the hardest questions in the world.
- 9. I have the right to think and talk about my memories of the person who died.** Sometimes those memories will be happy, and sometimes they might be sad. Either way, these memories help me keep alive my love for the person who died.
- 10. I have the right to move toward and feel my grief and, over time, to heal.** I'll go on to live a happy life, but the life and death of the person who died will always be a part of me. I'll always miss this special person.

~ Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

*Dr. Wolfelt is a clinical thanatologist and director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition, in Fort Collins, Colorado. This article is reprinted with permission from Bereavement Magazine, 8133 Telegraph Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920-7169, [719] 282-1850.*

### Washing the Family Car

As the water began to bead across the hard black surface, my mind slipped into a memory. Back to a time when a smile could fix the pain and mortality was not questioned. You and I played during the dreary task of washing the family car. Rinsing turned into a water fight. Soapy sponges became weapons, and upside down buckets served as our fortress.

This dull chore became an adventure, a game shared only by you and I. Drenched, the giggles slowly subsided and we turned to complete the more serious side of our labor. We began to dry off the car. As the memory faded, so did my smile. With forlorn my mind came back to the present. I had my own serious task to complete

So I picked up a towel to dry off your headstone.

~ Adele Rosales, TCF/Ventura, CA  
In memory of my sister, Anita

### THE BITTER TEARS OF LOVE LOST

Peter Smith, age 15; sibling to Gregory Smith  
Because of my status in society  
I can look below to poverty  
and realize no matter how frustrated I get,  
I will always be very lucky to have a family  
who loves and cares for me.  
But still the tears roll down my face  
and my cheeks are forever stained  
because I know as long as I live  
my heart will always be pained.  
I was left in shock, pain, and fear,  
left with your unspoken words which I will never hear  
But in my days of sorrow when I feel that I will fall  
I can only repeat the phrase to myself,  
"It is better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all."

### 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 crab trap 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.

Kathi Guthrie, TCF/Cape May County, NJ

## A Survivor's Alphabet: Empathy

"Where were you when I needed you?" Ever find yourself saying words like that? Ever look for comfort at a point of greatest need and wonder why it doesn't come or help? Family and friends try their best to let us know they care. It never seems enough for just what we need at the critical moment.

What's going on? Family and friends, in expressing their sincere words of comfort and love, are relieving their own anxiety. In their attempts they often bypass our more critical need. It's like two trains passing each other in the night. They meet but quickly go their separate ways.

What we have received is sympathy which, by itself, gives temporary comfort and relief but has little long lasting effect. It may or may not touch the point of hurting with enough impact to relieve. What is better is a sensitivity to hurt where it is and a response to that hurt that mirrors the crisis itself. What is needed is not sympathy but **empathy**.

Empathy is made up of the following:

**Listening.** What do you hear when you hear? Isn't it amazing how often we hear but we do not listen. You and I hear the concert while the violinist listens for pitch and tone. We tell a mechanic the engine runs "rough" while he listens and notes that something is wrong with the valves.

Developing the skill of listening enables us to be more sensitive to actual need where it occurs. A cry for help may be more, or less, than what we think we hear. Someone is hurting and needs relief, now. Being with that person we listen and are given clues of what to say and do that will bring the greatest relief. It's not for us to set the agenda; the other person in their hurt and pain does.

**Understanding.** By careful listening it's amazing what we can learn that we only surmised before. We learn that our agenda can be put "on hold" while the hurting person is considered as top priority. We learn that words do not always have the weight we give to them; a touch will do far more. Maybe just being there without thinking that we have to do something helps. Whatever it is, we are there for the other person and they know it; they are given just what they need at that given moment.

**Value.** This tacit understanding gives strength for building trust. A bond is created whose value will be noted long after the crisis is over. Friendships are developed that are long lasting. New understanding between family members creates a climate of love. Personal self esteem is given a boost which has a value of its own. We understand others and they understand us and a network is established of support and caring.

Empathy is "LUV" actively supporting and sustaining to develop strength for times of crisis. It goes beyond in creating long lasting relationships that give personal vitality to each of us.

© 1999 Jesse Baker

*Jesse Baker is a retired minister of The United Methodist Church. He and his wife Fay live in Port Orange, FL. They became bereaved parents when their daughter Vera was murdered in November, 1984.*

*Reprinted from the Heart of Florida Chapter newsletter, May 1999.*

## Names in Granite

Several years ago, on a visit to Washington, D.C., I visited the Vietnam War memorial. I knew a young man who died during the war and whose name appeared on the Memorial. I made a point of finding his name of the Wall; it was a moving experience for me. After I located his listing, I stood at the Memorial, reflecting on his life, his surviving child and wife, and thought about what this Memorial must mean to them.

This is a Memorial that was born in controversy. One veteran called it, "the black gash of shame." Another veteran thought the Memorial did little to lift the spirits of the men who fought in the Vietnam War. In fact, a second monument was built on the site to pacify those who expressed initial dissatisfaction. As years have passed, however, and millions have visited the Memorial, it has come to be a place of healing and peace.

People may wonder about its success as a tribute to the men and women who fought and died in Vietnam. But I don't. As a TCF chapter leader and editor of our chapter newsletter, I have come to understand the meaning of the Vietnam Memorial and its message to all of us.

We have a column in our newsletter titled, "That Their Light May Always Shine... Our Children Loved and Remembered." This column lists the day a child died, his/her name, and the child's parents. We call these "remembrance dates" rather than anniversary dates, thereby avoiding a word that connotes celebration and jubilation.

Occasionally and accidentally, I have omitted a child's name. Invariably, when this happens, I receive a phone call from a very distraught parent who wants to know why their child's name did not appear in the newsletter.

In fact, recently, a mother called to inform me that I had omitted her son's name. This child died five years ago. I asked why this error caused so much pain. She said, "When his name appears in the newsletter each year, it is the only time I ever see it in print. It is a sign to me that he lived and to anyone else that reads the newsletter. Maybe everyone else has forgotten that he lived, but I remember and the newsletter reminds others. Then I know I am his mother."

I understood, as never before, the importance of the written word, or as in this case, the written name. Any person who questions the impact of a black granite wall listing 58,132 names has never experienced the death of a child.

~ Cissy Lowe Dickson, TCF/Houston Bay Area Chapter, TX

### Benchmarks

Good bye would be too difficult,  
Although I know you are gone.  
Instead, I keep you in my heart  
And your memory lives on.  
I have redefined my purpose, son,  
Since you are no longer here.  
With your death I faced a choice  
To die, exist or to live free.  
My life has changed forever, child,  
I'm redefined each week,  
You would call these "benchmarks"  
Of goals set and then achieved.  
And so I set my benchmarks,  
Achieving many, reshaping some...  
But everything is different now  
Except your mother's love.

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

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

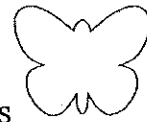
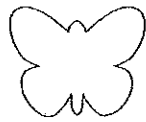
Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

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](http://www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourtrailer.html).

### That Anniversary

All our lives we've known about anniversaries.

Our parents celebrated their Anniversary.

The school we attended marked its Anniversary.

The company honored your Anniversary when you started your career.

The Lions Club held a gala to remember its Anniversary.

But there is one Anniversary that we're never eager to recall.

### It's That Anniversary.

When a child dies we retain vivid memories of that fateful day. Time cannot rob us of the memory and the grief of that awful and confusingly sad day. Unlike your wedding date or your first day on the job or when you graduated from school, which may have become hazy over time, the circumstances and ticks of the clock of **That Anniversary** remain etched in our minds.

Some of us do special "things" on **That Anniversary**. We pray. We cry. We grieve. Some make an effort to try to distract the intense sadness that **That Anniversary** brings. Some walk on the beach or take a ride in the country. We look at old photos or other memorabilia to remember and to ward off anything that might cloud the memory of our daughters and sons.

Friends and relatives also remember **That Anniversary** and may send a card or ask you out to lunch or choose not to visit you showing respect for your need for solitude. Regardless of how you deal with **That Anniversary**, you cannot avoid it. Sometimes even the days leading up to **That Anniversary** bring apprehension and uneasiness. That's OK. **That Anniversary** will always come (and go) as will the days before and after, too.

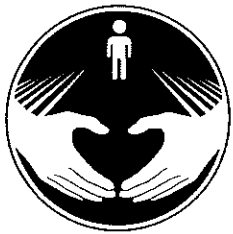
The Compassionate Friends understands that on **That Anniversary**, as when it occurred, your heart is heavy yet empty at the same time. It can be a confusing time. There may be guilt or remorse or simply confusion. But it is up to you to sort it out and move ahead because after **That Anniversary** there will be another and another. Surely your heart may not feel as heavy or as empty as time passes, but **That Anniversary** will always be there. How you face it, how you mark it, how you remember it and how you caress it is the key to moving forward and conditioning yourself for the next time **That Anniversary** occurs.

~ Michael Tyler, TCF/Lighthouse Chapter Lewes, DE

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS  
 OF THE F-M AREA  
 PO BOX 10686  
 FARGO ND 58106

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 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	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 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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