



# The Compassionate Friends

## Santa Clarita Valley Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

July-August 2025

Volume 26, 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, 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.

P.O. Box 46  
Wheaton, IL 60187  
Toll Free (877) 969-0010  
Email: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)  
Website: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TCFUSA](http://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](mailto:tcf.santaclarita@gmail.com)  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/  
TheCompassionateFriendsofSantaClaritaCA](http://www.facebook.com/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. The next two meetings are:

**July 3, 2025**  
**August 7, 2025**

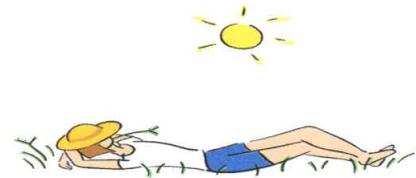
TIME: **7:00 PM**  
MEETING **Bethlehem SCV**  
PLACE: **27265 Luther Dr. Room 5 (Second Driveway & through the gate)**  
**Canyon Country, CA 91351**



#### FOR INFORMATION OR FOR A LOVING LISENER, PLEASE CALL:

Diane Briones (Leader) 661-373-5070  
Alice Renolds (Co-Leader & Editor) 661-252-4374

Linda Stout (Facebook Manager)  
Joanne Campos (Remembrance Secretary)  
Steve Crittenden (Webmaster & Treasurer)  
Jeanne Crittenden (Button & Angel Board Manager)  
(661-478-2948)



## 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](http://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 3 - Meeting, "Vacationing without your child."

August 7 - Meeting, "Please share what hurts, what helps"



## Book Review

**Beyond Tears: Living After Losing a Child by:** Ellen Mitchell, Carol Barkin, Audrey Cohen, Lorenza Colletti, Barbara Eisenberg, Barbara Goldstein, Madeline Perri Kasden, Phyllis Levine, Ariella Long

From Publishers Weekly:

Each of the nine mothers who contributes to this short but eloquent volume lost a child who was in his or her teens or 20s, just beginning to fulfill the promise of their brief lives. The mothers found solace by coming together and sharing their pain. Here they share what they've learned for other parents experiencing a similar tragedy, offering concrete advice and emotional reassurance (despite what the culture tells us, there is no closure, writes Cohen in her introduction -but there is a chance to enjoy life again.) These bereaved mothers discuss frankly the force of their rage and guilt; the impact of the loss of a child on their marriages, the difficulty of coming out of their own pain enough to acknowledge that of their husbands); and their ways of coping. Bereaved parents will find comfort, sympathy and support in this powerful, honest sharing of one of life's most painful experiences.

## Footprints



Some children come into our lives  
and go quickly

some children come into our lives  
and stay awhile

all of our children enter our lives  
and leave footprints...

...some, oh so small  
...some, a little larger,  
...some, larger still...

and we will never be the same again.

~Doreen Sexton  
In loving memory of Joshua,  
our perfect little son still born  
TCF, Phoenix

## The Greatest Gift

A Sudden accident killed your child.

That terrible phone call changed your life with no warning- you didn't get to say goodbye- this has to be the most terrible loss to all.

Your child died by suicide - you feel you should have been able to prevent it. Your guilt is devastating.  
How can you live with such an incomprehensible tragedy?

You only had one child -  
Now you have none and your focus in life is gone.  
What's the point of living? What could be more devastating?

You've experienced the deaths of more than one of your children -will it happen again?  
How does one survive this pain again?

When your baby died, your dreams died -  
You have few memories and you're too young to be suffering like this—this loss is the most unfair.

Someone murdered your child—  
An unbelievable violation—you're angry and your frustration with the legal system feeds your anger. This must be the very worst.

You're a single parent—your child has died and you have no one to lean on, no one to share your grief—surely your suffering is the post painful.

The unbelievable has happened—your adult child died—you had invested so much in that child—now who's going to care for you in your old age?

You had to watch your child suffer bravely through a long illness—  
You were helpless to ease his pain and to prevent his death—  
How do you erase those horrible images?  
Yours must be the greatest grief.

The truth is that death of any child is the greatest loss, regardless of the cause, regardless of the age. Our own experience is far more painful than we had ever previously envisioned, so how could we possibly comprehend what others have undergone.

To make comparisons between our own suffering and the pain of others is an exercise in futility. It accomplishes nothing and sometimes can be hurtful to others. To say that one type of death produces a greater deeper grief than another tends to place different values on the children who have died.

Each child is worth 100% of our grief, each person's sorrow is 100% and each loss is 100% of our being. I can't imagine wanting to walk in the shoes of any other bereaved parent, can you?

~Peggy Gibson  
Lovingly Lifted from TCF National On Line Website  
9/10/2020

# 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*

# A Love Gift

Was Received From:

*Tammy Gauld*  
In Loving Memory of her son:

**Bradley Ryan  
McBurney**

**4/22 - 7/18**



## Love Gifts

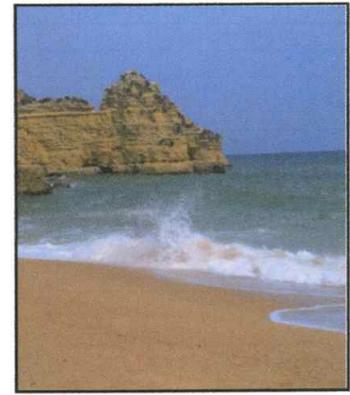


A Love Gift is a wonderful way to remember your child, grandchild, or sibling's birthday or angel dates or just to say I love you. What better way than to have their photo included in our newsletter along with a special memory, thought or message, article or poem from you.

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 AL5renolds@twc.com Love gifts should be received by the 10th of the month to be placed in the up-coming newsletter. **But remember our newsletter is bi-monthly.** 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!

*In your gathering of memories,  
invite your courage to remember everything!*  
~author unknown



## Somewhere on Another Shore

The ocean roars.  
The waves attack the rocks below,  
Angrily, it seems...

The rain-soaked beach is empty  
Bereft of footprints in the sand.

Gulls float in silent circles,  
Riding the wind.  
I think of my son and the  
Sea he loved so much.

Once again, I ask, "Why,  
Why did he have to die?!"  
There are no answers, only the steady,  
Inevitable pounding of the waves.

Those of us who have somehow survived  
The emptiness of the  
Days and years without our children,  
Have learned to look no more.

But, mothers of dead children  
Are allowed their dreams of what once was.  
Of laughing, sun drenched children  
Playing in the surf, leaving their footprints in the sand,  
But for a moment.

I recall clear, shining moments  
Of the happiness we shared.  
I choose to remember the joy and laughter.  
Having learned to live with the  
Emptiness and shadows, I am slowly emerging  
From the pain and loneliness of life without my son.

I have learned so much  
On this journey I did not choose!  
One truth is clear and certain to me,  
My boy is somewhere on another shore,  
Smiling and sun bronzed,  
Waiting with open arms for me.

~Kim Gerringer, Las Vegas, Nevada

# "Forever In Our Hearts"

## Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings



### *Loved and Missed on Their Birthdays*

#### July

#### August

Name	Date	Member		Name	Date	Member
Greg Hilton	7/11	Kathy Hilton		Michelle Briones	8/24	Bert & Diane Briones
Kevin Petersen	7/26	Cheryl Petersen		Steven Sprague	8/4	Marie Sprague
Sean Tessier	7/25	Patricia Vassallo		Eric Rodriguez	8/11	Carlos & Ana Rodriguez
Michael Lake	7/20	Marie Whitehead		Nicholas Colley	8/22	Scott & Jade Colley
				Cameron Morey	8/26	Dennis & Linda Morey
				Jordan Vargas	8/27	Carlos & Fabiola Vargas



### *Lovingly Remembered on Their Angel Dates*

#### July

#### August

Name	Date	Member		Name	Date	Member
Bradley McBurney	7/18	Tammy Gauld		Daniel McAlpine	8/29	Elaine McAlpine
Bailey Haney (Grandchild)	7/11	Myra Kulick		Nicki Kent	8/31	Beth Kent
Melissa Lind	7/6	Marcy Torrey		Matthew Weiss	8/18	William Weiss
Amanda Perez	7/17	Carrie Hall		Cameron Morey	8/26	Dennis & Linda Morey
Miles Davis	7/28	Michele Davis		Izaiah Baxter	8/11	Clyde Baxter
Kevin Perlstein	7/13	Robert & Kathleen Lencki		Ezequiel Sanchez	8/12	Stephanie Sanchez
				Harrison Goodwill	8/21	Lisa Goodwill
				Dustin Roberto	8/10	Joe Roberto
				Sky Schermerhorn	8/30	Robin Walker



### *To Honor You*



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, 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