



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

January 2017

Volume XVIII 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 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.

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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

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TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA](http://www.facebook.com/TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA)
web site: www.compassionatefriends-scv.org

MEETINGS

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

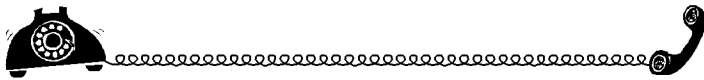
Our next meeting will be **January 5, 2017**
Our topic will be: "New Year - New Beginnings"

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, 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 & Editor) 661-252-4374
Carol Costin (Treasurer) 661-670-0395
Linda Stout (Remembrance Secretary) 661-202-8638

Another Year...

Old year has gone away
with gift and candle -
old year has gone away
with thought and song.

Old year has given light
and dark and season.

Old year has been too short
and been too long.

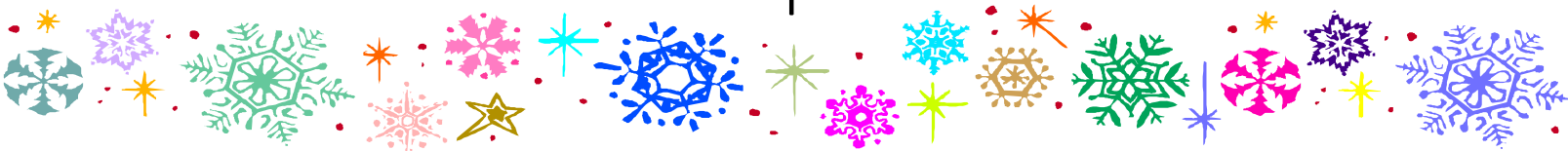
Old year has given joy
and disappointment.
Old year has given grief
and strength to cope.
Old year was memory
and was forgetting -

Another year is come:
give it your hope.

~Sascha Wagner

*Hope is like the sun, which,
as we journey toward it,
casts the shadow of our
burden behind us.*

~Samuel Smiles



New Year's Resolutions For Bereaved Parents



I resolve...

That I will grieve as much, and for as long, as I feel like grieving, and that I will not let others put a time table on my grief.

That I will grieve in whatever way I feel like grieving, and I will ignore those who try to tell me what I should or should not be feeling and how I should or should not be behaving.

That I will cry whenever and wherever I feel like crying, and that I will not hold back my tears just because someone else feels I should be "brave" or "getting better" or "healing by now."

That I will talk about my child as often as I want to, and that I will not let others turn me off just because they can't deal with their own feelings.

That I will not expect family and friends to know how I feel, understanding that one who has not lost a child cannot possibly know how it feels.

That I will not blame myself for my child's death, and that I will constantly remind myself that I did the best job of parenting I could possibly have done. But when feelings of guilt are overwhelming, I will remind myself that this is a normal part of the grief process and it, too, will pass.

That I will not be afraid or ashamed to seek professional help if I feel it is necessary.

That I will commune with my child at least once a day in whatever way feels comfortable and natural to me, and that I won't feel compelled to explain this communion to others or to justify or even discuss it with them.

That I will try to eat, sleep, and exercise every day in order to give my body the strength it will need to help me cope with my grief.

To know that I am not losing my mind, and I will remind myself that loss of memory, feelings of disorientation, lack of energy, and a sense of vulnerability are all normal parts of the grief process
To know that I will heal, even though it may take a long time. To let myself heal and not to feel guilty about feeling better.

To remind myself that the grief process is circuitous - that is, I will not make steady upward progress. And when I find myself slipping back into the old moods of despair and depression, I will tell myself that "slipping backward" is also a normal part of the grief process and these moods, too, will pass.

To try to be happy about something for some part of every day, knowing that at first, I may have to force myself to think cheerful thoughts, so eventually they may become a habit.

That I will reach out at times, and try to help someone else, knowing that helping others will help me to get over my depression.

That even though my child is dead, I will opt for life, knowing that is what my child would want me to do.

*Nancy A. Mower
TCF - Honolulu, HI*



New Year Thoughts

I hear the bells peal and the firecrackers pop a another year is ushered in and I pause for a few moments of reflection, knowing that each year has a way of bringing the unexpected and, sometimes, even the unthinkable. In February I will pass the five-year mark since my daughter's death and I look back over those five years with amazement; first, for the sheer fact that I am still journeying forward when five years ago I was stopped in my tracks and wondered if I would survive the emotional cement mixer I found myself suddenly thrust into. The lows were so very low at first, and the highs nothing more than little hiccups of hope giving me the impetus to keep putting one foot in front of the other.

There have been cliffs to scale, valleys to walk through, storms to weather, huge patches of mud that sucked at my feet and almost mired me completely a few times, an dry, desert-like areas that just about baked the life out of my soul. There have also been warm, sunny areas, cool lakes, majestic views and enriching encounters with other pilgrims—fairly fleeting at first, but increasing as time has progressed. Now here I am, contemplating a brand new year, knowing that it will include the bad as well as the good, the tough as well as the touching, and opportunities as well as roadblocks

I will always miss my daughter. I will always have an empty place in my heart that only her presence can fill. I will never have an answer to "why" and, in fact, I no longer ask it. I simply ask for enough strength for each day; enough wisdom to be gentle with myself when the winds of grief blow with extra force; enough insight to see when someone needs a comforting word; and enough courage to let the seeds of hope take root and grow in my soul in ever-increasing numbers.

*~Sally Cowell
TCF Salem, Or*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

January 5 - "New Year - New Beginnings"

February 2 - "Make a Memory Box"



16th Annual Candle Light Remembrance Program

On Sunday, December 11, our chapter held its' annual worldwide candle lighting program at the Child & Family Center. It was one of nearly 550 formal services held in 19 countries around the globe.

This year the weather cooperated and we were able to line the walkway with 75 beautifully glowing luminaries; the most we have ever had! Reading the names and seeing their faces of the



loved ones being remembered on the bags tugged at your heart as you walked to the entrance. As attendees came through the door they were given a small

remembrance of the night from our chapter, which was a glistening snowflake ornament with a beautiful butterfly attached in the middle.

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. Compassionate Friends, relatives, neighbors, and some new faces, there to light the way.



As we listened to the beautiful musical performances and poem readings, you could see tears and hear many weeping as they remembered! We lit our candles that signify the love ever present in our hearts and watched as our loved ones faces floated across the screen. We were there to honor and remember their life and the times we'd been through.



We hope that this program lifted you out of the darkness and that you felt the warmth of their memories and your loved one's presence in your heart. It is our

hope for the holidays that you were given some small measure of peace.

Thank you to the steering committee, Kathy & Gary Hilton, Jon Chait, Carmen Smith, Tom Renolds, Richard Costin, and Bert Briones for all your help with putting this event on! If you weren't able to attend, we hope that you were able to light a candle from home, so that..."their light may always shine."

~Alice Renolds
Editor

A New Year

A time for looking ahead
and not behind.
A time for faith
and not despair.
A time for long great gulps of hopeful expectation.
Drink deeply friend so that
fortified with the promises it brings,
this New Year will keep you
near fresh springs of healing love,
where you may come to weave old and loving
memories with new
understandings and acceptance
and find peace.

~Shirley C. Ottman
Bereaved Parents of the USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

THE HOLIDAYS ARE BEHIND US



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 at the 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 of new acceptance or of new understanding or of new love.

These are the new roots, born of our love for 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 Andres
TCF So. MD Chapter

When Winter Comes

When winter comes into our lives
With its uncertain sound
To strip us of our warmth and joy,
Our petals on the ground,
We may be tempted to give up;
To fold beneath life's storm
We may be tempted to forsake
The hope which keeps us warm.
But, we must learn to stand up tall;
To always face the sun,
And patiently await the day
When winter's work is done.
For winter winds will cease to howl,
The snows will melt away.
Then we shall see the beauty of
Another summer's day.
And we will have renewed our strength
When summer's wind first blows,
For God will whisper once again
The promise of a rose.

~Glenda Fulton Davis
St. Louis Chapter,
Newsletter Nov/Dec 2006
Bereaved Parents USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Angel

*Hope is the melancholy angel of grievers,
elusive and beautiful.
Hope is the light from nowhere,
telling us that we must reach for the unknown
promise that waits to be fulfilled,
in a future we do not yet understand.*

~Sascha Wagner
From *Wintersun*



Love Gifts



Were Received From:

Gary & Shelly Carter

In Loving Memory of their daughter:

Sarah Carter
12/27 – 1/26

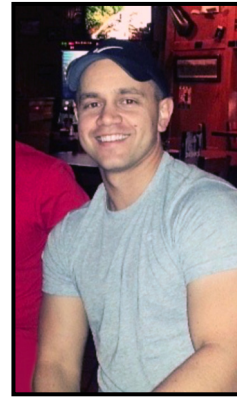


Missing you every day,
forever in our hearts,
Love Mom & Dad

Carlos & Ana Rodriguez

In Loving Memory of their son:

Eric Rodriguez
8/11 – 1/20



Bittersweet Memories

One of the most precious things to a parent who has lost a child is the memories. Without them, it would be as if their child never was. Without them, it is so bittersweet that it can make a parent laugh and cry, rejoice and anguish, touch the sweetness to the lips and taste the salt from the tears.

Memories keep the heart from crushing under the weight of sorrow. They give a parent the chance to be with their child again. They can walk through their memories like they were a movie. When the memories are so vivid, you can almost feel them. It is so bittersweet when the reality comes and you realize it is just a memory, a thought, and you are reminded of what you have lost.

If you asked a parent if they would give up the memories so they did not have to feel the pain of knowing their child is gone, they would tell you no. As painful as it may be, not having the memories or feeling their presence, is just as unbearable as losing them.

There is no happy place to go to, but there is a place to be with your child. You know before you step into that realm that it will be painful, but you know that it will be joyful too.

So as we let the memories take us to a time that our child was safe with us, just rest a while until it is time to go and the next time try not to think of what is gone but what is still in your heart and will always be.

~Vickie Van Antwerp
Lovingly Lifted from TCF National Magazine
"We Need Not Walk Alone", Vol. 34, No. 1/2



"Forever In Our Hearts"



Our Children/Siblings Remembered

January 2017



Name

Birth
Date

Angel
Date

Relationship

Olivia Lane Kares

7/14

1/12

*Daughter of Mike & Laurie Kares
Sister of Keenan, Niece of Julie Tate*

Megan Jean Burton

2/5

1/17

*Daughter of Terry & Jennifer Burton
Sister of Sarah*

Jeffrey Christopher Hearn

1/16

4/12

Son of Greg & Wendy Hearn

Michael Steven Haywood

1/29

8/7

*Son of Donna Frayer
Brother of Kristin, Heather*

Sarah Noelle Carter

12/27

1/26

Daughter of Gary & Shelly Carter

Nigel Peddie

1/19

2/1

*Son of Bruce Peddie
Brother of Cole*

Edward Alexander Evans

2/28

1/2

*Son of Edward & Barbara Evans
Brother of Jennifer*

Travis Fredrick Marton

10/15

1/1

*Son of Andrew & Ricki Marton
Brother of A.J. & Jake*

Margaret Smith

1/10

3/20

*Daughter of David & Sally
Sister of Brian & Zach*

Eric Rodriguez

8/11

1/20

*Son of Carlos & Ana
Brother of David, Scott, Nathan, Natalie*

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.