



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

July-August 2019

Volume 20, 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 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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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

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MEETINGS

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

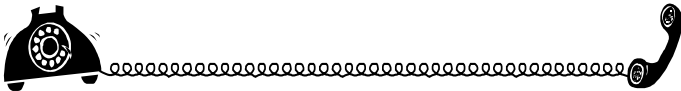
Our next 2 meetings will be on **July 11 & August 1.**

Please note: July's meeting is the second week of the month because of the holiday.

TIME: **7:00 PM**

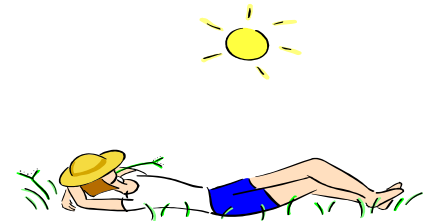
MEETING **Fellowship Christian Church**
PLACE: **26889 Bouquet Canyon Rd., Ste. C. Saugus, Ca 91350**

(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
Kathy Kelly (Treasurer) 661-724-1450
Linda Stout (Remembrance Secretary) 661-202-8638



Another Summer

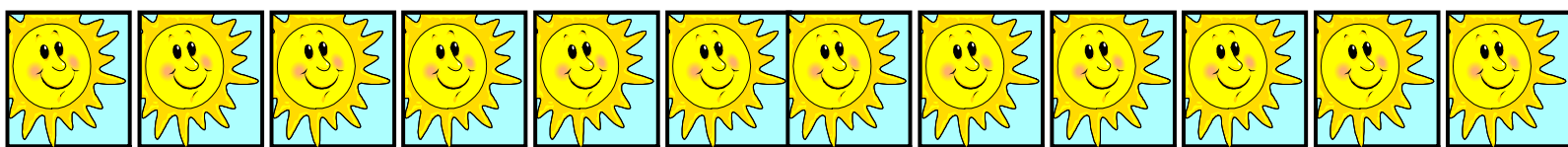
Leaving another summer behind,
adding one more bouquet
to your stores of remembrance,
holding new images
summer warm to your mind.

Leaving another summer behind,
with old, familiar mementos
of long-ago times in the sun.
And did you discover once more
how grief changes memories
to anniversaries?

*~Sascha Wagner
From "Wintersun"*

*"Ragged edges of sadness are
softened by memories."*

~unknown





Fireworks Are Like the Love In Our Hearts

July brings Central Oregonians lingering blue skies, lazy afternoons and the Fourth of July celebration, complete with the grand fireworks finale bolting from the top of Pilot Butte. This was one of my son's favorite holidays. When he was six I asked him why fireworks were so special to him. He said, "The lights explode in the dark and make the whole sky light up!" That was obvious. I said "Hum?" He gave me one of his "Oh mom" looks, then went on to say "The fireworks are like the love in our hearts, we should always try to spread our love out to others". I knew then and I still am aware today that profound wisdom comes from the lips of our children. From the summer on, in my mind, fireworks have been a triumphant testament of love's enduring power and wonder. I miss my son, Joshua terribly. I comfort myself knowing that his wisdom and kindness were precious gifts in my life.

Wherever you are on the Fourth of July, I hope that the splendor of sparkling fireworks might comfort as you acknowledge that the love you hold dear for your child is the light that is able to shine through you. We all have known grief well, yet as compassionate friends we need not walk alone in the darkness. We can lighten the path for others.

Grief can cripple and destroy us, but as we gather to share each other's burden, we are able to gain strength. Love for our children is our common flame, sharing and caring keep the flames afire. I look forward to our next meeting and the opportunity to hug and listen to my comrades.

*~Jane Oja,
TCF, Central Oregon Chapter*

Right now . . .

*Take a **moment**, close your **eyes** and
remember the **smile** of your **child!***

~Sascha Wagner



The Boat

When we lose our children, we begin a journey. It starts on a stream and each one of us gets into a boat. At first, the river is too fast and unfamiliar. We have no strength to put in the oars, but gradually we learn to row. Sometimes the current is too strong and we drift downstream again.

Along the way there are rapids, torrents, and storms we all must overcome and continue on our journey. At times, it seems so hard - others pass us; we watch as they gain strength and give us the courage to go on. We can look back and see others just getting in the boat and help them too, always there is some to help us row. We are never alone in our river of tears.

And some day, when we've rowed and rowed, we will reach dock and there will be our children to greet us. They will help us ashore and tell us they knew we could do it. We owe it to our children to be the best people we can.

They always knew we were. They had the most wonderful parents. We are left here to show them we are. So keep rowing on that river of life, someone is always there with you.

*~Samantha Adams, Australia
In loving memory of her son, James
www.bereavedparentsusa.org*

July's Child



Fireworks race toward heaven
Brilliant colors in the sky.
Their splendor ends in seconds
On this evening in July.
"Her birthday is this Saturday,"
I whisper with a sigh.
She was born this month,
She loved this month
And she chose this month to die.
Like the bright and beautiful fireworks
Glowing briefly in the dark
They are gone too soon, and so was she
Having been, and left her mark.
A glorious incandescent life,
A catalyst, a spark...
Her being gently lit my path
And softened all things stark.
The July birth, the July death of
my happy summer child
Marked a life too brief that ended
Without rancor, without guile.
Like the fireworks that leave images
On unprotected eyes...
Her lustrous life engraved my heart...
With love that never dies.

*~Sally Migliaccio,
TCF Babylon, Long Island, N.Y.*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

July 11 - "Vacations, Yes or No??" (Please note: this meeting date is the second week of July because of the July 4 holiday.)

August 1 - "Dealing With Grief Milestones"

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 is:

Matthew Thole, Brother of Brent

Book Review



I Have No Intention of Saying Good-bye
by Sandy Fox

Five or more years after the death of their children, 25 families open their hearts and their stories of courage, hope and their attempts to make sense out of the most unbearable loss of all. In addition to helping themselves, learn how these parents help others and what advice they give to those still having difficulty living in a world without their child. Available online at www.centering.org Code: IHNO Price \$15.95 Mention TCF for free shipping.

*~Lovingly lifted from TCF South Bay/L.A. CA
July 2018 Newsletter*

Please take note!

Our meeting for the of month July will be on the **SECOND Thursday** of the month. The date will be **July 11**, not July 4, as this is a holiday!

Butterfly Messages To Our Loved Ones

Our 14th Annual Family Picnic/Balloon Release was held on Sunday, June 2 at the Bouquet Canyon Park. Almost 100 Compassionate Friends and their families came to honor and remember our children, grandchildren and siblings.

The weather this year was cooler than all the years before, which made it nice to enjoy the friendly conversations with each other, the delicious food and the variety of side dishes brought by all.

After lunch we were ready to attach our assorted colored butterfly notes of love to the balloons. These butterfly messages are a very special part of the day and program. We then gathered together in a circle in an open



area of the park under the scenic turquoise blue sky scattered with wisps of floating clouds. Our program is brief with a few songs and poems read by our steering committee, but it is touching and reflective.

As the song "Pretty Balloons" echoed through the tall trees we released our balloons and watched them float up, up and away into the beautiful blue heavens, hoping they wouldn't catch in the trees! Tears, smiles and hugs were shared as we watched the balloons join with others on their journey to our loved ones as we honored and remembered them.

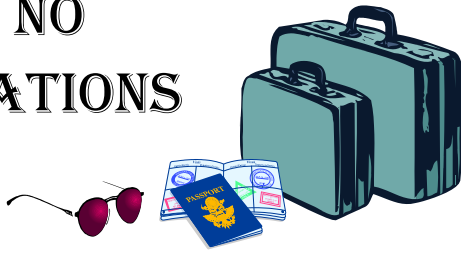


We finished the day with our raffle drawing while enjoying a slice of cake! It was truly a day of honoring and remembering. Yes, there were tears, but we were with Compassionate Friends and the tears eventually turned to smiles with the help of hugs!!

Thank you to our members Carlos & Ana Rodriguez who helped pick up pizzas, the cake and also for donating the cake, and to Bert Briones for picking up the chicken. Thanks to Kathy Kelly for her donation of a few raffle prizes. A big thank you to all those who gave a hand to help tie balloons, brought tables, chairs, easy-ups and helped with clean up!!! All your help and everything you brought was greatly appreciated! We couldn't put this event on without all the help from our members!

~Alice Reynolds, Editor & Co-Leader

NO VACATIONS



There is no vacation from your absence. Every morning I wake. I am a bereaved parent. Every noon I feel the hole in my heart. Every evening my arms are empty. My life is busy now, but not quite full. My heart is mended, but not quite healed. For the rest of my life every moment will be lived without you! THERE IS NO VACATION FROM YOUR ABSENCE.

Vacations are great for relaxing and taking a break from the routine of life. But as bereaved parents, vacations can be one of the most difficult times of the year. We are supposed to be having fun, relaxing and revitalizing ourselves. But how can we do this when our child has died?

Our first few vacations were disasters. I felt torn between the desire to enjoy life again and the need to keep Matthew and my grief alive. There was no way to rush through the process. The pain had to be faced even more directly without the diversions of daily routine.

A few things helped me to bear vacations. Some of these were necessary only for the first few years, some are still a part of any vacation. I set aside a time each day to remember Matthew, and to try to deal with my grief. Sitting on a rock in Panama City, Florida, overlooking an ocean sunset. I felt God in a way that I had not felt since Matthew's death. Setting a time each day to remember him seemed to include him in the trip.

Every new place I go, I bring something home in Matthew's memory. A shell sits on the shelf in the office. Matthew never went to the beach, but this is Matthew's shell.

Accept your feelings. You may not feel happy. That will come later. For now accept your grief. Accept the fact that vacations mean something different than before your child's death.

Accept the fact that you need rest. Be kind to yourself. Do only the things you feel you can do.

Eventually you WILL smile again!
Eventually you WILL have fun again!

*~by Kathy Boyette
TCF, Mississippi Gulf Coast*

Warm summer sun, shine kindly here;
Warm southern wind, blow softly here;
Green sod above, lie light, lie light -
Good night, dear heart, good night, good night.

*-Robert Richardson
(Inscription on the headstone
of Susy Clemens,
daughter of Mark Twain)*

My Grief Is Like A River



My grief is like a river...
I have to let it flow,
But I myself determine
Just where the banks will go.

Some days the current takes me
In waves of guilt and pain,
But there are always quiet pools
Where I can rest again.

I crash on rocks of anger...
My faith seems faint indeed,
But there are other swimmers
Who know that what I need

There are loving hands to hold me
When the waters are too swift,
And someone kind to listen
When I just seem to drift.

Grief's river is a process
Of relinquishing the past,
By swimming in Hope's channels
I'll reach the shore at last.

~Cynthia G. Kelly



Love Gifts



Were Received From:

Barbara Rawson

In Loving Memory of her son:

**Christopher
Rodriguez**
9/22 - 6/13



Carol Lock

In Loving Memory of her son:

**Darren
Bullock**
6/15 - 11/19



*When a parent remembers
with all their heart,
the child will forever remain.*

~Larry Warren
TCF, N. GA Chapter

How Long Will I Hurt

How long will I hurt
and carry this pain
That seems to come and go
Like a summer rain.

How long will I cry
with my heart breaking in two
How long will it hurt
That I love without you?

How many years
can a heart feel like this
Knotted up and tight
Like a boxers fist.

How long will I think
of how things used to be
When we were together
Just you and just me.

How much can a mother
stand this type of pain
That comes on as quickly
As the warm summer rain?

To hurt is to love
those who are not here
To love is to hold
Memories we hold dear.

I will hurt forever
This I now know
And cry softly
Like a soft winter snow.

How long will I hurt?
As long as I love....
The child God sent to me
From heaven above.

My hurting will stop
when it's my turn to leave
I'll depart this world softly
Like a warm summer breeze.

And Glory will be the day
when we're together again
Mother and child
My love has no end.

~Sharon Bryant
In memory of Andy Dunbar 1/71 - 10/77

“Forever In Our Hearts”

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings

Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays

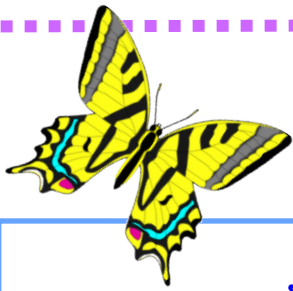


July

Name	Date	Member
Olivia Kares	7/14	Mike Kares,
Olivia Kares (Niece)	7/14	Julia Tate
Whitney Moore	7/1	Beth Moore
Whitney Moore (Grandchild)	7/1	Donna Rogers
Greg Hilton	7/11	Kathy Hilton
Amanda Perez	7/19	Carrie Hall
Kevin Petersen	7/26	Cheryl Petersen

August

Name	Date	Member
Michelle Briones	8/24	Bert & Diane Briones
Thomas Callin	8/7	John & Rumi Callin
Sean McPhie	8/2	Fran McPhie
Amber Rae Brown	8/25	Mary Ann Mogan
Austin Losorelli	8/27	Joe & Phyllis Losorelli
Steven Sprague	8/4	Marie Sprague
Eric Rodriguez	8/11	Carlos & Ana Rodriguez
Nicholas Colley	8/22	Scott & Jade Colley
Aveline de la Cueva	8/28	Kevin & Misty de la Cueva



Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

July

Name	Date	Member
Bradley McBurney	7/18	Tammy Gauld
Bailey Haney (Grandchild)	7/11	Myra Kulick
Melissa Lind	7/6	Marcy Torrey
Amanda Perez	7/17	Carrie Hall
Brent Thole (Sibling)	7/5	Matthew Thole

August

Name	Date	Member
Joshua Sparage	8/6	Bonnie & Gary Sparage
Daniel McAlpine	8/29	Elaine McAlpine
Nicki Kent	8/31	Beth Kent
Randal Smith	8/2	Sharon Smith
Randal Smith (Sibling)	8/2	Crystal Smith
Melissa Duhe	8/20	Cindy Tiekenski
Matthew Weiss	8/18	William Weiss



To honor you, I get up everyday and take a breath
And start another day without you in it.

To honor you, I laugh and love with those who knew your smile
And the way your eyes twinkled with mischief and secret knowledge.

To honor you, I listen to music you would have liked,
And sing at the top of my lungs, with the windows rolled down.

To Honor You



To honor you, I take chances, say what I feel,
hold nothing back,
risk making a fool of myself, dance every dance.

You were my light, my heart, my gift of love from the very highest source.
So everyday, I vow to make a difference, share a smile, live, laugh and love.

Now I live for us both, so all I do,
I do to honor you.

~Connie F. Kiefer Byrd
In Loving Memory of
Jordan Alexander Kiefer
8/24 - 12/13
Lovingly lifted from
TCF Atlanta online sharing