



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

January-February 2019

Volume 20, No. 1



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 age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides 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 reiteration and beauty.

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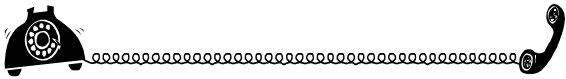
MEETINGS

We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the 1st Thursday of each month.
Our next 2 meetings will be **January 3 and February 7.**

TIME: **7:00 PM**

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) 661-202-86-38



Memories

Unique as snow flakes,
impossible to hold but for a moment,
yet when one is gone
there is another gliding
down upon the first
until they become blankets
of protection against the
storms of loneliness.
Memories, gentle memories.

~Marcia F. Alig
TCF Mercer, NJ



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

~Wayne Loder





It's The New Year

It is the New Year. The holidays are behind us. We did with them what we could. Whether they were a time of sorrow, a time of joy, or a combination of both, they are now a part of our memories. In a strange way, as a memory in our hearts and in our minds, our child's place is there among all the other memories of the season. There is hurt along with the memory, but also thankfulness for the memory.

Now we look out on a winter landscape. The earth is cold, the land sharply defined. Yet underneath the hard crust, the energy and warmth of our earth is guarding and providing life to all that grows. We may personally know the coldness and hardness of a grief so fresh that we feel numb—a grief so hurtful that our body feels physically hard, our throats tight from tears shed or unshed, our chests banded tightly by our mourning heart.

If we are not now experiencing this, our memories recollect so easily those early days. Yet as we live these days, like the earth from which we receive our sustenance, we too, in our searching's, find places of warmth and change and love and growth deep within. Let our hearts and minds dwell in these places and be armed and renewed by them, and let us have the courage and love to share them with our loved ones, to talk about even that first dim shape of new hope or new acceptance of new understanding or of new love.

These are our new roots, born of our love of our child, that are forming and stirring within, gathering strength so that our lives, at the right time can blossom once again and be fruitful in a new and deep way.

*~Marie Andrews
TCF South Maryland Chapter*

*"The new year brings time to reflect
on the children we love,
those who remain with us
and those for who we grieve"*

~Wayne Loder

January Warmth

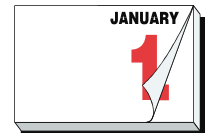


Like a tree in the winter
Which has lost its leaves
We look ahead to spring
For new growth and
Warmth of the sun
To heal the pain
In our hearts.

Let us make January a time
To reach out to each other
And give that warmth
From our hearts,
And in return,
We will all show new growth,

*Pat Dodge
TCF Sacramento Valley, CA*

Another Year



This is another year 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 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's, 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*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

January 3 - Guest Speaker - Lisa DeLong, RN, Local SCV bereaved mom. See Below

February 7 - "Box of Love & Memories" - Join us to decorate and fill a box of Love and Memories. If you do not wish to participate, the back room will be open for sharing.

Guest Speaker

Lisa DeLong is an international speaker, author, bereavement facilitator, ballroom dancer, and mom! She inspires healthcare professionals and lay people with a powerful reconnect to the heart message using writing prompts, Salsa dancing, and humor.

Her first-born son, Justin died at the age of fifteen in 2000 after a ten-year remission from leukemia. Shockingly, six years later, her youngest son, Jacob was diagnosed with the same kind of non-familial leukemia. He has completed treatments and is now a healthy teen!

Her memoir, BLOOD Brothers, is touching the hearts of readers all over the world and is now required reading for nursing students. Lisa blogs about her perspectives on dance, spirituality, living with fear, and returning to joy.

Holiday Pot Luck Dinner/Meeting



Our Chapter held its annual Holiday Pot Luck Dinner/Meeting on December 6. It was a wonderful turnout again this year!

Thank you to all those who attended and brought the delicious variety of food. It was a nice gathering of Compassionate Friends at a time when we most needed understanding and caring friends who share our pain during the holiday times!

Diane and I would like to wish all of our members a New Year filled with hope, good health and peace!

Alice Renolds & Diane Briones

Welcome New Members



Attending your first meeting takes courage and it is always hard to say "welcome" because we are so very sorry for the reason which made you eligible for our membership in TCF. However, we are glad you found us! We cannot take away your pain but we can offer our friendship and support, Do try and to attend at least 3 meetings so you have a chance to meet others who are bereaved and discover that special acceptance that occurs with new friends who truly understand.

New to our chapter are:

Bret & Teresa, parents of Taylor

John & Susan, parents of Alan



18th Annual Candle Light Remembrance Program

On Sunday, December 9, our chapter held it's annual candle lighting program at La Mesa Jr. High School. It was one of more than 700 formal services held around the globe.

We had over 40 beautifully embellished luminaries lining the walkway to the entrance of the auditorium. It was a magnificent sight to see these glowing bags with the many names and faces of those being remembered and it tugged at your heart as you entered the doors.

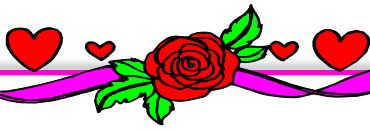
As attendees came through the doors they were given a small remembrance of the night from our chapter. A glass votive and candle, each with a variety of colored butterflies and the words of our theme - "May their light always shine" on the outside. Or they could choose one of last year's gifts, a white candle with a ribbon bow and butterfly attached.

We gathered together and filled the room that night in friendship and love with each other when most were celebrating the holidays to share the love for our children, grandchildren, and siblings. As we listened to the poems, musical performances, lit our candles, and watched our loved ones faces float across the screen you could hear weeping and see glistening tears shimmering down our cheeks. But those tears signify the forever love we hold deep within our hearts.

It is our hope that this program for just a short time helped you to feel the warmth of your loved one's memories and presence in your heart and that you were given some small measure of peace for the holidays.

Thank you to the Steering Committee, Jon Chaitt, Tom Renolds, Richard Costin, Bert Briones, and Keith Brown for all your help. If you weren't able to attend, we hope you were able to light a candle from home, so that..."their light may always shine."





*The gates of memory never close,
How we miss you no one knows,
No longer in our lives to share,
But in our hearts you're always there.
~unknown*

Symbols

We are fast approaching Valentine's Day, filled with symbols of love...hearts and roses. As a young school girl, I can remember wishing I would get a valentine from someone special. My friends and I would count how many Valentines we had received, feeling certain that the more you received, the more it indicated your popularity.

As I grew older, I was thrilled when I received flowers from that special someone. Surely this was, true love. As a married woman, Valentine's Day was always special. Glen and I usually went out to dinner, and I often received flowers or a special gift that said, I love you! While those gifts were much appreciated, I would be hard pressed now to tell you what we did or what I received.

However, one Valentine's Day will stay frozen in my memory forever, February 14, 1983. Glen took my arm and steadied me as I walked into a mortuary to view the body of our 17 year old son Nathan, who had been killed by a drunken driver on February 10. We had ordered a spray of seventeen red roses to be placed on his casket. When I ordered those flowers, I was stunned to discover how high priced roses are on Valentine's Day! At first, I had decided I would be content with carnations. Then the florist saw in my eyes how much I wanted my last gift to my son to be the very best...Red, long stemmed roses. The florist promised she would provide us with roses, regardless of how little we could afford to pay.

That afternoon, I drank in every detail of my boy, his hair, the bruise on his face, the National Honor Society pin on his lapel, those wonderful, strong hands. Then I pulled myself together for a very special appointment. I was the Academic Counselor at Nathan's high school, and we had arranged a special viewing for the students prior to the general visitation. I

watched as young girls brought beautiful bouquets of red roses they had received from their boyfriends, but now they were placing them below our son's casket. Their final act of love for a very dear friend.

It has taken me a long time to be able to actually celebrate Valentine's Day in a normal fashion. In fact, I guess I never will be able to that. Valentine's Day is no longer a superficial type of holiday where I just send cards or give candy or flowers without much deliberation beforehand. The symbols are still there; I just see them differently now.



The **ROSE**: A symbol of love that cannot be separated by death.



The **HEART**: Broken, bruised and bandaged, but not defeated.

And now, there's one more symbol:



The **HAND**: As we offer our hands to each other in friendship, in understanding, in strength, we are saying:

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE, WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS!

May your Valentine's Day be filled with roses that will encourage your broken heart and give you strength to offer a helping hand to others who are grieving.

*~Marilyn Heavilin
TCF Redlands*



February

Let this cool and
gentle
month of the heart
remind you
not only
of lost
treasures,
but also of riches
(past and present)
in your life.

~Sascha Wagner

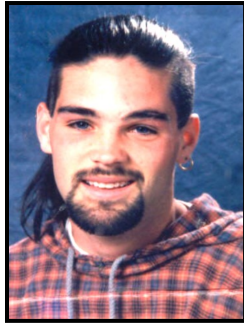
 **Love Gifts** 

Were Received From:

Jim & Susan Kirk

In Loving Memory of their Children:

Justin Knopf
11/28 - 11/21



&

Jamie Knopf
10/21 - 11/21



Tom & Alice Renolds

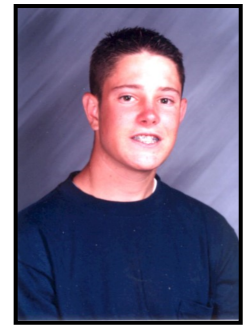
In Loving Memory of their Sons:

Tim Renolds
3/17 - 2/17



&

Danny Renolds
6/22 - 2/17



We love and miss you
yesterday, today and forever!



Patricia E. Patton, PH.D.

In Loving Memory of all the
Children of the Santa Clarita Valley

Carol Lock

In Loving Memory of her son:

Darren Bullock
6/15 - 11/19

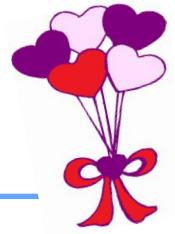


*To my child . . .
gone too soon,
You are my FIRST THOUGHT
every morning
And my LAST THOUGHT
every night.*



“Forever In Our Hearts”

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings



Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays

January

Name	Date	Member
Nigel Peddie	1/19	Bruce Peddie

February

Name	Date	Member
Sammy Thomas	2/1	Dave & Kay Thomas
William Lemke, Jr.	2/12	Marilyn Lemke
Edward Evans	2/28	Barbara Evans
Peter Spencer	2/5	Bobbie Mathers
Sage Gallegos	2/22	Alex Gallegos
Lloyd Sreden	2/13	Maxine Sreden

Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates



January

Name	Date	Member
Oliva Kares	1/12	Mike Kares
Oliva Kares Niece	1/12	Julie Tate
Sarah Carter	1/26	Shelly Carter
Edward Evans	1/2	Barbara Evans
Travis Marton	1/1	Andrew & Ricki Marton
Eric Rodriguez	1/20	Carlos & Ana Rodriguez

February

Name	Date	Member
Daniel Renolds	2/17	Tom & Alice Renolds
Timothy Renolds	2/17	Tom & Alice Renolds
Walter Rodriguez	2/3	Carole Rodriguez
Jeanene Sykes	2/5	Ted Sykes
Santos Aguilar, Jr.	2/15	Santos & Carol Aguilar
Nigel Peddie	2/1	Bruce Peddie
Reese Stout	2/10	Linda Stout
Eli Rodriguez	2/17	Pahola Mascorro
Aveline de la Cueva	2/9	Kevin & Misty de la Cueva
Erica Findley	2/20	Kevin & Pam Findley



Then And Now

They were my children, then.
Resounding voices, arguments and laughter -
Intense and wide awake at story time -
In love with music, dance and birthday parties -

So serious about their great inventions -
So filled with promise, all-involved with life.

They are my children, now,
Remembered like a touching of the wind -
Remembered in the clarity of mornings -
Remembered in the smiles of other children -

Remembered like the charm of cradlesongs-
Alive in silence and in absence, present.
My Children, now.

“Grieving is a journey that teaches us how to love in a new way now that our loved one is no longer with us. Consciously remembering those who have died is the key that opens the heart, that allows us to love them in new ways.”

*~Tom Attig
From- The Heart of Grief*