



The Compassionate Friends

Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Sept-Oct 2024

Volume 25, No. 5



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, daughter, brother, 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, regeneration and beauty.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

48660 Pontiac Trail #930808

Wixom, MI 48393

Toll Free (877) 969-0010

Email: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

Website: www.compassionatefriends.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TCFUSA

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY

Mailing Address: 27949 Park Meadow Dr.
Santa Clarita, CA 91387

Email: tcf.santaclarita@gmail.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/

TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA

Website: www.compassionatefriends-scv.org

MEETINGS

We have one meeting a month. They are usually held on the 1st Thursday of each month. The next 2 meetings are:

September 5, 2024

October 3, 2024

TIME: **7:00 PM**

MEETING **Bethlehem SCV**

PLACE: **27265 Luther Dr. Room 5 (Second Driveway & through the gate)
Canyon Country, CA 91351**



FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISENER, PLEASE CALL:

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-373-5070

Alice Renolds (Co-Leader & Editor) 661-252-4374

Kathy Kelly (Treasurer) 661-724-1450

Linda Stout (Facebook Manager)

Joanne Campos (Remembrance Secretary)

Steve Crittenden (Webmaster)

Jeanne Crittenden (Button & Angel Board Manager)
(661-478-2948)



Hope

Hope is a beautiful answer to many difficult questions.

Hope only asks that you believe.

Hope only wants you to receive.

Hope is "hanging in there" until help arrives, whenever a day didn't go as planned.

Hope is there as a comforting guide to help you understand.

Hope is a quiet, personal place where you can always take shelter.

Hope is the warm and welcomed knowledge that beautiful possibilities exist.

Hope is all these special things, and in simply knowing this...

When hope is all you've got...
you still have got a lot.

~Collin McCarty

*"It isn't for the moment you are struck
that you need courage,
but for the long uphill climb back
to sanity, faith and security"*

~Anne Morrow Lindberg



Just Another Day

Today is just another day. But today my son came into my life. He is small and helpless, needing me and depending on me for everything. I take care of him, love him and nurture him, and every year on this day I celebrate his coming into my life. I delight in his sunshine and laughter, his tears and triumphs, and I revel in the brightness of his eyes...especially on this day, just another day, but a very special day to me because it is the day my son came into my life.

Today is just another day. But today, my son left my life. He was once again, after so many years, small and helpless, needing me and depending on me for most everything. I took care of him, loved him, and watched his illness consume him until he was no more. Today is just another day, but a very special day to me because it is the day my son's eyes grew dim, and it is the day he left my life.

Today is just another day. But on this day, every year for as long as I live, will be the anniversary of the day my son left my life. I miss him with every fiber of my being, every corner of my soul. His sun no longer shines, his laughter and wit no longer sound in my ears, his bright eyes no longer look upon me with recognition and welcome, and today I quietly mourn his passing. But to everyone else, today is just another day.

Today is just another day. But today, as fall approaches, the sun has come up again, the birds call to each other and squabble around the feeders and birdbath, the squirrels scamper along the back fence in search of the peanuts I left for them, and the tree limbs, still full of lacy green leaves, wave gently in the afternoon breeze. Today is just another day and I slowly begin again to see the beauty of a bluejay's wings outstretched in graceful flight, to savor the fragrant rose-scented potpourri simmering in the pot on the table, to cherish the sound of my young grandson's joyous discoveries, to enjoy the softness of a sleek cat's fur, and finally to look forward to tomorrow...just another day.

*~Margaret King
TCF Aurora, Denver
(Margaret's son Brian died of Cancer in 2002)*

*I know for certain that we never lose the people we love,
even to death.*

*They continue to participate in every act, thought and
decision we make.*

Their love leaves an indelible imprint in our memories.

*We find comfort in knowing that our lives have been
enriched by having shared their love.*

~Leo Buscaglia

September Song



The school bells ring, young voices sing
And small ones shout with glee
The autumn air beckons school to start
And left alone is me
What makes me feel so down and blue
And boggled down with thoughts of you?
I see the school bus passing by
And find myself with a tear in my eye
Is it the clothes we can't buy
While others grab the jeans to try,
Or is it autumn in the air
That pulls at heart strings-already bare?
Maybe it's falling leaves and dying grass
Bringing reflections like a looking glass
Whatever the reason that stirs my heart
Every year when school must start
Reminds me how much I miss you
Forever loved Forever missed

*~Barbara Williams
TCF Fort Worth, IN*



Autumn Tears

We look back on September and we realize that somehow we made it through those dreaded first days of school. Whether it was the anticipation or the actual days that were, we survived. We used our faith, our support systems or just plain hard work and made it over yet another hurdle. We watched small children heading for their first day of kindergarten, listened to excited teenagers talk of high school and heard stories of children leaving home to attend post secondary school. Somehow we rode the waves of grief and found ourselves ashore again.

As these waves subside new ones will build as we head into the holidays that speak of, and to, children. Halloween will soon approach and for some, painful memories. Thanksgiving arrives to exemplify family and togetherness and Christmas looms ahead. These special days are forever reminders of our loss-the costumes we'll never sew, the empty chair at turkey dinner, the fun and magic we'll never share with someone we love. Forever reminders that our child has died.

To survive when these and anniversary days come around let's find time to think of the good memories we have-the announcement of our long awaited pregnancy at Thanksgiving dinner, the look of excitement of our daughter helping prepare the turkey dinner. These holidays will always be reminders that our child lived! They left us memories more precious than any others to hold and celebrate!

*~Penny Young
TCF Powell River, British Columbia*

Chapter News

Meeting Topics & Info

Sept 5- Meeting, "Words Of Emotion"- Pick a stone from the basket-have you felt this????

Oct 3 - Meeting, "People Say The Darndest Things" - How have we responded to situations and questions that might be awkward or uncomfortable?

Nov 7 - Meeting, Make Luminaries for Candle Lighting in Dec.

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:

David & Itzel, Parents of Noah

Latasha, Mother of Clarence

Amanda Tejada, Mother of Jayden

Any Child's Death Diminishes Me

What difference does it make whether a child is stillborn or dies after some years of life? She spoke of lack of memories because her child was stillborn. He commented on the deep pain brought by those very memories which remind him of what he lost. When it comes to a child's death, does the type of death matter? Is a murder worse than an accident? Suicide worse than chronic illness? Teenage worse than older adult? Stillborn worse than teenage? I've tried to be thankful that Jeanie wasn't murdered, that she and those dear boys did not linger comatose, or die from prolonged illness. I could not find thankfulness, though I have sought diligently for it within my deepest being. The death of each child, whatever the age or circumstances, brings its own guilt and anger, its own despair and questioning. Any child's death diminishes the parents who love that child, and for those parents, that death is surely the worst, their grief the most severe.

*~Robert F. Gloor, Tuscaloosa, AL
In Memory of Jeanie*

*reprinted from Bereaved Parents USA 2005 Newsletter
www.bereavedparentsusa.org*



Please light a candle near a window at 8 PM on Tuesday, 9/10/24 to show your support for suicide prevention, to remember a lost loved one, and for the survivors of suicide.

"There is no suffering greater than that which drives people to suicide;
suicide defines the moment in which
mental pain exceeds the human
capacity to bear it.
It represents the abandonment of hope."

*~John T. Maltzberger, MD
Past President of the American Ass. of Suicidology
Practicing Psychiatrist &
Teacher @ Harvard Medical School*

Come Sit With Me

Come sit with me awhile and let me
Hold your hand, I understand your
Sorrow and know you need a friend.

I understand the pain that lies within your heart,
I have felt the silent screams that tear you apart.

Come share with me your memories and let me be
Your friend, you can cry, laugh or say nothing at all,
And I will understand.

Come sit with me my friend, I'll try to help you through..
I understand my friend, for I have been there too.

*~Judy Peckinpaugh
TCF, Inland Empire*



Photo Buttons

Just a reminder! We take orders at each meeting for photo buttons or you can send it by email, or regular mail. We will photo copy your child, grandchild or sibling's picture and make 3" buttons for \$3.00 each. Please when sending the photo my email or text they need to be in jpeg form.

Why not order an extra button to keep at our meeting place, so you will always have one there. Also, don't forget to order some for you family and friends. Contact Jeanne at 661-478-2948 or joriesgirl56@gmail.com

Also, Jeanne is the one to contact if you would like to have your child's photo added to our photo boards at the meetings.

*What you leave behind is not wheat is engraved
in stone monuments,
but what is woven into the lives of others.*

~Pericles



The Mask of Grief

As the beautiful colors of Fall surround us and the air is sweetened and chilled, the broken hearted parents and families of those children who left us too soon begin to find the strength and perseverance to face another season, another anniversary, another rush of memories. Perhaps Halloween brings with it visions of little candy grabbing goblins and gossamer clad fairy children. Perhaps those memories aren't available to some of us. All of us pick up our masks right around this time of year and we put them on. Our masks are different, though. When our children died, we discovered that the raw and horrible pain we were in probably showed up on our faces, in the way we stood, in the way we walked and talked. We soon discovered that, even though we had many close and loving friends and family, they were not very comfortable with watching us bleed to death from the inside out. So we constructed a mask.

Masquerade Balls and Pagan ceremonies goes really well with us because it is a relief to hide our hurt behind them. Don't you agree? I heard someone tell me after Greg died, "It's hard to watch you and talk to you because your eyes show so much hurt." I thought about wearing shades even in the winter. Well, what do you think? The way I see it, all survivors deserve an Energizer Bunny costume this Halloween. We'd like to hide behind the sunglasses and have people listen to our steady drumbeat of wishes, but most of all, we have kept going, and going... The worst hurt imagined has invaded our lives, crushing our spirits, and yet we still have kept going & going! I'm proud of each of you. Move over, little stuffed pink and white bunny. Take a look at us. Our lives aren't a whimsical commercial. We are living your slogan.

The idea of "masking" one's identity for a short time and celebrating with wild abandonment is as appealing in our society as it was in those ancient times. Unfortunately, the bereaved have a different reason for donning the mask. We force our masks to smile when the lump in our throat and the heaviness in our chest threaten to choke us. Our eyes leak profusely, despite the waterproof mascara and pancake makeup we women keep applying...Men put on a stoic and strong façade, sometimes failing miserably and breaking down with terrible beauty.

I urge you to be gentle with your mask. Put it on thoughtfully and take it off with great care. There are safe places to leave it off and one of the places is with those of us who travel this path with you.

*~Kerry Marston, Mother of Michael
Bereaved Parents USA, St. Louis Chapter
Sept-Oct 2004 Newsletter
www.bereavedparentsusa.org*



Coping with October

The coming of Autumn with the beautiful colors of the leaves and their falling will bring different emotions to different families. Maybe your family had a tradition of driving through particularly scenic areas. Maybe the child you lost was the one who raked the leaves. Perhaps all of this will simply be a reminder that winter and a barren landscape are coming.

Halloween is a favorite holiday for most children, but it can be hard for bereaved parents. This formerly innocent holiday, the years "decorated" as graveyards with markers and ghosts and skeletons, the stories of unhappy spirits that must walk the earth, all have a completely different impact on us now.

Many of us have opened the door to give out treats and been faced with a costume so similar to one our child wore for a Halloween past, that either we really want to pull aside to see the face behind or we want to dream that this was one last visit from our precious child.

Some parents have surviving children who still want to join in the fun—and, oh, how hard to "trick or treat" when you feel the victim of the ultimate "trick".

Stop and think—What can you do differently? For Autumn and its beauties and chores, what routines can you change? Hire someone or ask a friend who has been offering to help and asking for specific tasks. Maybe you could do it together.

For Halloween, take surviving children to a carnival (many schools and churches sponsor these). Or if a carnival was an every year event, go to the zoo or go door to door this year. If you don't have surviving children wanting to celebrate, maybe you can leave your house dark and to a movie and skip this holiday. In any event, planning ahead will help you get through a difficult time.

*~Tracy Rhein
Bereaved Parents USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org*

Remember

Time can't take away anything that has already been given. Your treasurers from days gone by are treasurers still. Your most precious memories will always be. We learn, as we go along, that life is not one big beautiful jewel we can hold--or lose--in our hands. Each one of us is an hourglass. And in our hearts, we get to keep the diamonds that come our way among the passing sands.

~Alin Austin



Love Gifts



Were Received From:

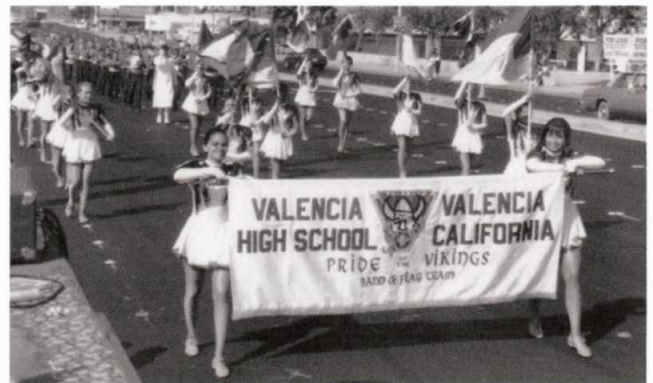
Kirk & Dianne Mueller
In Loving Memory of their daughter:

**Melissa Jane
Mueller**
3/26 – 11/3



David & Laurie Millard
In Loving Memory of their daughter:

**Brianna Millard
Smith** 10/6 – 3/30



Brianna is on the left holding the flag, this is 1995. She was in the first 4 year graduating class in 1998.

Barbara Rawson
In Loving Memory of her son:

**Christopher
Rodriguez**
9/22 – 6/13



You Were On My Mind...

When I woke up this morning...
You were on my mind. You were on my mind.
You with that genuine enthusiasm,
like a kid with his first bicycle.
You with the curiosity and excitement
that dads love to be there for.
There's so much of you still with me...
Still with us! It's not fair that we feel cheated or
that we won't share your ways anymore.
But in reality, after all the tears and
inner feelings of pain and sadness pass
We will have joy and great happiness because
we shared your days. Your laughter. You.
And when I wake up each morning
It will be OK that you were on my mind...
You are on my mind.
That's a special place for you to be,
because it will be forever.

Bobbie Mathers & Dan Spencer
In Loving Memory of their son:

**Peter
Spencer**
2/5 – 9/4



~Michael Tyler,
TCF Lighthouse Chapter, Lewes, DE

"Forever In Our Hearts"

Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings



Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays

September

October

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
Vincent Lizarr	9/6	Ida Hahlbech	Jamie Knopf	10/21	Jim & Susan Kirk
Brian Berry	9/16	Steve Berry	Brianna Millard Smith	10/6	David & Laurie Millard
Christopher Rodriguez	9/22	Barbara Rawson	Aiden Lopez	10/27	Cesar & Jessica
Matthew Weiss	9/21	William Weiss	Aiden Lopez (Grandchild)	10/27	Carmen Smith
Miles Davis	9/01	Michele Davis	Travis Marton	10/15	Andrew & Ricki Marton
Maddox Melton	9/2	Ceara Melton	Julian Burns	10/13	Robert Burns
Cameron Morey	9/21	Dennis & Linda Morey	Jeeven Viridi	10/23	Jaswir & Harvinder
Melissa VanDyke	9/16	Doris Van Dyke	Donald Brown	10/1	Christine Brown
Jayden Saenz	9/18	Amanda Tejada			



Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates

September

October

Name	Date	Member	Name	Date	Member
Jeffrey Costin	9/3	Richard & Carol Costin	Michelle Briones	10/11	Bert & Diane Briones
Michael Rodriguez (Sibling)	9/19	Debbie DiCorrado	Vincent Lizarr	10/5	Ida Hahlbech
Cyrena Becerra	9/5	Mona Gonzalez	Greg Hilton	10/2	Kathy Hilton
Peter Spencer	9/4	Bobbie Mathers	Sarah Crittenden	10/20	Steve & Jeanne Crittenden
Maddox Melton	9/3	Ceara Melton	Michael Leone	10/5	Mariacristina Leone
Michael Lake	9/18	Marie Whitehead	Christopher Mosco	10/3	Marla Mosco
Erica Thomas	9/27	Lisa Monsour			
Christian Malan	9/23	Lex & Emily Malan			

In the Silence

In the silence you hear me,
 In the silence I am here.
 In the silence you can feel me,
 In the silence it is clear....
 That my spirit hasn't left you,
 I am just a thought away,
 You can see me in the shadows,
 Anytime you look my way.
 Look for me in the sunshine,
 And in the stars at night.

In the wind, trees, and flowers,
 Everything that is in sight.
 Talk to me, say my name,
 Know that I'm still here,
 In my death I have new life,
 And one day it will be clear.
 So talk to me and look for me
 In everything you do,
 For I haven't gone so far away,
 I'm really right next to you.

~Joy Curnett
 joy99@peoplepc.com
 Reprinted from: TCF Bridgewater, NJ
 May 2006

