



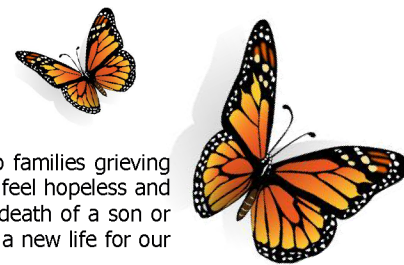
The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

April 2017

Volume XVIII No. 4



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is a self-help, nonprofit organization offering friendship, understanding and hope to families grieving the death of a child of any age, from any cause. 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, support to every family experiencing the death of a son or daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family. The butterfly signifies a new life for our lost children and a different life for ourselves. It is a symbol of hope, rebirth, and regeneration and beauty.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

P.O. Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

Toll Free (877) 969-0010 *Fax (630) 990-0246

Email: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

website: www.compassionatefriends.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TCFUSA

Regional Coordinator: Olivia Garcia 818-212-3506

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

Mailing Address: 27949 Park Meadow Dr.,
Santa Clarita, CA 91387

E-mail TCF.SCV@gmail.com

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA)

TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA

website: www.compassionatefriends-scv.org

MEETINGS

We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the 1st Thursday of each month.

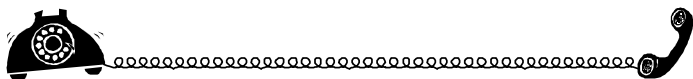
Our next meeting will be **April 6, 2017.**

TIME: **7:00 P.M.**

MEETING **Fellowship Christian Church**

PLACE: **26889 Bouquet Canyon Rd., Ste. C. Saugus, CA 91350**

(Take the side street next to the Goodwill store and make a left behind the store, the church is located in that building. Entry to the church is the double glass doors.)



FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISTENER, PLEASE CALL:

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-252-4654

Alice Renolds (Co-Leader) 661-252-4374

Carol Costin (Treasurer) 661-670-0395

Linda Stout (Remembrance Secretary) 661-202-8638



From the Ashes of Grief

In the early morning fog of a spring day

Sunlight dries slowly across the lake

Lifting the dark shadows of night.

The honking geese frolic in the early morning rays of sunshine

While the birds sing of promises yet to come.

Through the dark clouds of grief,

Silvers of sunlight filter down.

The pain and fear residing in my heart

Is starting to give way

To the hope of finding joy once again in my life.

The warmth of the sun flows through my body

And I now feel and see flickers of that joy.

It is but a fleeting moment in my thoughts.

But it fills me with the hope of perhaps

Finding peace once again.

The forever tears cleanse my heart and my pain.

They pave the way for love and laughter once again in my life.

My heart will forever be empty

from the loss of my precious child.

But the sparkling sunlight spreads light

around that hole in my heart.

Gentle healing is beginning;

springing anew from the ashes of grief.

~Lana Golembeski

Reprinted from the TCF national magazine

"We Need Not Walk Alone"





In the Springtime of Your Grief

Spring has fragile beginnings; a tiny shoot of green that emerges from the cold earth, a hint of pastel against the brownish grass, a bud that awakens with the morning sun. Sometimes spring comes so quietly we almost miss it, but once it begins, it is impossible to ignore the daily growth and change. The morning sun brings sounds that were not there before. The breeze carries warmth that invites us to venture outside of ourselves. A promise is released with the budding and blossoming surrounding us. Hope emerges for the beginning of a new season; change is in the air.

What we experience in the springtime of the year is what we can experience in the springtime of our grief. There begins to be a growing radiance. The radiance is not just around us; it is within us. A gradual warming of the heart silences the chill of intense pain. The natural unfolding of the grief process moves gently to remind us that we will survive. Life is changing and growth emerges through the changes. The song of our hearts that seemed off key begins to experience a harmonious blend of the past and the present. The songs of the birds invite us to join them in a celebration of new life. In the springtime of our grief, there can be a new song for us to sing. It will be a song we composed through the heartache of loss.

Optimism for a better day may awaken us one morning. Hearing laughter and discovering it is coming from within ourselves gives us promise for today. Dreams and hopes for a better tomorrow shine brightly with the morning sun. Surviving the winter of our grief with the openness to embrace change is a decision to embrace loss and integrate its impact into the fabric of our lives. It can be a willingness to explore new possibilities that create a different landscape to behold. We can make a decision that we will begin to appreciate what we still have, not just focus on what is missing.

We will know when we have made that decision. Something buds; something opens. The harshness of winter is softened with new life and new growth. It is not something we can force; it is something that unfolds when the time is right. The springtime of grief arrives with no dramatic entrance, no flashing lights. The stillness of the beauty unfolds and captures our attention. It is happening around us, but it is also happening in us.

If spring has already crossed the path of your personal journey of grief, rejoice! But, if the chill of winter remains in your heart, be encouraged; spring is on its way. Look for it, expect it and it will be yours to experience around you and in you!



*~Judi Fischer, Cleveland, Ohio
from A Journey Together Newsletter
Volume IX No. 2, Spring 2004
Bereaved Parents of the USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org*

Spring Waiting



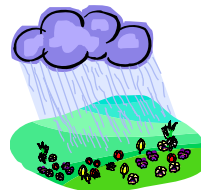
Winter's end is almost here,
Crocus struggle in the snow.
Sunlight has a softer glow.

-Is the winter long this year?

Spring waits, watching for a cue
not to rush your grief away.
But to be there, when you say.

-Spring is waiting, friend, for you.

~Sascha Wagner



April Showers Bring May Flowers

April is a month known for rain, which is a necessary component to bring out the flowers in May. It is a step that cannot be skipped or done away with. Although at times bleak and dreary, this rainy season is a time of rejuvenation for the ground and prepares the soil to be able to nourish the plant life that will soon come.

The death of a loved one creates a personal "rainy season" that lasts much longer than a single month. The days become figuratively dark and gloomy with menacing clouds hanging overhead. This too is a necessary component for personal healing. So many people I see grow (understand-ably) tired of their "rainy season"; full of sudden outbursts of tears and thunderous pangs of pain. These emotional storms cannot only come quickly, but may linger un-mercilessly as well.

In April, with storms coming at the drop of a hat, I know that if I want to manage the amount I get wet, I need to stay prepared. I will keep an umbrella in my office, in the car, at home, and with me wherever I go. Likewise those who are weathering "emotional storms" can also prepare themselves. Suggested supplies to keep on hand are many and may vary from person to person. First and foremost, keep tissues on you at all times. Grief is often unexpectedly triggered in the most inconvenient of places. For many, eating is completely thrown off balance. Keep a snack near you as well for times when you suddenly realize you have not eaten all day and feel like you may pass out. Also, it is nice to have something cold to drink to replenish yourself after having a "good" cry. In addition, keep a small notebook and pen handy and write down anything important that you need to remember. People who are grieving are supposed to have no memory when it comes to appointments or grocery lists. These things take a back seat (if that) to mentally reconstructing one's own life after a death.

As you continue to weather your own storms, remember that the tears you shed are not wasted. They are necessary and healing, preparing you for your coming springtime when the flowers bloom once again.

*~Stephanie Elson,
reprinted from Tears to Hope Newsletter of the Amelia Center, A place
for hope & healing for grieving children, parents and families.
Birmingham, AL
www.ameliacenter.org*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

April 6 - "Healing Flowers, Planting & Sharing Our Love" Our grief process helped by nature, butterflies and gardening.
Please bring a 4" potted flower to be used for a plant exchange at the end of our meeting.

May 4- "What To Do For Mother's Day?"

May 21- Balloon Release/Family Picnic



Balloon Release/ Family Picnic Sunday, May 21

Our annual Balloon Release/Family Picnic will be held on Sunday, May 21 at the Bouquet Canyon Park located at 28127 Wellston Dr., Saugus, beginning at 1:00pm. All members of TCF as well as family members & friends are invited to participate!

This family event includes a few songs, poems, and the release of balloons in memory of our children, siblings and grandchildren. Of course, who can't forget the wonderful food and friendship.

Our chapter will be providing the main course, paper goods, dessert and balloons. All you need to **bring** is a **side dish** to share and your own **drinks**. You also might want to bring a **blanket** or **chairs for sitting and if you have an extra portable shade cover, that would be great!** If you have any lawn games that you like to play, bring them for some extra fun!

YOU MUST RSVP to Alice Renolds 661-252-4374, Carol Costin 661-670-0395 or email our chapter at TCF.SCV@gmail.com by **May 12, SO THAT WE WILL HAVE ENOUGH BALLOONS AND FOOD FOR EVERYONE!**

PLEASE TRY TO ARRIVE ON TIME, we would like to start eating by 2:00.

Thank you,
The Steering Committee

Why Compassionate Friends?

As a Compassionate Friend you can expect to receive and should expect to offer in return... FRIENDSHIP –nothing more, nothing less. At a time when you may feel abandoned by many friends and family members we gather for mutual support and we share. We share our pain, we share our tears, we share our kids' stories, we share our precious memories and most importantly we share ourSELVES. Isn't that what friends do? We can acknowledge and honor our children without fear of being told to "get over it", "move on" or other such nonsense. We have formed a unique bond with one another. We are not brought together by ideology, belief systems, political agendas, occupation or any other sort of earthly trappings. Our bonds are the most powerful forces of love and grief. We love our kids. We miss our kids...deeply. In this group we can freely share our pain and love with those around us because we know they understand how we really feel and we in turn understand how they feel. Our friendships are borne on the shoulders of mutual understanding of the human experience in its truest form. Often, it isn't fair.

It has been several years since my beloved daughter died. After being on this grief journey for some time, I am constantly awed and inspired by the depth of compassion and love that grieving people share. I have witnessed a young mother, who only had a few short hours to share her lifetime of love for her dying newborn, embrace and comfort a woman who had lost her 40 year old son. Compassion has no limits. Love knows no boundaries - it is universal and complete. These emotions are what unite us and help us to continue when we are at our lowest depth of grief and despair. Our children have become our teachers and guides. How we honor them becomes our connection to them when we feel hopeless and disconnected. How our children died and at what age has little meaning. What matters is how much we loved them, how we remember them and how we carry on in their memory. That is our journey.

*~David Derby
Genevieve "Ginger" Ann Derby's Dad
Chapter Leader, Regional Leader TCF Colorado
Lovingly lifted from June 2007 Newsletter*



Photo Buttons

Don't forget, we take orders at each meeting for photo buttons or you can send it by email, or regular mail. We will photo copy your child, grandchild or sibling's picture and make 3" buttons for \$2.00 each.

Why not order an extra button to keep at our meeting place, so you will always have one there. Also, don't forget to order some for you family and friends to wear at our Balloon Release/Family Picnic on May 21. Contact us at TCF.SCV@gmail.com or contact Alice at 661-252-4374 for more info.



Easter Surprise Helps Mom Heal from Child-Loss

On October 25, 1989, my fourteen-year-old son Shawn was struck by a car and died. When the coroner came to our door to tell us, I felt like he'd stuck a knife in my heart. I wanted so badly for him to be at the wrong house talking about the wrong kid. But he wasn't and the nightmare began.

I don't remember much about those first few weeks and months. I do remember how hard it seemed to breathe. I kept waiting for the nightmare to end. It didn't. I didn't suddenly wake up and see my son sleeping in his bed or have to tell him to turn his music down. Those days ended with the ringing of the doorbell. Life as my family knew it was over.

Our house seemed so empty. It seemed to scream Shawn was gone. There were reminders of him everywhere. All those things he'd never use again. His brand new bike hanging in the garage that I couldn't bring myself to part with.

His jackets were still hanging in the hall closet. All of those things that took on new meaning and became so important to us after our loved ones die. The clothes they wore. The things their hands touched. The things that now keep us connected to them. When we can no longer touch or smell those we love, we touch and smell what they leave behind.

Grieving is like being in a no-man's-land. It is a place of loneliness, even in a crowd, longing for what we had; it's a place of sadness and anger that we can never have it again. It is a place where hope is non-existent or very hard to find and difficult to live without. I, like many grieving people, longed for a sign that my son was okay.

Days passed and turned into weeks and then months. Time takes on a confusing quality when grieving. It can seem like forever since our loved one died and at the same time that it was just yesterday. Easter was coming and I was dreading it. Easter had always been a happy time. It had been a time of celebration.

My mood would not allow me to feel like celebrating. I wanted to skip Easter. I couldn't get excited about church, an Easter egg hunt, Easter baskets, and dinner. I knew it would just make me miss Shawn more. I desperately needed to have something good happen soon.

That something happened the day before Easter with a phone call. There was a message on our answering machine from a local handmade chocolate store that Shawn had won the drawing for the solid chocolate bunny. I knew there must be some mistake. Was someone playing a cruel joke on us? Had they meant to call a different house with a boy named Shawn? I asked my

husband to call the store. He did and was told they had called and left the message and verified Shawn's name as the winner.

As I headed out to my car feeling confused, I decided someone in my family must have entered Shawn's name. When I got to the store and brought out the bunny, I was amazed at the size of it. It was huge. I questioned everyone in my family but every one of them said they had not even been to the store. I started thinking maybe one of his friends had done it.

Suddenly, I realized it didn't matter how my son's name got in there or got picked. All that mattered is it happened and I thought it was Shawn's way of saying; "I love you all. I'm okay. Please be okay for me. Happy Easter." I wrapped those messages around my heart and went to the refrigerator and got the eggs out.

*~Deb Kosmer, April 2011
Lovingly Lifting with permission from
Open to Hope Foundation Newsletter 4/6/2014*

Easter Thoughts

One more winter overcome,
one more darkness
turned to light and promise.

Winter is the price for spring.
struggle is the price for life.

Even in sorrow, remember
to prepare your heart
for celebration —
next spring perhaps.
Or the spring after that....

*~Sascha Wagner
From "Wintersun"*

*The passage of time alone does not cause
our grief to end,
but its softening touch
helps us to survive.*

~Wayne Loder

*What moves through us is a silence, a quiet sadness, a longing for one more day. One more word, one more touch, we may not understand why you left this earth so soon, or why you left before we were ready to say goodbye, but little by little we begin to remember not just that you died, but that you lived.
And that life. . . gave us memories too beautiful to forget.*

~author unknown



Memories

When you need to....
Reach deep inside and take one of your precious memories.
Wipe away the cobwebs, lay it out in front of you
And let the sunshine
and the sounds engulf you.

Revel in the experience of it...
Re-live each precious moment,
be overwhelmed by them
And taste the wonderful sweet tears
that are their gift.

When your needs have been almost satisfied
Pause for one more second
Then gently fold it back up, give it a big hug and a tender kiss
And return the treasure
to where you found it.

Then to make the experience complete,
Find someone special and share the feelings with them...
For surely something as wonderful as this is meant to be shared.

Don't be afraid of using them - that's what memories are for
You will never lose them....
for as certain as the sun will rise tomorrow,
Love once attained is never lost.

~Steve Channing

Lovingly Lifted from:

"Linked Together" Newsletters of The Compassionate Friends Atlanta Chapters
Atlanta-May/June 2002
www.tcfatlanta.org

A Love Gift

Was Received From:

Linda Stout

In Loving Memory of her daughter:

Reese Marleen Stout

4/30 - 2/10

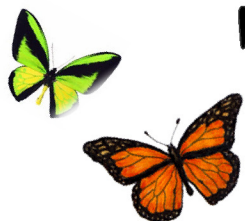


Time slips by and life goes on,
but from our hearts
you're never gone.
We think about you always,
we talk about you too.
We have so many memories
but we wish we still had you.

Lovingly lifted from:
Fb/wingsofhopelivingforward

*To my child . . .
gone too soon,
You are my FIRST THOUGHT
every morning
And my LAST THOUGHT
every night.*

The Compassionate Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



"Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Siblings Remembered



April 2017

Name

Birth Date Angel Date

Relationship

<i>Erik Alan Fleischer</i>	<i>4/26</i>	<i>6/28</i>	<i>Son of Larry & Rita Fleischer Brother of Barbie, Holli, Heidi</i>
<i>Bradley Ryan McBurney</i>	<i>4/22</i>	<i>7/18</i>	<i>Son of Michael & Tammy Gauld Brother of Tara</i>
<i>Walter Arnoldo Rodriguez "Wally"</i>	<i>4/25</i>	<i>2/3</i>	<i>Son of Hugo & Carole Rodriguez Brother of Ivan, Nora, Enrique</i>
<i>Sammy Joseph Thomas</i>	<i>2/1</i>	<i>4/10</i>	<i>Grandson of Kay & Dave Thomas Brother of Hannah Joy</i>
<i>Anthony Amodio</i>	<i>4/28</i>	<i>12/26</i>	<i>Son of Lynn & Michael Olds Brother of Briana</i>
<i>Wallace James Potter</i>	<i>6/6</i>	<i>4/24</i>	<i>Son of Shirley Potter Brother of Christine, Monica, John, David</i>
<i>Adam Bouziane</i>	<i>4/15</i>	<i>10/29</i>	<i>Son of Laura Erdmann Brother of Ryan</i>
<i>Michael Eddie Arvizu</i>	<i>5/6</i>	<i>4/22</i>	<i>Son of Robert & Juanita Arvizu Brother of Angela</i>
<i>Melissa Christine Lind</i>	<i>4/23</i>	<i>7/6</i>	<i>Daughter of Marcy Torrey Sister of Stephanie</i>
<i>Amber Rae Brown</i>	<i>8/25</i>	<i>4/15</i>	<i>Daughter of Jim & Mary Ann Mogan Sister of Jeff, Lindsey</i>
<i>Reese Marleen Stout</i>	<i>4/30</i>	<i>2/10</i>	<i>Daughter of Linda Stout Sister of Reno</i>
<i>Sarah Geneva Lowery</i>	<i>4/23</i>	<i>10/28</i>	<i>Daughter of Bill & Karen Lowery Sister of Spencer</i>

If, in remembering our children, there are any errors or omissions, we are truly sorry! Please let us know of any corrections or additions as soon as possible so they may be incorporated into the database.