



# The Compassionate Friends

## Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

May/June 2018

Volume 19, No. 3



**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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Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
Toll Free (877) 969-0010 \*Fax (630) 990-0246  
Email: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)  
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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TCFUSA](http://www.facebook.com/TCFUSA)

#### THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

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TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA  
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.

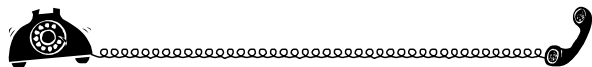
Our next meetings will be **May 3 & June 7.**

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



### Still Their Mothers

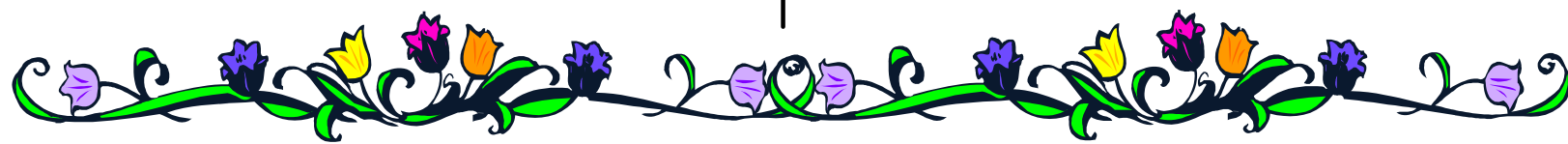
We are the mothers-that don't know how to act.  
We are the mothers-that can't accept the fact.  
We are the mothers-that feel the crushing pain.  
We are the mothers-that sometimes feel insane.  
We are the mothers-that feel lost and alone.  
We are the mothers-that sometimes scream and moan.  
We are the mothers-that are sad and sigh.  
We are the mothers-that watch time pass by.  
We are the mothers-that pace our home.  
We are the mothers-that have thoughts that roam.  
We are the mothers-that remembers their hugs and kiss.  
We are the mothers-that our child miss.  
We are the mothers-that have cried and cried.  
We are the mothers-of a child that has died.

**WE ARE STILL THEIR MOTHERS.....**

~Judy Craig  
In memory of her sons,  
Larry "Travis" Shaun Carter  
10/27 - 12/24

*In the Heavens above, the Angels whispering  
to one another, can find, amid their burning  
terms of love, none so devotional as  
"Mother"*

~Edgar Allen Poe





## Month of May Brings Tears, Fond Memories

The month of May is a time of many memories and many tears for mothers who have lost a child to death. The memories are tied to our natural association of May as being the "Mother's Day" month. We can't escape the reminders. Second only to the Christmas season in commercialization, Mother's Day is thrust at us in television commercials, billboards, radio spots, magazine and newspaper ads and special features, local and national news shows and each store we enter. Heart breaking, emotional, touching movies or television shows are aired in May in big part because of Mother's Day. The reminders are endless. Our emotions build and build until we think we will snap.

Most of us have memories of happier Mother's Days, time spent with our children opening their gifts and reading their special cards, talking, laughing and enjoying the moment. The counterpoint to our memories is that Mother's Day intensifies the deep void that will always remain in our lives. In the words of one mother, "One day after my son had been gone for several months, I realized that this nightmare life is my life forever." May doubly difficult for me as my son was born in May. Even without a birth or death anniversary, May can be extremely stressful and sad. We enter the countdown on the first day of May. Some of us begin to improve after Mother's Day passes, some of us can't let go until the month ends. Some of us suffer lingering effects for several weeks or months.

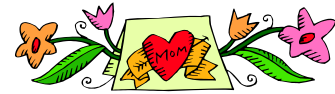
My first Mother's Day without my son was a horrifying time. No gifts, no cards, no call. I took all the cards he had given me for Mother's Day and put them on my piano...the time honored place in our home for special occasion cards. My second Mother's Day was different. I simply refused to acknowledge it. My husband gave me a card and small gift, and we left it at that. A few tears, but we decided to relax and do things that would keep us away from the Mother's Day celebrations.

This will be my third Mother's Day without my son. I do miss him terribly; there will be no replacement for that relationship in my life. Unlike losing a parent, a spouse, a grandparent, sibling or a friend, the loss of our child means the loss of a big part of ourselves. That is our new reality. What will I do this Mother's Day? I don't really know, but it will dawn on me that I should do one thing or another. What you do this Mother's Day is your choice. You owe no explanation to anyone. As we walk through this grief of losing our children, we owe no explanations. Our love for our dead children lingers, and in that love is a goodness and purity that allows us to gently be ourselves. Our emotions are not

intended to offend; but sometimes the pain is so overpowering that we must block out the world. And sometimes, we are able to overcome it. I will handle it in the best way I can. So will you.

*~Annette Mennen Baldwin  
TCF Katy, TX*

*In Memory of my only child, Todd Mennen*



### Mother's Day For Bereaved Moms

A day of joy and celebration  
for all mothers on this earth  
who love their children unconditionally  
from adoption or from birth

This love lasts a lifetime  
but if your child should die  
the day is marked with sadness  
stained with tears that you will cry

God bless you special mothers  
whose children have donned wings  
our thoughts are with you this bittersweet day  
and the melancholy that it brings

No matter how many years will pass  
your heart will hurt this day  
like a glowing ember flaring up  
the pain returns your way.

There is nothing that can be said  
nothing anyone can do  
no one can heal the pain  
so deep inside of you.

It is your pain  
the greatest burden a mother can bear  
imbedded within all the joys of Motherhood  
there will always be some despair.

Find solace the best you can  
in knowing a mother's love transcends  
all time and space  
and no matter where your child is  
they will feel your heart's embrace.

*~Mitch Carmody TCF Minnesota,  
Author of "Letters to My Son"  
[www.heartlightstudios.net](http://www.heartlightstudios.net)*

# Chapter News

## Meeting Topics & Info

**May 3** - "Mother's Day - How to Cope With The Day"

**May 6** - Balloon Release/Family Picnic

**June 7** - "Father's Day - What will help you through the Day?"



**41st TCF National Conference**  
St. Louis, Mo  
July 27 -29

This year's 41st National Conference will be held in St. Louis, Missouri on July 27-29. Registration and hotel reservations are open. The Conference will be held at the Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel and the theme of this year's event is "Gateway to Hope and Healing". Please visit the national website, [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) as well as their Facebook page at, [www.facebook.com/TCFUSA](http://www.facebook.com/TCFUSA) for further information.



## Submit a Child's Name for TCF's National Walk to Remember

The Compassionate Friends Walk to Remember is a highlight of every TCF National Conference. It was created as a symbolic way to show the love we carry for the children we mourn. Held at 9:00 am Sunday on the final day of the Conference.

If you are unable to take part in the National Conference Walk in St. Louis, we invite you to submit a child's/grandchild's/sibling's name so that it can be lovingly carried by volunteers who will carry hundreds of pages of names of children loved, missed, and remembered during the Walk to Remember.

You can be a part of this heartfelt event by sending them the names of the children whose memory you wish to honor. There is no charge to have a child's name carried during the Walk, but donations are appreciated which support National outreach.

Also, National is offering again this year the opportunity to sponsor a personalized walk sign that would include your child's/grandchild's/sibling's photo and name. The walk signs will be featured along the walk route.

To submit a name or order a sign, please go to the National website: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) and click on News & Events; Walk to Remember, then Submit a Name.

## 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:

Maxine Sreden, mother of Lloyd

# Don't Forget



## 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!

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 HAVEN'T RSVP yet, PLEASE DO SO NOW!!** To Diane 661-252-4654, Alice 661-252-4374 or email [TCF.SCV@gmail.com](mailto:TCF.SCV@gmail.com), **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.

## IMPORTANT!! Newsletter Renewal Time

Every two years we update our mailing list, and it's that time again! Soon you will be receiving in the mail your newsletter renewal form. So please make sure that we have your most **up-to-date mailing address!!!** When you receive your form, please fill it out and return it, if you would like to stay on our mailing list and continue receiving our newsletters.

*Thank you,  
Alice Reynolds, Editor*

## When Fathers Weep at Graves



I see them weep  
the fathers at the stones

Taking off the brave armor  
forced to wear in the work place

Clearing away the debris  
with gentle fingers

Inhaling the sorrow  
diminished by anguish

To walk hand in hand  
with children no longer held-

To all the fathers who leave a part  
of their hearts at the stones

May breezes underneath trees of time  
ease their pain

As they receive healing tears  
...the gift the children give.

*~Alice J. Wisler  
For David, in memory of our Daniel  
8/92 - 2/97*

"As we journey through these painful experiences of living, we must never forget that we have an amazing resilience and capacity to survive. Just as whole forests burn to the ground and eventually grow anew, just as spring follows winter, so it is nature's way that through it all, whatever we suffer, we can keep on growing. It takes courage to believe we can survive, that we will grow. It takes courage, too, to live now and not postpone living until some vague tomorrow."

*~Judy Tatelbaum,  
The Courage to Grieve*

father's day

Fathers Day... not a big holiday like Christmas or Thanksgiving, but one that holds a lot of meaning for those to whom it applies. For first-time fathers, that Sunday in June brings a feeling of joy and pride. For a long-time dad, it's a reminder of the fulfillment which children may have brought to his life.

For those men who have lost a child, it can be a painful time. For those who must endure their pain in secret and in silence, either through their own desire for that approach or through society's expectations that they must be strong and controlled, it can become a horror.

But we in TCF wish to acknowledge the day, because the death of a child does not negate the parenthood of the dad who loved him or her. Love and death does not succeed in robbing us of our parental identity.

We wish all Bereaved Fathers a day of peace. In the midst of the grief and loss, may you experience a taste of good memories and remembered love for your child.

*~Lovingly Lifted From TCF Safe Harbor Chapter  
Petoskey, MI Newsletter*

## I'll Always Be Your Dad

Years have come and gone and time has surely drifted by  
I've searched for any answer yet I'm left to wonder why  
The only thing I know for sure through the happy and the sad  
No matter what the circumstance I will always be your dad

Not a day goes by that I don't hold you in my heart  
My love reaches far beyond this space we are apart  
These empty arms remember all the good times that we had  
I may be standing here alone but I will always be your dad

Some won't understand so I don't bother to explain  
They look into my eyes but they can only see the pain  
Afraid to look too deep as they are blinded by the fear  
If only they could know a father's love won't disappear

So when this road gets lonely and the journey seems too hard  
And I get to feeling sorry that I didn't get a card  
If I close my eyes I can almost hear you say  
I love you and I miss you daddy, Happy Father's Day  
Blessings,

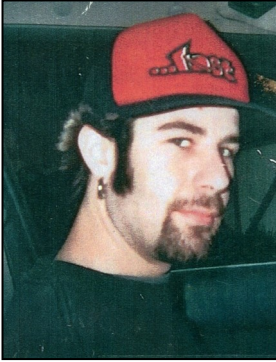
*~Alan Pedersen  
Past TCF National Executive Director  
songwrtr@comcast.net*

# *Love Gifts*

## Were Received From:

*Fran McPhie*

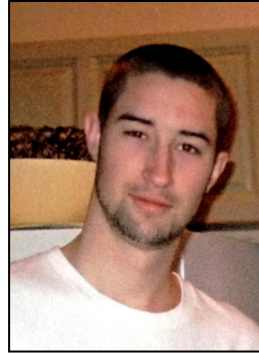
In Loving Memory of her Son:



**Sean McPhie**  
**8/2– 3/9**

*Bruce Peddie*

In Loving Memory of his Son:



**Nigel Peddie**  
**6/6– 4/24**

## *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](mailto: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!

## *Remembrance*

You can shed tears that he is gone,  
or you can smile because he has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray that he'll come back,  
or you can open your eyes and see all he has left.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see him,  
or you can be full of the love you shared.

You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday,  
or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.

You can remember him and only that he's gone,  
or you can cherish his memory and let it live on.

You can cry and close your mind, be empty, and turn your back,  
or you can do what he'd want:

Smile, Open Your Eyes,  
Love and Go on.

*(author unknown)*  
*Lovingly lifted from TCF Atlanta Online Sharing*

# "Forever In Our Hearts"

## Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings

### Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays



#### May

| Name                | Date | Member                  |
|---------------------|------|-------------------------|
| Daniel Lieberman    | 5/4  | Dot Lieberman           |
| Elona Widman "Loni" | 5/3  | Shirley Shields         |
| Jeffrey Costin      | 5/17 | Richard & Carol Costin  |
| Michael Arvizu      | 5/6  | Robert & Juanita Arvizu |
| Santos Aguilar Jr.  | 5/12 | Santos & Carol Aguilar  |

#### June

| Name                       | Date | Member              |
|----------------------------|------|---------------------|
| Daniel Renolds             | 6/22 | Tom & Alice Renolds |
| Wallace Potter             | 6/6  | Shirley Potter      |
| Darren Bullock             | 6/15 | Carol Lock          |
| Cyrena Becerra             | 6/11 | Mona Gonzalez       |
| Daniel McAlpine            | 6/27 | Elaine Bottoms      |
| Nicki Kent                 | 6/15 | Beth Kent           |
| Caitlin Gulley             | 6/11 | Dale & Holly Gulley |
| Maxwell Flancer (Grandson) | 6/17 | Harriet Flancer     |



### Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

#### May

| Name                | Date | Member          |
|---------------------|------|-----------------|
| Elona Widman "Loni" | 5/2  | Shirley Shields |
| Dwayne Laub         | 5/29 | Mary Trimmel    |

#### June

| Name                  | Date | Member         |
|-----------------------|------|----------------|
| Erik Fleischer        | 6/28 | Rita Fleischer |
| Brian Berry           | 6/30 | Steve Berry    |
| Christopher Rodriguez | 6/13 | Barbara Rawson |
| Steven Sprague        | 6/18 | Marie Sprague  |
| Michael Kelly         | 6/10 | Kathy Kelly    |

## The Survivors

We who are left behind in the shadow of the valley of death, we know about sorrow from the bones out.

We who choose to stay behind and not follow our loved ones through the portal of death, we are the brave ones.

We who survive abandonment by children who left unwillingly, struggle through the lonely night, into the empty day.

We who drink this cup of sorrow need to remember the joy that carved the cup so deep.

~Anna Olson, In memory of Jennifer  
TCF Winnipeg, MB

Behind  
each dark flower  
of sorrow

waits  
a memory  
of the blessing  
you shared.



~Sascha Wagner  
Dedicated to her dear friend,  
Donnafred Hinman