



# The Compassionate Friends

## Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

March/April 2018

Volume 19, No. 2



**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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website: [www.compassionatefriends-scv.org](http://www.compassionatefriends-scv.org)

#### MEETINGS

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

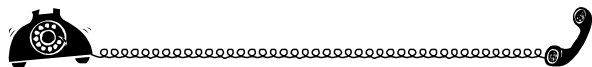
Our next meetings will be **March 1, 2018 & April 5, 2018**

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

## Gentle Memories

We can be left with nothing greater than gentle memories of those who have touched many lives in numerous ways. When we gather happy memories and hold them close to our hearts, the gentle spirit of peace will touch us. And as we go on celebrating the time we had together, we'll find the treasure of remembering and the comfort of believing that each life is indeed a gift... to be held in our hearts forever!

*~Author unknown*

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

*~Larry Warren  
TCF, N. GA*





## Evolution

Rich Edler once said, "The only good that can come from the death of your child is the person you will become." As bereaved parents, we undergo a metamorphosis. The person we were before our child's death is gone forever. We are evolving into somebody different. For most parents further along in their grief journey, they say that they have become better people as a result of their experience. Don't get me wrong, every one of them also say they would trade their "better" self for who they used to be if they could have their child back. However, the fact remains, we can't go back to who we were. The loss of a child is so traumatic and life altering that we can't help but be changed by the experience.

There are several ways in which we do change. Many bereaved parents have similar experiences. Some of them are:

- Our patience level is different-what used to seem like huge problems are now just petty annoyances. When somebody complains to me about how awful their day is going, I think "if you only had a clue to what a real tragedy in life is-try walking in my shoes for awhile!"
- We have a new appreciation of life-unfortunately we have learned the hardest way possible just exactly how fragile life is. We no longer take those we love for granted.
- Others' expectations for us-people who knew us before our child's death often put our grieving on a timeline. After a set amount of time (6 months to a few years depending on how compassionate the person), the "unbereaved" begin looking for the "old" you to emerge. They can be disappointed when you don't live up to their expectations. They don't understand that the person you used to be is gone forever.
- Priorities change-I used to define myself by what I did for a living. My work and my income no longer have the same meaning. Employers often have a difficult time understanding this. After the loss of a child, I no longer have the desire no the drive to "climb the corporate ladder" that I once had.
- We are more compassionate-because we have felt the worst pain possible, we are more caring towards others.

The road we travel as we survive after the death of our child teaches us many things about who we are and who we are becoming. As we help others, we also help ourselves. This new awareness of life and death does make us re-evaluate who we once were.

*~Lorna & Matt Pierce  
Lovingly Lifted From  
TCF South Suburban (Evergreen Park, Ill  
November 2003 Newsletter*



## Chasing Butterflies

So many times I wonder now  
How will I make it through?  
As years go flitting by me  
Taking memories of you

Elusive, fragile, here and there  
I chase and cast my net  
Tiny pieces of our long agos  
I fear I might forget

Like a thousand butterflies  
So many, yet too few  
Each one a treasured moment  
Each one a part of you

Time may bring me closer  
To the day I see your smile  
But time can be my enemy  
Stealing from me all the while

So I will chase each memory  
Seen through this Mother's eyes  
Until I'm with you once again  
I'll be chasing butterflies

*~Donna Gerrior  
TCF Pasco County, FL  
In Memory of Rob*



*The rain falls because the cloud can no  
longer handle the weight.*

*The tears fall because the heart can no  
longer handle the pain.*

*~author unknown*

# Chapter News

## Meeting Topics & Info

### March 1 - "Tools That Help"

Please bring your favorite quote, poem, song, article, book, something you created or discover along your grief path. We'll share it with the group.

### April 5 - "Precious Signs From Our Loved Ones"

### May 6 - Balloon Release/Family Picnic

Mark  
Your  
Calendar

## Balloon Release - Family Picnic Sunday, May 6



Our annual Balloon Release/Family Picnic will be 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.

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!

**YOU MUST RSVP** to Diane 661-252-4654, Alice 661-252-4374 or email TCF.SCV@gmail.com by April 23, **SO THAT WE WILL HAVE ENOUGH BALLOONS and FOOD FOR EVERYONE!!!**

**PLEASE TRY TO ARRIVE ON TIME**, we would like to start eating by 1:30.

Thank you,  
The Steering Committee

Dear Compassionate Friends:

We are always looking for a little extra help and would welcome fresh and new ideas. Please consider joining our steering committee! We meet approximately every 3 months to plan our chapter's activities and manage our business matters.

*"An opportunity to **HELP**  
is an opportunity to **HEAL**"*

## 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:

Cheryl Petersen, mother of Kevin

Mariacristina Leone, mother of Michael

Cindy Tiekenski, mother of Melissa

Michael & Robyn Kaplan, parents of Jacob

Mel & Jeniffer Silverstein, parents of Jeremy

## About Feeling Guilty

Do you blame yourself?  
Are you strangled by the burden  
of things you think you "should  
have done,"  
as if these were the things  
that killed him.

Dear Griever,  
take time to realize  
That death is not in your hands,  
and blame is not the answer.

Try to relinquish  
this relentless torment.  
Hold your heart now  
with the tenderness  
that human grief deserves.

*~unknown  
Lovingly Lifted from:  
TCF Front Range Chapter  
Newsletter March 2012*



## Out of Winter, Into Spring

In the dark of winter the skies are gray, the trees are bare, the grass is brown and all the world appears to be dead. Yet inside the branches of the barren trees and underneath the dormant grass, a silent happening is taking place. The seeds and juices of new life are moving within and underneath. It is a silent, slow process not seen with the eye until one day a tiny green leaf bud appears on a tree branch and another and another. Little grass blades begin to emerge out of the brown and seemingly lifeless ground. Again and again the leaves appear and the grass grows and thickens and a new world has emerged. We see patches of beautiful flowers in variations of bright colors, the birds come and nest in the trees, butterflies flutter about and we realize the miracle of a new season – Springtime. Out of the long, cold, barren winter, a transformation has occurred. A new world has happened. One that is fresh and full of promise of new life, a miracle.

The grief process is much like this. We feel barren and alone. Our world is cold and gray and we do not feel alive inside. Yet all the while, the grief work taking place in each of us is a transforming process; new life is silently at work within our inner being bringing forth a new life until we emerge as a new person in a new world. It is a world quite different from our old world, for we have survived through our suffering to our rebirth. No one ever said it would be easy. We cried. We hurt. We stumbled. We sometimes doubted and some of us cursed the darkness. Our grief season was long and hard but we told ourselves “this too shall pass”. And so it did.

And finally the springtime of our soul was created. Darkness gave way to sunshine; the bitter cold gave way to warmth. Desolation gave way to hope and we let go and embraced the new season of our soul.

A miracle happened.

*~Connie Andrews  
TCF Harvey County, Kansas*



## Spring, Soon



Is this our season  
more than some other  
turn of the year?  
Is it?

With winter dancing  
out and in,  
freezing the melted snow  
one more time?

Is this the season  
between death and life.  
Is it?

With sorrow struggling  
in and out,  
finding the touch of hope  
one more time?

*~Sascha  
From: For You From Sascha*



## Easter and Passover



This is the month for celebrating Easter and Passover, family holidays, and family gatherings. Again, as bereaved parents, especially if we are newly bereaved parents, we pause and must make a decision as to how and if we are going to proceed as we have in former years, before the death of our children. For both holidays, there is the “children’s hour” so to speak. For Easter, there have always been the Easter parade, Easter eggs, and the Easter bunny. For Passover, there have been matzoh, the Seder with recitation of the Four Questions and the participation of the youngest child.

So again, what to do? Both Easter & Passover are holidays in which children are strongly involved. To see that empty chair at the table, to know that the missing child is no longer with us, can be devastating, especially after the first or second anniversaries of the death. As with the other holidays, Christmas, Chanukah, Thanksgiving, there are no pat answers, no magic formulas. If you can, talk about your child during the holidays. At our home we have made it a ritual to remember our son at the beginning of the Passover Seder.

Please handle these holidays any way you can. There are no rules. **DO IT YOUR WAY.**

*~David Ziv  
TCF, Bucksmont, PA*





# Love Gifts



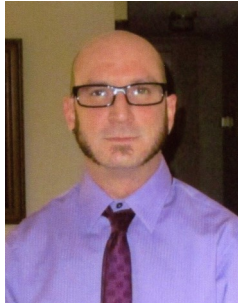
Were Received From:

*Bobbie Mathers & Dan Spencer*

In Loving Memory of their Sons:



**Eric Spencer**  
12/29 - 11/2



**Peter Spencer**  
2/5 - 9/4

*Linda Stout*

In Loving Memory her Daughter:

**Reese Marleen Stout**  
4/30 - 2/10



*Happy Birthday In Heaven*

Wishing you were here today  
for even just a while  
So I could say happy birthday  
and see your loving smile.

The only gifts today will be  
your sweet memories left behind  
Of laughter, joy and happiness  
that echo on, in my mind.

I'll gaze upon pictures  
I'll think of you with love  
And hope you're doing fine  
in Heaven up above.

May angels hold you closely  
and sing you a happy song  
And I'll be sending wishes  
today and all year long.

*~all-greatquotes.com*

*Love Gifts*



A Love Gift is a wonderful way to remember your child, grandchild, or sibling's birthday or angel dates or just to say I love you. What better way than to have their photo included in our newsletter along with a special memory, thought or message, article or poem from you.

If anyone would like to make a donation in memory of their child, grandchild, or sibling you may give it to Alice or Diane at our meeting or mail it to Alice at 27949 Park Meadow Dr., Canyon Country, 91387. You can also email the info to TCF.SCV@gmail.com Love gifts should be received by the 10th of the month to be placed in the following month's newsletter. What a special way to share and remember your loved one!

Our chapter exists solely on voluntary, tax deductible donations. We thank you in advance for any donations you may be able to give or send. Your donations help to pay the expenses of our newsletter, purchase books & brochures, coffee & refreshments, new member's packets, our rental space and other miscellaneous supplies. They also fund our annual Balloon Release and Candle Lighting programs. We sincerely appreciate your support!

*"When someone you love becomes  
a memory,  
the memory becomes a treasure."*

*~unknown*

# *“Forever In Our Hearts”*

## Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings

*Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays*

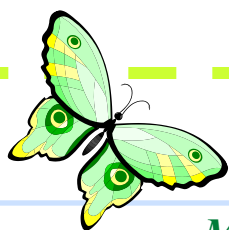


### *March*

Name	Date	Member
Timothy Renolds	3/17	Tom & Alice Renolds
Michael Rodriguez	3/7	Debbie DiCorrado
Jeanene Sykes	3/2	Ted Sykes
Melissa Matters	3/26	Kirk & Dianne Mueller
Colleen Brown	3/17	Keith & Lin Brown
Bailey Haney	3/28	Myra Kulick
Melissa Duhe	3/31	Cindy Tiekenski
Johnathon Leopold	3/26	Kathy Kugler

### *April*

Name	Date	Member
Erik Fleischer	4/26	Rita Fleischer
Bradley McBurney	4/22	Tammy Gauld
Walter Rodriguez	4/25	Carole Rodriguez
Anthony Amodio	4/28	Lynn Olds
Adam Bouziane	4/15	Laura Erdmann
Melissa Lind	4/23	Marcy Torrey
Reese Stout	4/30	Linda Stout
Sarah Lowery	4/23	Karen Lowery
Nadia Esmaeel	4/20	Deanna Esmaeel
Elizabeth Komen	4/9	Jeff & Liz Komen
Kevin Rickhoff	4/30	Nancy Rickhoff



## *Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates*

### *March*

Name	Date	Member
Sean McPhie	3/9	Fran McPhie
Anthony Tumasone	3/18	Brenda Tumasone
Brianna Smith	3/30	David & Laurie Millard
Jonathan Marinelli	3/8	Carrie Cruse
Nicholas Colley	3/28	Scott & Jade Colley
Casey Ray	3/14	Tracey Ray
Aiden Lopez	3/26	Cesar & Jessica Lopez
Aiden Lopez	3/26	Carmen Smith
Margaret Smith	3/20	Sally Smith
Tyler Hoefl	3/19	Michelle Hoefl
Elizabeth Komen	3/6	Jeff & Liz Komen

### *April*

Name	Date	Member
Sammy Thomas	4/10	Kay & Dave Thomas
Wallace Potter	4/24	Shirley Potter
Michael Arvizu	4/22	Robert & Juanita Arvizu
Amber Brown	4/15	Mary Ann Mogan
Justin Hakola	4/11	Cheryl Landreth
Anthony Avila	4/22	Daniel & April Govea

## Appologies!

In the last issue of our newsletter (Jan/Feb) a mistake was made and a child's name was left off from our memorial page. We are so very sorry, please excuse this error. It is listed below.

February Birthday 2/5  
 Peter Spencer  
 Member: Bobbie Mathers

## Treasures



Is this the first day  
 when you can bear to remember  
 how you smiled together,  
 that day in spring,  
 that morning in the rain?

Are you discovering  
 how many gifts of comfort  
 he left behind,  
 this child who died  
 to soon?

His life is gone,  
 but he endows your time  
 from this day forward,  
 with all the faithful treasures  
 of remembrance.

*~Sascha Wagner  
 From Wintersun*