



The Compassionate Friends
Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, we have decided for the safety of our members to cancel chapter meetings and Mom meetings until further notice.

LOVE GIFTS

Paul & ReNae Roney in memory of their son, Carson Roney
 Sandi & Bob Roel in memory of their son, Joseph Peter Roel
 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.

FOR THE NEW YEAR

Where there is pain,
 let there be softening
 Where there is bitterness,
 let there be acceptance
 Where there is silence,
 let there be communication
 Where there is loneliness,
 let there be friendships
 Where there is despair,
 let there be hope
 ~ Ruth Eiseman, TCF/Louisville, KY

And when we have remembered everything, we grow afraid of what we may forget.
 A face, a voice, a smile? A birthday?
 An anniversary?
 No need to fear forgetting – the heart remembers always...
 ~ Sascha Wagner

NEW YEAR

Parties, toasts, and careless resolutions
 Waiting for midnight Silence, tears, no easy solutions.
 Quietly waiting for Eternity
 ~ Naomi Holzman, TCF/Flager, FL

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

Holiday Angel that were not listed in December's Newsletter

<u>Given By</u>	<u>In Memory of</u>
Larry & Holley Teaff	Matthew Cvijanovich
Ellen Pazdro	Matthew Cvijanovich
Harold & Irene Schenck.....	Doug Schenck
Shawna, Arne, Noah, Maggie, & Dan Kujanson	Isiah Frederick Kujanson
Hazel & Larry Grooters	Gregory Grooters
Lisa Beach & Jeff Amundson	Nathan Keith Beach
Jerry & Yvonne Nelson.....	Kyle Irvin Nelson

I'M BEGINNING

I'm beginning to know your children
 From the things I heard you tell. From the pictures that you've brought here I think I know them well.
 Our hurt and sorrow are immense
 I'm not sure where to start.
 Compassion after all is
 Your Pain in my heart.
 My thanks to you for listening
 To words wrung from my soul.
 We are The Compassionate Friends
 That's all I need to know.

~ Jack Brown, TCF/Louisville, KY

NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

We are asking, would you please receive your newsletter by email. We do not want to remove anyone from our newsletter mailing list who is benefitting from receiving it. We hope it is a help to you while going through your grief, giving you better understanding of your feelings and letting you know “We need not walk alone”.

We consider this an important function of our program. If you have email, would you consider receiving your newsletter in email format. You will receive your copy earlier if you opt to receive it by email. If you wish to receive your newsletter by email, please email Nancy Teeuwen at fmtnfnwltr@live.com with your full name and your child’s name.

Note: If you are already receiving the newsletter by email, no action is required.

The Journey

There once was an old man who journeyed back to his hometown with the intent of reminiscing about the good times, as well as the sorrows he had experienced as a young father. High on the list of places he intended to go was the elementary school his daughter had attended.

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

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

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

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

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

Understanding that he would never be able to fulfill his mission, the old man started thinking about the transient nature of life - how nothing ever remains the same. Communities change. Buildings are here today and gone tomorrow. Loved ones live - and die. Even nations rise and fall.

But then the old man had another thought: The love his daughter had passed onto him still remained within his heart - 46 years after she had died. He realized that it didn't matter if a day, a year, a decade or a century were to pass. The candle of love would continue to burn bright in his heart.

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

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

A smile crossed his lips. *His mission had been completed!*

~ Wayne Loder, *We Need Not Walk Alone* Winter 1996

HOPE

"When does this pain of loss end? Is there no relief?" This is often the cry of a parent who has lost a child. The grief seems too big and too hard at times. And, there seems to be no end in sight for the pain and isolation. And, yet we know that somehow, some way life must continue on.

We keep trying; keep reminding ourselves that we must take life one day at a time. In fact, sometimes we take life one hour at a time, giving ourselves the time we need to adjust to our new world, our new way, this life that now is labeled "the new normal."

And, so we train our minds daily to look for the good, to listen for the song, and to watch for the sunshine and blue skies. We force ourselves to move forward into this world knowing that it will never be the same again, but also understanding that we must choose to move forward into this new land beyond our grief journey. And, so we do!

Hope is amazing as it teaches us that the very same sun is still shining and waiting to warm us. Nature is still painting the world with beauty beyond words. Our Father is still giving us comfort and help in order to help fill the void. And, so we slowly move forward knowing that one day the curtain of grief will be pulled back and we will be able to see life with new eyes and a heart filled with hope!

~ Clara Hinton

TELL + LISTEN = HEALING

The fastest way through grief is to *tell* your story many times and *listen* to many others tell their story. Do these two things and you will begin to **heal**.

Ah, but you say, “People don’t want to hear my story again. They look away when they see me coming.” What do you think our Compassionate Friends meetings are for? Come tell your story over and over. We will listen.

CARRYING MEMORIES INTO THE NEW YEAR

With the church bells' ringing
the new year enters
echoing the days of yesteryear
memories of happiness
the smiles of our children
the sunlight within each face
Who will remember these dear ones
far from our yearning arms
Who remembers all they were
the way she danced, the hat he wore
With the old year gone, will they
no longer be known?
We will remember them, each one
We will hold them in our hearts
as we carry memories
into this new year.
We will allow the memories to
make us laugh, to make us sing.
Their lives will fill the air as the church bells ring.

~ Alice J. Wisler

THIS IS ANOTHER YEAR JUST BEGINNING

This is another year just beginning - afresh with new days, new opportunities, new challenges. It occurs to me, however, this is a very difficult task to keep from concentrating on past years and the sadness we endure just because it is a new year and the calendar has flipped the page.

Moving on to a brighter tomorrow and letting go of the pain of yesterday is a gradual process. We cross that threshold one step at a time - a small one at first, faltering and stumbling - but somehow getting there.

With patience, effort, and persistence, once again we will be able to celebrate life as the year stretches on before us, putting behind us our sadness, our guilt, our failures and our pain.

We will be able to smile again. We will be able to remember our precious children in life rather than death.

We will recognize in our days many little blessings and will be able to share our joys with others.

Whenever that "New Year" begins for you, I celebrate with you that marvelous accomplishment, and wish you great peace, courage, and comfort

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

~ Alice Weening, TCF/Cincinnati, OH

The Promise

Cold winds blow across the frozen pond.
Snow lies deep upon the fields.
But the change has begun.
Daylight hours increase slowly.
With each passing day later sunsets are more
apparent
Winter is ending.
For bereaved parents
The change is awfully slow
The progress is not always apparent
But the promise is the same.
Winter will end.
Spring will return.
~ Betty Stevens, TCF/Baltimore, MD

Where to Buy Grief Books

Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you're looking for-or they'll be able to tell you where to find it.

Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at 866-218-0101 Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. CDT or visit their website at www.centering.org.

THOUGHTS ON WINTER

January...February...so cold, so crisp, so leafless. Beginning a year...a new year...A NEW BEGINNING. You never lived in this year, and that is new. Sometimes new is painful. January is also the month of resolutions and the only resolution we must make is that we must learn to live without our child. What a profound sadness that is! To love them so deeply, so passionately, so completely...only to have us part.

My child, did I ever tell you enough how much I loved you? I've wondered. Do we tell those we love how very much their life has meant to us? Probably we do not. Somehow we just arrogantly believe that time goes on forever. It does. It's just the people do not. We fail to recognize how entirely too brief some lives can be. You were not supposed to die. Death is reserved for others. How could you have disappointed me? Didn't you know that I had such plans for you? I didn't want to face my own mortality. How cruel life was...using you to prove to me that we do indeed come to an end.

I don't want to accept your death...but what choice have I left? Have you any idea how angry that makes me? Oh, I'll mend...although mending sometimes means forgetting. I cannot put you aside, but already memories of you are fading.

You know what I like best? When I'm given little tidbits of your life by those that knew you. What a bittersweet delight!

Each piece of my jigsaw puzzle life will eventually fit together. You will be the only missing piece.

~ Dorothy Worrel, TCF/Palo Alto, CA

Living With A Broken Heart

I spend some time each day wondering

How different my life might be.

Why so many people that I love

Are no longer here with me.

Mothers, Fathers, a sister, then our son

Wonderful friends, beloved pets, always another one.

I know where there is love, there will also be pain.

The sadness will continue until we're together again.

When the phone rang that particular morning,

I was sure it was a call from Heaven.

The ashes of my best friend, Gabby, were ready.

It was Valentine's Day. (The time was 11:11.)

The loss of each one has left its mark.

Their legacy is what they gave to those they left below.

"It's not what you take when you leave this world,

It's what you leave behind when you go."

How many more breaths will I be allowed to take

Before it's my time to leave this world?

How many breaks can one heart take

Before it doesn't beat any more?

~ Tom Murphy, TCF/Greater Cincinnati, OH
In Memory of my son, Brennan Murphy

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED

CORRECTION TO DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

**My apologies to the three families in which the age of their child was incorrect
in the December newsletter**

CHILD	.....	.....	PARENTS
ZANE SHANNON BUCHHOLZ	23	.....	STEPHANIE DETZEN
CHLOE LOVE CONN	18	.....	JEROD & STACY CONN
STEVEN DUANE COOK	52	.....	SHARON COOK

BIRTHDAYS

CHILD	.....	.....	PARENTS
NICHOLAS LEE BAILEY	28	.....	PAUL & KARA BAILEY
KONNIE JEAN CHAFFEE	48	.....	MARK & JEAN CHAFFEE
WILLIAM "BILL" COWDEN	54	.....	WALTER & KARIE COWDEN
BRIELLE DEUTSCHER	10	.....	LYNN & DONNA MICKELSON (Grandparents)
GREGORY S GROOTERS	61	.....	LARRY & HAZEL GROOTERS
ERIK HINZPETER	41	.....	JOHN & LEANN RINDT
MATTHEW R HOLLAND	25	.....	CHAD & RHONDA HOLLAND
DANA DAWN KEBLAR	43	.....	DEBORAH FACEY
MICHAEL L LIVDAHL	27	.....	ROBERT & TANYA LIVDAHL
MATTHEW ALLEN WINTER	34	.....	CAROL & DAN WINTER

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD	.....	.....	PARENTS
NATHAN ANDERSON	20	.....	DIANE & JAY FENSKE
SHERI PETERSON BJORGAN	21	.....	DEWAYNE PETERSON
ANDREW HOWARD BRAUN	15	.....	CRAIG & DEANNA BRAUN
OLIVIA MAE BUTH	3	.....	TIM & MELANIE BUTH
SANDRA DIANE CASELLA	9	.....	RICHARD & DIANE MACGREGOR
MATTHEW ISAAC CVIJANOVICH	16	.....	SHERYL CVIJANOVICH
RACHEL ELIZABETH ELLINGSON	2	.....	PATRICIA & ERIC MONSON
TIMOTHY LYLE HANSEN	2	.....	LYLE & BARBS HANSEN
MATTHEW R HOLLAND	6	.....	CHAD & RHONDA HOLLAND
DERRICK DENNIS JACOBS	3	.....	TROY & DENISE JACOBS
SUZETTE AMELIA PARKOS	2	.....	ANN & ROBERT WAGNER
JESSE DANIEL SCALLON	3	.....	LEE & LUANNE SCALLON
ERIC JOHN SCHAFER	6	.....	BILL & LOIS SCHAFER
JANESSA "JAYE" NICOLE (GOHDES) SMITH	1	.....	KEITH & MARY GOHDES
BRUCE C THORNBY	12	.....	JANET & HOWARD GALLAGHER
SHERYL ANN TOBAR	2	.....	ANGIE SCHLICHT
CARLA RAE TRUITT	4	.....	LORETTA KEISACKER
LARISSA UNGER	1	.....	JON & CYNTHIA UNGER
KATHRYN "KATIE" ELIZABETH WHELTLE	6	.....	SHARON & MARK WHELTLE

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.

SIBLING PAGE

IT'S NOT FAIR

It's not fair that my only sibling, my older brother, my best friend died.

But I have to survive this.

It's not fair that I won't have nieces or nephews, nor will my future children have Michael as the wonderful uncle that he would have been.

But I have to survive this.

It's not fair that he wasn't here to give me a hard time about turning 30.

But I have to survive this.

It's not fair to have to deal with such a heart wrenching blow.

But I have to survive this.

As all of us know at TCF, life sometimes isn't fair. We all have to survive the pain of losing a sibling or a child. It is not fair that we have to, but we do. It has been one year and three months since my brother died, and I have to survive this. But you know what, every day that passes and every morning that I wake up, I realize that I AM surviving this!

So will you!

~ Renee Highsmith, TCF, Valley Forge, PA

In memory of my brother, Michael Highsmith 1966 – 1997

REFLECTIONS

With the death of my sister come some painful realizations; that life isn't always fair or predictable; that sometimes even my best still isn't good enough; and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable lessons and precious gifts. As a result of my sister's death, I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater compassion for those who hurt. I have learned to be a survivor and to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all, I have been given the gift of time – time to heal and time to replace those painful memories of death with priceless memories of my sister's life.

~ Cathy Schanberger

SOMETIMES

Sometimes something clicks
and with a tear, remembrance of the pain
and the loneliness flood the heart.

Sometimes something clicks
and with a smile, remembrance of the love
and the laughter flood the senses.

And there are times when nothing clicks at all
and a voice echoes through the emptiness and
numbness never finding the person who used to fill
that space.

And sometimes
the most special times of all
a feeling ripples through your body, heart and soul
that tells you that person never left you, and he is
right there with you, through it all.

Kristen Hansen, Bereaved Sibling
TCF/Nashville Newsletter Feb09

MY THOUGHTS OF YOU

Another holiday without you
Another wedding without you
Another birthday without you
Another graduation without you
Another day without you.

I miss your goofy laugh

I miss your temper tantrums

I miss your bugging me for money

I miss your punches in my arm

But most of all I miss you.

So I will remember

Our good and bad times

And share them with others

So that I can keep you

Alive in my heart.

You were supposed to be here always

Or till the world came to an end.

I know that we argued and

Seemed to disagree,

But I could always count on you

~ De Ann Kouse, TCF/Louisville, KY

How Can They Move On?

How can they move on? Every day I realize that while my brother's death may have touched many people's lives, they seem to be able to just pick up where they left off and continue with their lives. For me, it has been so much harder.

I learned this week, that last year, my brother's girlfriend had gotten married. While I am very happy for her to have finally been able to love again, my happiness is also filled with a little jealousy. I think of my brother at some point every day. Does this mean that she has forgotten him? I have asked myself this question all week. I hope that she hasn't and at least remembers the good times that they had sometimes. I find it hard to think of her with someone else, but she was so miserable for so long, she deserves a little happiness. I was also told that she is pregnant and is having her baby soon. When I heard this I almost cried. I think that was harder than finding out that she was married. Then a real jealousy kicked in. I thought, Hey, what about Sean's baby? He'll never know the joy of being a parent.

After mulling this around for a while, I realized that everyone must move on. Sometimes I feel as if I can't go on another day because I feel so much pain. That pain is not so strong as it was two or three years ago, but it does come back to visit now and then. When Sean first died, a few of his friends came over a lot. Over the past few years, that began to happen less and less until his friends stopped coming at all. One of his friends still comes by or at least calls my mom at Christmas. Another puts presents on his grave occasionally.

I know that a lot of people cared about my brother, but I think that knowing him for 19 years and being as close as we were has made it all the harder for me. I know that he watches over our family and is always with us. I know in my heart that moving on is not the same as forgetting. I hope with my heart that all who knew Sean still spare at least one thought for him once in awhile. While I wish every one of his friends much happiness in their lives, I hope that they will never forget.

~ Traci Morlock BP/USA Bereaved Sibling
St. Louis, MO The Gate to Tomorrow

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

A New Year Wish

I wish you all a blessing
As the New Year approaches us all.
May this year bring gentle memories
Of our child that God has called.
I wish you all some sunshine
That clouds can cover on some days.
I pray your hearts will mend
As mine has along the way.
I thank God for our TCF "family"
And the Online Sharing each day,
For so many are always there
To help so many find their way.
I wish I could take each one of you
And show you what I've learned.
As time has helped my own heart
Your feelings are my concern.
The Holidays are the hardest
As you all very well know,
Yet we can find healing
As the New Year unfolds.
May you all know I'm thinking
About each and every one of you.
I give you all my blessing
And hope the New Year is gentle for you.

~ Sharon Bryant, TCF/Atlanta Online Sharing

DON'T BE STRONG

As children most of us were told over and over, "Big girls and boys don't cry, only Babies and Sissies cry." This fallacy is so deeply rooted in some of us that when our child dies we have to be strong. We push back, deny, and try to hide our grief.

This type of being strong is what I call the Stiff Upper Lip Syndrome. Suppressed grief and unshed tears are like a pressure cooker with a faulty valve; it can explode at any time. Pressure builds, and builds, and finally is released one way or another. We can either let our tears flow, admit our grief, and release our pressure in a natural way; or, we can plug that valve and wait for the time bomb.

You say, "Wait a minute, what will my family and other people think-if they see me cry?" Your family needs to know that you are human not made of steel. They need to know that you love, that you hurt, and that you also feel the loss. If you remain the strong one, you may be faced with anger, bitterness, broken communication, or indifference from your family members. Later you may be accused of being cold and uncaring. For someone trying to be strong for the rest of the family, someone hiding the hurt, this could be the final blow that causes the explosion.

Friends! Most of your friends and neighbors haven't known the grief of having a child die. They don't understand the pain of "no longer setting that place at the table; the stack of laundry no longer done; the silence; the graduation unattended; or, the grandchild that will never be." They don't understand the role of parenting that has stopped! They only see the physical absence of your child. No you shouldn't worry about being strong for them, because they can't even begin to contemplate the agony your child's death brings. You couldn't before you experienced. They can't because they haven't experienced. This leaves only a few people that are just insensitive beings too involved with themselves and their world to care about anything or anyone. Since they can't care, why then, should we be concerned with what they think.

Some people think that our tears are tears of self-pity, to an extent they are. We mourn the loss of a very beautiful part of ourselves. Our life will never again be completely the same. I have cried many times these last few years, and I'm sure there will be more tears. I don't cry so much for the child that is no longer here; as I do for myself, what could have been, and what used to be. I don't mean for you to drown yourself in pity and let grief completely disrupt your life. What I am saying is don't be afraid to show your emotions. When there is a need for tears, let them come.

As I see it you have a choice, you can either be human and show your emotions and help yourself; or, you can try to be superhuman, try to control your grief and one day run the risk of having something inside of you break or become badly bent. Don't say it won't happen because someday it will. There is no other way to deal with grief; you can't go around it, over it, or under it; you have to go through it. By suppressing your feelings you run the risk of distorting your personality for life; and harming or destroying your family and yourself emotionally.

The choice is yours. Only you can make the decision. Remember: It takes more strength and courage to admit and share feelings and pain with others, than it does to close yourself behind a wall and hide from your grief.

~ Sue Heisten, TCF/Columbia, MO

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: _____

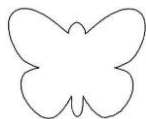
Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____

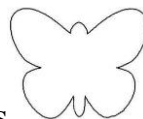
Date: _____

(Signature)

Please return to: The Compassionate Friends of F-M Area, PO 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 Paul and Kara Bailey 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.

Choosing Life

“It will never be the same. Never.” As a bereaved parent, you have often heard or said these words to express grief's profound feelings of sorrow and disorientation. Your life has suddenly taken an unexpected course that appears both uncharted and endless. Bewildered, you vainly search for pathways back to your former life, until you confront the reality that there is no way back. Your child is dead forever. It is then that you may say, “...never the same.”

This is the aspect of grief that Simon Stephens calls “The Valley of the Shadow.” It is that very long time between the death of your child and your reinvestment in life. *Between*. It is not supposed to be a permanent resting place. Although some people do take up residence in the valley, it is a transition from the death of your child to life with renewed purpose.

The key to this transition is yourself. You must choose between life and the valley. You and only you can decide. And you must make that decision again and again, each day.

Giving in to the hopelessness of the valley is tempting. Choosing to move on toward life requires a great deal of work. You must struggle with the pain of grief in order to resolve it. It is a daily struggle full of tears, anger, guilt and self-doubt, but it is the only alternative to surrendering yourself to the valley.

Little by little you choose to move on. Little by little you progress toward the other side of the valley. It takes a very long time, far longer than your friends or relatives suspected. Far longer than you had believed – even prayed – that it would be. When one day you find yourself able to do more than choose merely to live but also how to live, you will know you are leaving the valley of the shadow. There will still be more work to do, more struggle and choosing. The valley, however, stretches behind rather than in front of you.

When you have resolved your grief by reinvesting in life, you will be able to realize that nothing is ever “the same.” Life is change. We would not have it be otherwise, for that is the valley of the shadow. Change has the promise of beginning and the excitement of discovery.

Life is never the same. Life is change. Choose life!

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

Just an Idea

As you sit and ponder about what the New Year will bring for you and your family, try this: take a note pad and pen, and at the top of the page, write, “This year I hope I can...” or, “This year I hope to do...” or, another “hope” you wish to concentrate on. Then make a list of what you hope will take place during the year. Later, go a step further and number each “hope” in order of preference or importance. Then work on it...one thing at a time. And mark it off your list as it's accomplished or a goal is reached. Then you can look at your progress. And please remember, each and every time you accomplish something you set out to do—no matter how small or trivial it may seem at the time—that it IS PROGRESS.

~ TCF, Anniston, AL

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
 OF THE F-M AREA
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**The
 Compassionate
 Friends**
Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

MISSION STATEMENT: When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

A SINCERE WELCOME TO ALL COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS...We are a nonprofit self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. We offer group support, understanding and friendship. Our purpose is to promote and aid parents and siblings in the positive resolution of the grief they are experiencing and to foster physical and emotional health. If you have questions or wish to talk directly to a member of the Fargo-Moorhead Compassionate Friends, please call any of the numbers listed.

FARGO-MOORHEAD COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS BOARD

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE BOARD AT ANY TIME!

Chapter Leader	Paul & Kara Bailey .....701-491-0364	Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen..... 701-730-0805
Co-Chapter Leader	Lori Wiger.....701-781-3931	Newsletter Database	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287
Secretary	Sheryl Cvijanovich.....701-540-3287	Website Administrator	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287
Treasurer	Chuck Klinkhammer .....701-298-2929	Initial Contact	Sheryl Cvijanovich
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:

- Sheryl Cvijanovich (son, 23 - illness) 701-540-3287
- 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.