



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

November 2017

Volume XVIII No. 11



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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Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA
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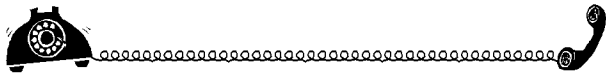
MEETINGS

We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the 1st Thursday of each month.
Our next meeting will be **November 2, 2017**

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

A Season Of Many Feelings



Fall is a season of many feelings,
Autumn is here once again
as it comes every year.
And with the leaves,
my falling tears.

This time of year is the hardest of all.

My heart is still breaking,
once again it is fall.

Memories once so vivid
are seeming to fade.

My time spent with you
seems some other age.

This season reminds me
of grief and of pain.

But yet teaches hope
and joy once again.

For the trees are still living
beneath their gray bark,
And you, my sweet child,
are alive in my heart!

*~Cinda Schake
TCF Butler, PA*





Thanksgiving

November: Cool days, chilly nights, autumn leaves changing colors, football games, apple cider and pumpkin pie. Ah. November! . . . Is it November already? Oh, no! Make it go away! Just let me sleep; wake me up in January. November is here, the start of the holiday season.

This is the time of year most bereaved parents dread. This is the time of year when thoughts turn to spending time with family and friends and celebrating. Holiday decorations start popping up everywhere you turn and holiday music begins to play at the malls and on the radio. People are busy cleaning their home, and are all abuzz with getting ready for. . . Oh, no! Thanksgiving!

Everyone is asking what are you doing for Thanksgiving?" For the bereaved parent, especially the newly bereaved, this question can become daunting and almost horrifying. What am I doing for Thanksgiving?

Thanksgiving - giving thanks. But I don't feel very thankful.

- How can I be thankful, when my child lives no more?
- How can I be thankful, when he/she will never again walk through my front door?
- How can I be thankful, when my eyes are filled with tears?
- How can I be thankful, when he/she won't be here throughout the years?
- How can I be thankful, when my heart will never mend?
- How can I be thankful, when I've lost my dearest friend?
- How can I be thankful, when his/her hugs and kisses have now ceased?
- How can I be thankful, and sit down to a feast?
- How can I be thankful, when my heart is filled with sorrow?
- How can I be thankful, when I can hardly make it to tomorrow?

What do you answer? What will you do this year? For some, the choice is to keep the same tradition they have in the past. Others choose to remain home and ignore the holiday completely.

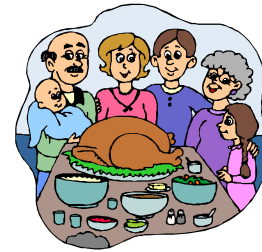
There are parents who go on vacation or go out to Thanksgiving dinner at a restaurant. Newly bereaved parents may question "what am I supposed to do?" There is no standard right or wrong answer. Whatever feels the most comforting is the right answer for you. Family members or friends might disagree with your decision and say you are wrong. This often happens if you decide to break tradition, want to be alone, or decide not to celebrate at all. People can become very insistent, and tell you that Thanksgiving is about being with others. I have found that my choice has varied over the years from choosing to be alone and not acknowledge the holiday at all; to going to friends' and family members' homes; to just having dinner at home and when asked, I say, "I know that you

may not like my answer, but still. I need to do what is best for me."

However you decide to spend this Thanksgiving, please remember that for however short or long your precious, awesome, amazing, wonderful child was with you here on earth, you are blessed to be their parent. You have been given a most spectacular gift—a one of a kind, unique, extraordinary child to carry in your heart, thoughts, and soul for all eternity. And this is a reason to be forever thankful.

From my home and heart to yours may you have a blessed Thanksgiving and may it be filled with peace.

*Bev Rosen Katowitz
TCF, Charlotte, NC*



First Thanksgiving

The thought of being thankful
fills my heart with dread.
They'll all be feigning gladness,
not a word about her said.
These heavy shrouds of blackness
enveloping my soul,
pervasive, throat-catching,
writhe in me, and coil.
I must, I must acknowledge,
just express her name,
so all sitting at the table,
know I'm thankful that she came.
Though she's gone from us forever
and we mourn to see her face,
not one minute of her living,
would her death ever replace.
So I stop the cheerful gathering,
though my voice quivers, quakes,
make a toast to all her living.
That small tribute's all it takes.

*Genesee Bourdeau Gentry
from Stars in the Deepest Night -
After the Death of a Child*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

November 2 - Decorate Luminaries

Come join us as we decorate a luminary for the Candle Lighting Program (**SEE BELOW**). The back room will be open for sharing as well.

November 24—Deadline to send in photo for video presentation for Candle Light Program

December 1—Deadline to send in order for luminary

December 7—Holiday Potluck @6:30 (SEE BELOW)

December 10—Candle Light Remembrance Program

Don't Forget!



During our November meeting we will be selling and decorating luminaries in memory of our children, siblings or grandchildren for \$10.00 each as a small fundraiser. All the necessary supplies will be available for you. This is the only fundraiser our chapter has. If you can't make it to this meeting, please send in page 7 of this newsletter (an order form) by **DEC 1**, and we'll gladly make one for you. As this is a fundraiser, we would appreciate that you not bring luminaries from home or from past years to our ceremony. These beautiful, lighted luminaries will line the walkway to our Candle Lighting Remembrance Program and then are yours to take home!

Also, please don't forget if your child's picture is not already on our video presentation and you want it to be included, you will need to add it. Please email a digital photo to Alice at TCF.SCV@gmail by **November 24**. A digital photo is preferred, but if you only have a hard copy, please contact Alice at 661-252-4374 for instructions.

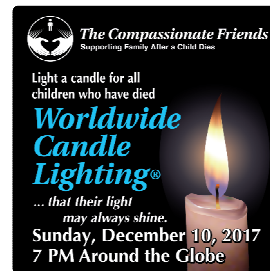


December 7 @ 6:30

Our December meeting will be our Holiday Potluck Dinner. Please bring your favorite, or maybe your child's favorite dish to share with our group. Paper goods, **dessert** and **drinks will be provided**. Our meeting will begin at **6:30** instead of 7:00 for this special dinner meeting only.

*The greatest comfort
at time of grieving
comes, quietly,
from the love that lives
within ourselves.*

~Sascha Wagner, From Wintersun



*17th Annual
Candle Lighting
December 10
@ 6:30pm*

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age from any cause. As candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual wave of light, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural, religious, and political boundaries.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the Worldwide Candle Lighting, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

Our local chapter will be holding its 17th Annual Candlelight Remembrance Program at an **indoor venue** located at a **NEW LOCATION** this year, located at La Mesa Jr. High 26623 May Way, 91351 Santa Clarita, beginning at **6:30pm**. This very touching evening includes live music, video presentation, the reading of poems in addition to the lighting of candles which will be provided to all who attend.

The holiday season is an extremely difficult time of year for families grieving the death of a child. This candle lighting ceremony is a symbolic way of showing the love we continue to carry for our children, even though they can no longer be with us physically. Please invite your friends, neighbors, and relatives to come and share with you this very moving celebration of all children who have died.



THANKFULNESS

At this time of year, when it is often times difficult to find things to feel thankful for, we are all truly thankful for the following:

THANKS to those who had the courage to walk through the meeting room doors for the first time, as well as those who continue to come to meetings - not only for themselves - but also to reach out to newly bereaved members.

THANKS to those members, family and friends who support our chapter with their donations (Love Gifts) to help ensure that our chapter will exist for those who need us now and in the years to come.

THANKS to those who share their children, siblings, and grandchildren with us at meetings through their personal stories, their tears, and yes, laughter.

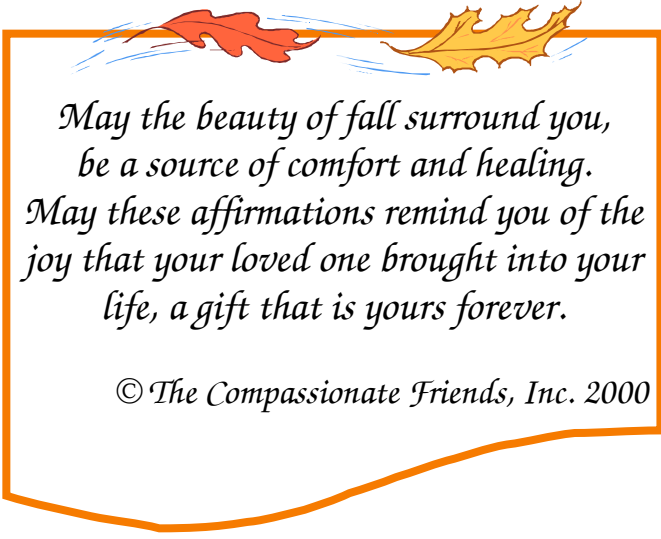
THANKS to those with their ready hugs, listening ears, and shoulders to cry on.

THANKS to past and present chapter leadership and all the volunteers who have helped keep our chapter a supportive and hopeful place for our members.

THANKS to those members who share treats, help us setup and clean up after meetings, and all the many important things that they do to support each other.

*~Cathy Seehuetter
TCF St. Paul, MN*

*This is from another TCF chapter,
but this surely applies to our Santa Clarita Valley
Chapter as well!*



*May the beauty of fall surround you,
be a source of comfort and healing.
May these affirmations remind you of the
joy that your loved one brought into your
life, a gift that is yours forever.*

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Just Flow With The Season And Take Care Of Yourself



We're well into November and it's almost time to take the "January pill". After Tricia died I decided I'd invent a pill you could take the week before Thanksgiving and when you came to, it would be January! I'm still working on the invention. In the meantime, I know many of you are already dreading the approaching holidays.

The true spirit and meaning of Thanksgiving and Christmas are not necessarily exemplified by some of our "traditions". You are re-evaluating many aspects of your life so let this also apply to the coming holidays. You will not always feel as you do now. You will find joy in holiday activities but maybe not in all the things you once thought so very important.

Flow with the season and with your sadness, knowing strength will come as you work with what you can do without overtaxing yourself. Resolve to be as generous with your energy as you can and as selfish as you have to be to protect the emerging person you will become as a result of your loss. This person can be truly beautiful and loving because of what you have learned through grief.

You will miss your child; no magic potion can wipe the pain away. Enjoy what you can—you deserve some pleasure. And may some measure of peace overtake you before this year ends.

*~Elizabeth B. Estes
TCF Augusta, GA*

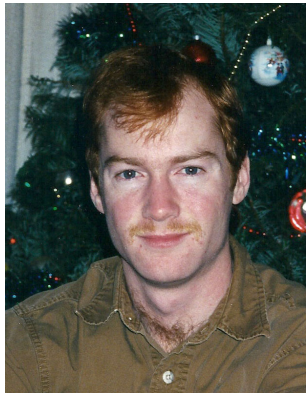
A Love Gift

Was Received From:

Bobbie Mathers & Dan Spencer

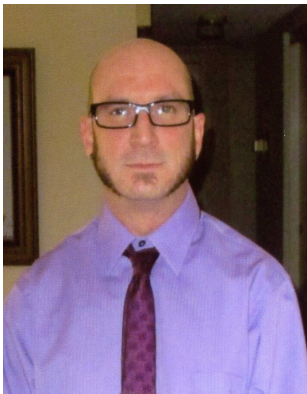
In Loving Memory of their Sons:

Eric Spencer
12/29 – 11/2



"We love and miss you every day."

Peter Spencer
2/5 – 9/4



Peter went to heaven to join his brother on September 4th.

Love for our children is as deep as the oceans and as vast as the desert, Even though they have left our sight they will never leave our vision.

~Debra Ochsner



Love's Lasting Touch

Don't weep for me when I'm gone,
Because I'll always be there.
My spirit will exist in all the earth,
In the water, trees, and air.

You'll hear me say, "I love you",
In the whisper of a breeze.
You'll know that I'm beside you,
With the rustling of the leaves.

You'll feel my arms caress you,
In the warmth of each sunrise.
The moon will be my goodnight kiss,
The stars my watchful eyes.

Your life will be my legacy,
Your memories my epitaph.
These ties will bind us together,
Till we meet on heaven's path.

I'll not ever desert you,
We'll never be far apart.
I'll live within you always,
Nestled deep inside your heart.

Jacquelyn M. Comeaux

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*In Loving Memory of My Angels...
Michelle, Jerry & Danny*



"Forever In Our Hearts"



Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings Remembered

November 2017



<u>Name</u>	<u>Birth</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>Angel</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>Relationship</u>
<i>Darren Bullock</i>	<i>6/15</i>	<i>11/19</i>	<i>Son of Carol Lock Brother of David, Rick & Rob</i>
<i>Eric Spencer</i>	<i>12/29</i>	<i>11/2</i>	<i>Son of Bobbie Mathers & Dan Spencer</i>
<i>Justin Knopf</i>	<i>11/28</i>	<i>11/21</i>	<i>Son of Jim & Susan Kirk</i>
<i>Jamie Knopf</i>	<i>10/21</i>	<i>11/21</i>	<i>Daughter of Jim & Susan Kirk</i>
<i>Brent Clarke</i>	<i>2/23</i>	<i>11/1</i>	<i>Son of Sue Clarke Brother of Brandie</i>
<i>Francisco Garcia</i>	<i>9/10</i>	<i>11/9</i>	<i>Son of Javier & Veronica Garcia Brother of Jennifer, Valerie, Breanna, Marlene</i>
<i>Michael Thomas Kelly</i>	<i>11/17</i>	<i>6/10</i>	<i>Son of Kathy Kelly Brother of Joseph</i>
<i>Melissa Jane (Mueller) Matters</i>	<i>3/26</i>	<i>11/3</i>	<i>Daughter of Kirk & Dianne Mueller Sister of Jessica</i>
<i>Colleen Linette Brown</i>	<i>3/17</i>	<i>11/3</i>	<i>Daughter of Keith & Lin Brown</i>
<i>Justin Hakola</i>	<i>11/9</i>	<i>4/11</i>	<i>Son of Cheryl Landreth Brother of Josh, Brittani, Matthew</i>
<i>Anthony Avila</i>	<i>11/18</i>	<i>4/22</i>	<i>Son of April, Step-son of Daniel</i>

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.



The Compassionate Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Light a candle for all
children who have died

**Worldwide
Candle
Lighting®**

... that their light
may always shine.

**Sunday, December 10, 2017
7 PM Around the Globe**



Candlelight Remembrance Program

December 10, 2017 6:30pm

Photo Presentation & Luminaries

La Mesa Jr. High School

26623 May Way

Santa Clarita, CA 91351

*Sponsored by The Compassionate Friends
Of Santa Clarita*

Again this year we will have a video presentation of our children's, sibling's, and grandchildren's photos. You do not have to be a member of the Santa Clarita Chapter to have their photo included in this presentation. Photos must be received by **November 24** to be included in the video. A digital photo is preferred and should be emailed to our chapter at TCFofSCV@gmail.com. If you only have a hard copy of your photo, it can be mailed to Alice Renolds at 27949 Park Meadow Dr., Canyon Country, CA 91387. Please include your name, loved one's name, address, and phone number so your photo can be returned to you.

Also available for purchase are luminaries in memory of your child/sibling/grandchild as a small fundraiser for \$10.00. If you are unable to make our November meeting to come and decorate one, please fill out and mail in the order form below. We will take care of the rest for you and put it out on the walkway the night of the program! These luminaries are yours to take home at the end of the program. As this is a fundraiser, we would appreciate that you **not bring your own** luminary or **ones from past** years to our program.

The deadline for ordering a luminary is **December 1.**

# _____ of Luminaries with battery operated candle (\$10.00 each)	Total \$
Name(s) to appear on Luminary (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)	

Please mail order form and check (made out to The Compassionate Friends) to:

Alice Renolds
27949 Park Meadow Dr.
Canyon Country, CA 91387

Orders must be received by December 1, 2017