

The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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

Upcoming Meetings
 October 10th
 November 14th

Weather cancelations will be posted on WDAY, KVLV, KFGO and Fargo Forum!

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on October 24th
 @ Fry'n Pan
 Annual Worldwide Candlelighting -
 December 8, 2019 7 p.m. local time

LOVE GIFTS

Scott and Jamie Olson in memory of their son, Austin Olson
 Paul and Kara Bailey in memory of their son, Nick Bailey
 Chuck and Sandy Klinkhammer in memory of their son, Alex Klinkhammer
 Diane & Dean Bauck in memory of their son, Davin Bauck
 Kathy & Kevin Quittschreiber in memory of their son, Kyle Quittschreiber
 Herman & Rennae Weiss in memory of their son, Kristopher Weiss

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

LOVE

"...Grief is the price we pay for love. We did not lose our children. They died, taking with them our hopes and dreams for the future, but, never, never taking away their love. Though death comes, love will never go away. Hold it tight, the love our children gave us. Hold it tight through the storms of grief and bring it with you into today. Love never goes away..." ~ Darcie Sims

Our Mom's group generally meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Fry'n Pan restaurant, 300 Main Avenue, Fargo. Our gatherings are very informal as we meet to talk about our children, books, recipes, jobs and whatever else comes up in conversation. We all have times when we need the listening heart of another mom or grandma. Please join us this month on Thursday October 24th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylev13@msn.com.

Halloween

It is here, this day of merriment and children's pleasure.
 Gremlins and goblins and ghosties at the door of your house.
 And the other children come to the door of your mind.

Faces out of the past,
 small ghosts with sweet, painted faces.
 They do not shout.

Those children who no longer march laughing
 on cold Halloween night,
 they stand at the door of your mind --
 and you will let them in,
 so that you can give them the small gifts of Halloween --
 a smile and a tear.

~ WINTERSUN by Sascha

Nine Years or Nine Hundred

Sometimes it seems that nobody understands

The pain of losing your child

"Well," they say, "it's been nine years

Shouldn't you be over it by now?

My parents died (or my cousin - or my dog.)

And I did my grieving and got over it," they say.

Nine years— It seems like only yesterday

And I remember the horror:

- The police knocking at the door in the middle of the night
- Making funeral arrangements (funeral arrangements?) for my son.
- Asking his best friends — boys who were just yesterday playing ball and laughing with him — to be his pallbearers.
- That awful empty feeling in the pit of my stomach when the limousine from the funeral home; drove up to our house.
- Seeing his casket poised above the freshly-dug grave.
- Being pulled away from the graveside when the eternity of services was done.
- Waking up every morning for weeks and for a blessed split second thinking everything was right with the world, then the reality crashing in that he is dead.
- Fumbling my way, somehow, through the days and nights.

Yes, my friends, it's been nine years. And still it hurts to say his name.

To think what he might have been doing now with his life.

To realize what a waste of a young life it was.

So, please, don't expect me to be "over it" or "okay."

Not in nine years - Or in ninety - Or in nine hundred

~ Barbara Koontz Clarihew, TCF/Bucksmont Chapter

A Note To A Newly Bereaved Parent

Memories have no time spans,
one minute, one hour, one day.

The heart will hold forever
what time has taken away.

I know your pain will lift some

with every new minute, hour and day.

No one will replace them,
we will just have to wait.

But our memories will touch our hearts
till we can touch again!

We do survive, my friends, as God is my Witness!

~ Suzi Southworth, TCF/McMinnville, OR

Am I Healing?

Am I healing? I'm able to gaze at her photograph without that tourniquet tightening around my throat, clamping memory...

I'm beginning to see her in her life, and not only myself bereft of her life...

Piece by piece, I re-enter the world. A new phase. A new body, a new voice. Birds console me by flying, trees by growing, dogs by the warm patch they leave behind on the sofa. Unknown people merely by performing their motions. It's like a slow recovery from a sickness, this recovery of one's self...

~ Toby Talbot, TCF/Volusia/Flagler, FL

GRIEVING IS A LONELY JOB

I don't care what anybody says, grieving is a very lonely job. Friends and family try to help in their own way, but, sometimes it's almost too much effort to try to explain how you feel inside.

In fact, I'm not so sure that there are words to describe the feeling. It isn't "physical pain," and I don't know if "emotional pain" is any more descriptive. It's just a feeling that's always there. The sadness, the loneliness, the helplessness. On the outside, of course, no one would know. From the beginning people would always tell me how great I looked or how well I was doing. What did they expect? Sometimes I'm tempted to ask, "Well, how do you expect me to look?" But I don't. They mean well. They just don't know what else to say.

Oh, it's true, the last 15 months since my 17 year old son, Shane was killed in a motorcycle accident with his friend, I've come a long way. Life is good, and I have much to look forward to each day. A challenging job, terrific friends, a great family including Shane's 14 year old brother, Zachary. But there are days when it's just not enough.

It's interesting how your entire perspective about life changes when you're forced to endure a personal tragedy. I call it my "Big Deal Scale". Losing Shane was the "biggest deal" I've ever experienced. It gives me a tool in which to measure the trivial ups and downs of life. We all have the strength to endure a tremendous amount of pain. We just have to get it in perspective.

It doesn't come easy. I consciously work at it every day. I wonder if it will ever go away. Sometimes I hope it doesn't. I guess it's my way of remembering,, holding on.

My biggest source of strength comes from Zachary, though. My heart aches for him; knowing how close he was to Shane. The first few days after the accident, he said, "Shane was my idol. He always helped me and taught me things." It's hard for me to imagine what it must be like for him. Still sleeping in the same room that they shared for 13 years. Although, now he sleeps in Shane's bed, and does his homework at Shane's desk. He says he likes it like that. I guess it's just his way of remembering. Of holding on.

Months ago when Zachary asked when the "hurt" would stop, I didn't have an instant answer. Grieving is a lonely job. To be done in individual time frames. But what I did tell him was, "Trust me. The pain will eventually fade but, the memories will last a lifetime." And just the other day he said to me, "You're right, Mom, The hurt is much better." I can see it in his face, in his eyes. He has matured so much this last year. It seems like he was a baby when all this happened. Now, I can see so much of Shane in him. And, I know that if he can do this "job", he can handle anything. And so can I.

~ Susan Hedlund, TCF/Portland, OR

QUESTIONS

How do things look from your side of the rainbow?

Are the colors still the same?

Are they dull or bright?

Are the clouds white or gray?

What about the trees?

The grass?

The flowers?

Do you see me kneeling at your grave?

~ Mary Vandever, TCF/Long Beach, CA

Have Others Forgotten?

The first several weeks following the death of a child are usually filled with lots of emotional grief support. Friends drop by your home with food. Cards arrive daily. Phone calls of encouragement come quite often. Then, almost as suddenly as the support began, it ends. Friends become scarce, and when they are around, they don't know what to say so they often remain silent. As a parent, it feels like everyone has forgotten your child, and that leaves a parent with a lonely, empty feeling.

The death of a child makes others feel very uncomfortable. Friends and family members alike often are afraid to mention the name of the deceased child for fear of bringing up sad memories to the parents. What others fail to realize is that it is very healing for parents to hear the name of their child spoken, as well as to hear stories that bring warm memories to mind. Parents long to hear about their child from others. Fond remembrances are comforting and aid in healing.

As a parent, it often helps to talk about your child to others, breaking the ice of being uncomfortable. Remind others that you love to hear your child's name spoken in a warm way. It will often be up to you to lead the way with talking about your child. Once you make the effort, others will know that they, too, have permission to talk about times spent with your child. They will find that it's healing to them to talk about your child, too. The bond of friendship you share will become even stronger as you walk through this journey of grief hand-in-hand.

Be prepared for the few who might suggest that you should be ready to "move on" with your life, though. Many simply will not understand that your loss presents a continuing empty void that needs attention. The absence of support leads a parent to believe that their precious child has been forgotten. Actually, others have not forgotten, but they might feel that enough time has elapsed to provide healing. What most people don't understand is that grief, while it does get better, is a slow, difficult journey that takes lots of time and hard work.

How can a parent cope when others are not providing adequate support? It's a great idea to find a local support group, if at all possible. Face-to-face support can be the one thing that keeps a parent going during those lonely, dark moments. It helps to find a group where you can talk freely about your feelings, vent openly without fear of someone making you feel inadequate, and where you can mention your child's name without being made to feel uncomfortable.

When it seems like others have forgotten, bring your child's memory alive by talking about past experiences. Invite some of your child's friends to your home and plan something like an informal get together and perhaps have your child's friends help you begin a memory book or some sort of scrap book. An activity like this can be quite healing to all involved.

Others have a tendency to forget special days, anniversaries, and occasions such as your child's birthday. Rather than waiting for others to send a card, plan a meal and something such as a balloon release, candle lighting, or planting of a flower or tree in memory of your child. Ask your friends and family members to join you for these special occasions for additional support.

Have others forgotten? Not always. Most times they are afraid to bring up memories for fear of adding more pain. When you openly remember your child, so will others. And, you will soon have a built-in support system that can carry you through the difficult days into healing.

~ Clara Hinton

Hiding behind the Mask

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

How many masks do you wear - even in a week ... or a day. Do you wake up in the morning feeling the pain, with the knowledge that your child is no longer here? Do you "mask" that face with your old normal face to say good morning to your spouse? You can take the mask off and cry in the shower....it somehow feels so good to release some of those tears. Time to wake the children for school, put on the cheerful, positive mom mask. After dropping the children off at school you can once again remove the mask and feel. Soon you will be pulling into the parking lot at work....get the next mask out....the most of the competent professional. WOW! That's a lot of mask changing in a short time.

Strange isn't it how the MONSTER pain of grief makes us put on masks to cover the pain often to those who really care and who perhaps are putting on their masks to cover their pain when they see us.

Maybe we could all be so much better off if we removed our masks and let the monster pain out.

~ lovingly lifted from Bereaved Parents USA/Orange County

Love's Lasting Touch

Don't weep for me when I'm gone,
Because I'll always be there.
My spirit will exist in all the earth,
In the water, trees, and air.
You'll hear me say, "I love you,"
In the whisper of a breeze.
You'll know that I'm beside you,
With the rustling of the leaves.
You'll feel my arms caress you,
In the warmth of each sunrise.

The moon will be my goodnight kiss,
The stars my watchful eyes,
Your life will be my legacy,
Your memories my epitaph.
These ties will bind us together,
Till we meet on heaven's path.
I'll not ever desert you,
We'll never be far apart.
I'll live within you always
Nestled deep inside your heart.

~ Jacquelyn M. Comeaux

Pennies From Heaven

I found a penny today just laying on the ground.
But it is not just a penny this little coin I found...
Found pennies come from Heaven
that's what my Grandpa once told me. He said Angels toss them down . Oh, how I loved that story...
He said when an Angel misses you, they toss a penny down.
Sometimes just to cheer you up and make a smile out of your frown.
So don't pass by that penny when you are feeling blue.
It may be a penny from Heaven that an Angel has tossed to you!

~Author Unknown



OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED

BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
QUENTIN LEE CLEMENTS.....	5.....	JAMIE KUROWSKI
JAMES "JESSY" HABERMAN.....	10.....	JIM & HEATHER HABERMAN
MATTHEW TYLER HARRIS.....	27.....	RACHEL BODIN
MATTHEW TYLER HARRIS.....	27.....	WILLIAM & RACHAEL BODIN
ALEXANDER BRENT KLINKHAMMER.....	32.....	CHARLES & SANDY KLINKHAMMER
AMY CHRISTINE LARSON.....	34.....	DALE & MARILYN LARSON (Grandparents)
SUE ELLEN LARSON.....	56.....	DALE & MARILYN LARSON
JAYME ELIZABETH LASSLE.....	34.....	SHERRY LASSLE
TERESA JO NATHAN.....	40.....	TIMOTHY & BRENDA DOOHER
DONNA L PFEIFER.....	66.....	JUNE L HAGEMEISTER
NICHOLAS J SADEK.....	33.....	JOHN & TAMMY SADEK
JESSE SCALLON.....	31.....	LEE & LUANNE SCALLON
WESLEY SCHREINER.....	62.....	NETTIE SCHREINER
SPENCER TUFTE.....	10.....	DAWN & BRANDON TUFTE
JASMINE ROSE WILSON.....	11.....	KAREN WILSON

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
JOHN CLAYTON JACKSON JR.....	6.....	NORMA JACKSON
DANA DAWN KEBLAR.....	20.....	DEBORAH FACEY
DAVID MARK KLEINGARTNER.....	15.....	NORBERT & LUELLA KLEINGARTNER
THERESA VICTORIA KLIER.....	2.....	KAREN SCHWARTZ
ANNIE PAGE LEGGIO.....	21.....	JOSEPH LEGGIO
PAUL MORLOCK.....	3.....	DELLA MORLOCK
DENNIS JAMES MULDOON, JR.....	1.....	PATRICIA MULDOON
JUSTIN OLSON.....	6.....	CHERIE HARLAND & BILL BARTHOLOMAUS
MATTHEW ALLEN OLSON.....	12.....	DICK & LINDA OLSON

October Chill

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

To Suzanne from Mommy
Vickie Smith, TCF/Bend OR

Next time you feel lonely, take a walk under the stars and feel the magic of not being alone. ~ Joe A. Perez

SIBLING PAGE

LOOKING TO THE LIGHT

It is difficult to articulate thoughts and feelings about a life-altering event such as the death of a brother. For a long time, the only thing I could do to find any solace was to read about the tragic experiences of others. I was often moved to tears, so strong was my identification with their anguish.

I never suffered from denial. My brother's death was always a very tangible thing. It was my grief. I owned it. In accepting it, I feel that the healing was somehow expedited. I don't mean to imply that I am now returned to the unaffected individual that existed prior to his death, that my acceptance of his death is now clear,

I don't think you ever "get over" such a loss. What happens is the incorporation of that loss into your daily life. In my case, that process brought a number of changes in attitude and priority which, as it turned out, were in my best interest. I had become centered on myself and my career to such an extent that I was armed against life's disappointments. When meeting me, it became clear to others that "career" was what it was all about.

I keep pictures of my brother all around so that I can see him several times each day. In doing so, I am alternately both comforted and saddened. But mostly, I am comforted. I know he is in heaven, and I believe he looks in on me and is aware of the magical events that have taken place in my life. When I look upward through my kitchen skylights, I can see the sky and the top of the big old elm in the lights. I talk to him in my heart and I know he is near. I still shed my tears, for I miss him and will the remainder of my life.

Given a choice, I wish he had never become ill and that he hadn't ended his life. Today, some two years after his death, I can accept it and understand his choice. The love we feel for a loved one never has to leave us, even though our loved one has departed physically.

~ Rhonda St. John, TCF/Grosse Pointe Woods, MI

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

You left us so suddenly that I think most of us just felt shock. Did you know of everyone's love for you? We used to have lots of fun playing basketball, talking about diesel trucks and dragsters, and playing videos. You lived for scouting, you lived for animals and nature -- you lived for us all. I got to know your corny jokes, your adolescent fears (although for you they were understandably real), the simplest way with which you saw life, the joy you placed in other's hearts.

How could it be that you're gone now while others seemingly less deserving live on? I'm not sure. Life isn't fair - everyone has said it - but why? Why does the sun rise? Why are we here? What is the purpose of life? I haven't been alive very long, but the only response I can come up with is love. Love has to be the answer to this question.

I love you. We all love you. We shall meet again someday, and that day will be a day of joy for me, a day that we shall again be companions. By that time, we will have a lot to share. It already seems a lifetime since you've gone. So it goes.

We live, we love, we learn. Our biggest task to learn is to let you go and never Forget.

~ Scott T. Anderson, TCF/Omaha, NE

An Essay On Love

Many things have affected my life during my short seventeen years. I have seen myself undergo several changes, and pass through different stages. However, the event that, without a doubt, has had the most profound effect on my life, was the death of my brother Doug on July 23, 1994. Because of this, I find myself to be a completely different person than I ever imagined I would be, and my entire outlook on life has changed.

At the time of Doug's death, he was only at the young age of 19. I was only five years younger at 14. Because I was at the age when I began to share many of the same interests as him, we had become closer than we had ever been. The memories of our playful wrestling-matches, and frequent games of softball or basketball, are forever implanted in my mind. He was more than just my brother; he was truly my best friend. There were so many things that I wanted to do with him, or anticipated to see him accomplish, and it all seems so unfair that he had to slip away just when we realized our special relationship.

Since Doug's death, I have come to realizations that some people take years to come to, and those that some people never will. The most important of these is that we must cherish every moment we have with those we love, because nobody is promised to be alive when they wake up. This may seem drastic, however, when I woke up at 1:00 in the morning and found out my brother was gone, it seemed anything but drastic. Looking back, I wish I could change words I spoke to him, and actions, which at the time seemed harmless. The only thing in life that I feel is necessary for everyone to learn is how to love without limits, and to appreciate what we have.

It has taken me much time, and many tears to accept this tragedy which has been placed so suddenly in my life. I fear, however, that I would never have been who I am now if the one I so dearly cherished had not fallen into God's grace. It is sad to realize that sometimes only a tragedy can change a person's heart forever.

~ Kari Brown, TCF/Warrington, PA

FOREVER 13

He would have been a junior
He should have been on the football team
He could have been a wrestler
He might have been.....
He would have been 17 this year
He should have been laughing and running
about
He could have been chasing the girls
He might have been.....
He would have been blowing his French horn
He should have been giving his teachers
a hard time
He could have been learning how to drive
He might have been.....
Except now he is forever 13.....

~ Lorie Beryl, TCF/Colorado Springs, CO.



My Cover-Up Mask

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

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

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

~ Joan Watson, TCF/Salisbury, MD

AS FALL APPROACHES...

As I type this newsletter, there is a suggestion of fall in the air. If this is your first fall without your child, and you have been having a few "good" days, but now you seem to be slipping, know that it is normal. If this is your first seasonal change, this expected mood swing may seem frightening. Change of seasons can be very difficult; even before the tragedy, our bodies reacted to seasonal change. The psychiatrists call it "seasonal blues." Add grief, and it compounds it.

If it is not your first, but you are still affected, don't be discouraged. That, too, is normal. It takes quite a few years before they can be handled better. In addition to how our body is affected, each season has its own set of memories with which we have to deal. With fall, there is the beginning of school. No matter what the age of our child, our thoughts can turn to the start of school. If they were very young, we may think about missing the fun of picking out clothes, lunch box, note-books, etc. If they were still in school, a pattern is broken in mid-sentence. If they were older, and the school years were finished, the memory of those years are still there, and we are taken wistfully back to those days.

Fall also means the holidays are coming closer and it is easy to slip into anticipating them. Try your best not to. Take it one day at a time; don't look ahead, particularly if you are in your first year. Today is what you should try to handle at this time. The tomorrows you will handle when they get here.

~ Mary Ehmann, TCF/Valley Forge, PA

The "Veteran" Bereaved Parent

Have you ever attended a TCF meeting to see a "veteran" bereaved parent shed a tear or openly show grief, and have wondered why after all that time?

Please don't get the wrong idea—the wrong idea being:

1. You won't ever cry after ten years.
2. You won't feel a need to still attend TCF meetings.
3. You won't feel like sticking with TCF in case a newly bereaved parent needs you.
4. You won't care enough to stay and help organize future meetings.
5. You won't feel compassionate enough to hear a newly bereaved parent talk of their grief.

Yes, some veteran bereaved parents move on and I wish them peace. But I am personally grateful for veteran bereaved parents who stay with TCF. What would newly bereaved parents do if they attended their first meeting and no one was there?

~ Sandy Smith, TCF/Greater Cincinnati Area, OH

DEATH IS NOTHING AT ALL

Death is nothing at all. It does not count.

I have only slipped away into the next room.

Nothing has happened. Everything remains exactly as it was. I am I, and you are you, and the old life that we lived so fondly together is untouched, unchanged. Whatever we were to each other, that we are still. Call me by the old familiar name. Speak of me in the easy way you always used to.

Put no difference in your tone. Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.

Laugh, as we always laughed at the little jokes that we enjoyed together.

Play, smile, think of me, pray for me. Let my name be ever the household word that it always was. Let it be spoken without an effort, without the ghost of a shadow upon it. Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was.

There is absolute and unbroken continuity.

What is this death but a negligible accident?

Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?

I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near, just around the corner.

Be well.

~Sir Henry Scott Holland

THE FALL OF FALL

What is it about the season

That takes me back in time

Everything I do,

I find you are on my mind.

Haunting dreams find me

At night when I try to sleep

And every little detail is replayed,

and the sadness falls so deep.

Something about the close of summer

Seems to bring it back

Making it so hard to move onward and stay on track.

Something about the dying and fading of the trees

Brings my heart to sorrow, with the falling of the leaves.

How I long to stop it, to keep the fall away

But time marches on, and summer just won't stay.

I know with the fall, winter's not far behind

Another lonely season, and the memories flood my mind.

I cry my tears of sorrow, and pray for spring to come

A rebirth of the earth, and the warmth of the sun.

It makes the memories softer and gentler to recall

But now my life is saddened with the nearing of fall.

~Sheila Simmons, TCF/Atlanta Online Sharing

AUTUMN

In the fall

When amber leaves are shed,

Softly-silently

Like tears that wait to flow,

I watch and grieve.

My heart beats sadly in the fall;

'Tis then I miss you Most of all.

~ Lily deLauder, TCF/Van Nuys, CA



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: _____

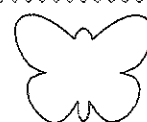
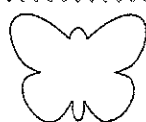
Date: _____

(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 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.

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.

Strange Words Welcome New Members

I am always amazed at the instant empathy we each feel as new members come to their first meeting. We have the strangest welcome for these parents: "We are so sorry you have to be here."

In other organizations the questions are probing: where did you go to school, where do you work, where do you live? All designed to "size up" the newcomer, put him or her in the proper perspective of a neatly ordered world. For us, this information is meaningless. We know the world isn't neat and orderly; we discovered that when we lost our children. We care about you, the newly bereaved parent, whose life was tossed into a cosmic blender when your child died. We care because we are you. We have been here a while, in this purgatory of pain. We have learned to live our lives in a different way, to place value on understanding and hope, the intangibles of the purest meanings of life. We have learned to value each other, to reach out and talk, to wait patiently during the silences needed to form thoughts. We listen intently as you quietly say your child's name, tell your child's story, speak of your heartbreak.

Yes, this is a different kind of welcome. But it is the most deeply sincere welcome we will ever receive. We are kindred souls, you and I. Each of us lives in the "after death" world of losing our child. Each of us has learned gradually that the hope we have attained has made life better, lessened the pain, moderated the isolation, tears, emotional devastation and pure mayhem that once overtook us. Each of us has learned this slowly, in our own time and in our own way.

Each month new parents who have suffered the most horrific loss that a human can endure are welcomed into our group. We reach out, we listen with our hearts and we remember.

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

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

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #1625
FARGO, ND

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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

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

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

FARGO-MOORHEAD COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS BOARD

YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE BOARD AT ANY TIME!

Chapter Leader	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.