



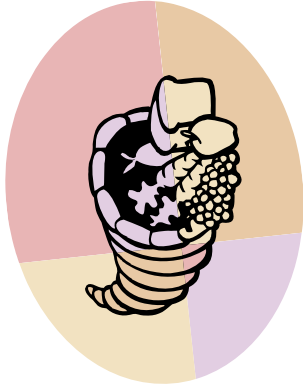
THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS



1830 6th Avenue
Moline, Illinois 61265

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To those who are receiving our newsletter for the first time, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that your family and you have many friends. We who have received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help.

You are not alone in your grief.

The Quad City Chapter



THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS

November 2010, Volume XXIII, Number 10

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Dear Compassionate Friends,

Time does restore to us our quiet joy in the spiritual presence of those we love, so that we learn to remember without pain, and to speak without choking up with tears. But all our lives we will be subject to sudden small reminders which will bring all the old overwhelming loss back to us.

Elizabeth Watson

Our daughter, Anna, was born in November, 27 years ago. She died 4 months later. Her time on earth was short but she impacted our lives in ways that we can only guess at as we do not know who we would have been or how our lives might have been different had we been given the privilege of raising her. This month we will be traveling to Asia to present two Marriage Encounter weekends. There is a point on the weekend when we share our feelings related to death and of course Anna is part of that. Each time we are surprised by the tears that usually come to our eyes or how shaken we feel when we share openly those deeply painful feelings, even all these years after the fact. Time and trusting God restored our joy many years ago and we generally remember Anna with a certain wistfulness and speak of her without tears. Sometimes though, the sorrow rushes back as if it were yesterday (usually just for a moment). I think we are glad that this is the case. She is our child, an important part of who we were then and who we have become now. Those occasional rushes of sadness remind us of the reality of her existence. They are also a reminder of lessons learned most importantly that God can and does bring blessing in the midst of pain and hope and healing an outgrowth of our pain.

*Sincerely,
Jerry and Carol Webb*

Hope Through the Holidays
Saturday, November 20 – 6PM
Homewood Evangelical Free Church
3303 60th Street, Moline, IL

Hope through the Holidays is a uniquely designed memorial service for adults and mature teens who have experienced the loss of a loved one within the past year. Included in the evening will be singing, Scripture and poetry readings and prayer. Gary Nordick, a licensed clinical professional counselor and clinical psychologist, will also share a helpful message with us. During the service each person will be invited to light a candle in memory of their loved one, and will also have the opportunity to share thoughts and memories of their loved one with others in a small group format. After the service, a time of fellowship will conclude our time together. Individuals are encouraged to bring along a friend or relative if they would like. The entire evening is designed to provide help and hope as the holiday season approaches. Contact Pastor Jim (309-797-2000) with any questions.

If you read or write an article or poem which might be helpful to other bereaved parents, please share them with us, Jerry and Carol Webb, Box 71, Cordova, Illinois 61242.

If you move and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, please send us your new address. Because we send the newsletter bulk rate, the post office will not forward it.

If you know someone you think would benefit from receiving the newsletter, we would be happy to add them to our mailing list.

If you prefer to no longer receive the newsletter, we would appreciate you letting us know. Thanks. Jerry and Carol Webb (Editors), Box 71, Cordova, Illinois 61242, (309)654-2727.

e-Newsletter Now Available!

An e-newsletter is now available from the National Office! The monthly e-newsletter contains notes and happenings of interest to all TCFers. To subscribe to the e-newsletter, visit the TCF National Web site home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter Link. This newsletter is available to everyone.

Thank you to **Maggie's Fund and Bethany for Children & Families** for printing this month's newsletter. If you would be willing to prepare the newsletter for the post office, please contact Jerry and Carol Webb (309) 654-2727.

CHRISTMAS
MEMORIAL
SERVICE

Thursday December 2, 2010
at 7:00 P.M.
Bethel Assembly of God Church
3535 38th Ave., Rock Island, IL

Our Christmas Memorial Service is for every bereaved parent who would like to have his or her child remembered at our candle lighting ceremony. We will light a candle in memory of each child. (We will provide the candles.) All family members are invited. A time of fellowship will follow the service.

If you plan to attend the service, or if you cannot make the meeting but would like a candle lit in your child's memory, please complete and return this form or give Michelle Cauwels a call (number below) so we will have an idea of how many candles to order. If you have a candle from previous years, please bring it with you.

Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Date of Death: _____

Parents' Names: _____

We plan to attend (please circle): yes no

We are unable to attend, but would like our child remembered (please circle): Yes No

I/We would be willing to help in some way (cookies, special music, set-up, clean up).

Name _____ Phone _____

Send to: **Michelle Cauwels (309.755.0783)**
351 15th Ave
East Moline IL 61244.

If you would like to make a love gift to TCF in memory of your child, you may do so at the service or by sending your contribution to our treasurers, Larry and Joyce Molitor, P.O. Box 191, Cordova, Illinois 61242. Checks should be addressed to *The Compassionate Friends*. Your gifts are tax deductible.

CHALKBOARD REFLECTIONS

A CHILD IS A CONCRETE EXPRESSION OF HOPE IN THE FUTURE AND WHEN A CHILD DIES MUCH OF A PERSON'S HOPE DIES AS WELL.

HOLIDAYS ARE SPECIAL DAYS THAT HURT SO MUCH MORE THAN OTHER DAYS. BUT SOMEHOW, THROUGH THE SADNESS COMES THE SATISFACTION OF KNOWING THAT "THIS TOO SHALL PASS." AND I SHALL BE A STRONGER PERSON THAN I HAVE EVER BEEN BEFORE.

SHIRLEY MELIM, TCF/AURORA, IL

PARTICULARLY AT THIS TIME OF YEAR WHEN FAMILIES ARE CELEBRATING THE HOLIDAYS, THE SUDDEN SMALL REMINDERS AND THE LARGE ONES TOO, COME TO PLAGUE US. WE THOUGHT WE WERE DOING SO WELL, AND THEN THERE WE ARE, CRYING AS THOUGH OUR LOSS WAS YESTERDAY. WE NEED TO TAKE HEART. IF OUR LOSS WAS RECENT, THE SADNESS IS UNDERSTANDABLY OVERWHELMING. IF IT WAS A WHILE AGO AND WE THOUGHT WE WERE OVER THE WORST, THEN PERHAPS THIS TIME IT WILL NOT TAKE SO LONG FOR THE QUIET JOY TO REASSERT ITSELF, THE SPIRITUAL PRESENCE TO RETURN IN ITS QUIET AND INFINITELY PRECIOUS WAY. OUR LIFE RUNS IN SEASONS, AS DOES OUR GRIEF. SOME SEASONS ARE LONG, SOME SHORT. BUT IF WE ARE RESOLUTE IN OUR EFFORTS TO BE PRESENT TO THE MOMENT, EVEN AS WE KNOW THIS MOMENT WILL GIVE WAY TO ANOTHER, WE CAN BE ASSURED AT THESE TIMES OF RENEWED PAIN THAT THINGS WILL GET BETTER.

MARTHA WHITMORE HICKMAN, HEALING AFTER LOSS

I Never

I never believed I would see another season change with gladness. I never believed I would see the world again without the haze of tears. I never expected to laugh again. I never felt my smile would return and feel natural on my face. I never hoped for another day when I would not want to die. I never envisioned a world that could again be bright and full of promise. I believed that all that had passed from me the day that he died and went away, never to return. But I was wrong, and I know that in the fullness of your grieving, you too, will come to understand that life goes on. That it can still have meaning, that even joy can touch your life once more.

Don Hackett, TCF/Hingham, MA

GRIEF MATERIALS

Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than the Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief-related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you're looking for – or they'll be able to tell you where to find it. Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at (402) 553-1200 or visit their Web site at www.centering.org. When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.

How I struggled that first Thanksgiving after Wade died to see how in the world I could possibly be thankful. The idea came to me to separate the two – what I could never be thankful for, from those things for which I was still thankful in spite of the tragedy that had come. I wrote my two lists on paper, and it helped!

Janet Reindle,
TCF/Houston NW Chapter, TX

The melody that the loved one played upon the piano of your life will never be played quite that way again, but we must not close the keyboard and allow the instrument to gather dust. We must seek out other artists of the spirit; new friends who will help us find the road to life again, who will walk that road with us.

Rabbi Joshua Loth Liebman, Peace of Mind

Love Gifts

There are no dues or fees to belong to TCF. As parents and other family members find healing and hope within the group or from the newsletter, they often wish to make a Love Gift to help with the work of our chapter. This is a meaningful way to remember a beloved child.

Thanks to:
Kirby and Kim White in memory of their daughter, Elizabeth

Love gifts are used to provide postage for the newsletter and mailings to newly bereaved families. Some of the love gifts are used for materials to share with first time attendees at our meetings or to purchase books for our library. Our thanks to the many families who provide love gifts so that the work of reaching out to bereaved parents and families can continue. If you would like to send a love gift, please send it to our treasurers, Larry and Joyce Molitor, P.O. Box 191, Cordova, Illinois 61242. Checks can be made out to *The Compassionate Friends*. Your gifts are tax deductible.

Jerry and Carol Webb to be Honored at Family Award Event

Bethany for Children & Families will host its annual Family Awards Night on Thursday, November 18th at 5:30 pm at the *Isle Casino Hotel*, Bettendorf, Iowa. Outstanding individuals, families, and businesses in the community that exemplify Bethany's mission and vision are honored during this event.

Among the honorees are **Jerry and Carol Webb**, editors of The Compassionate Friends monthly newsletter who were designated Leadership Family of the Year. The press announcement from Bethany stated, "After having lost their infant daughter, Jerry and Carol turned their grief and anguish into comfort and hope for other bereaved parents for the last 21 years by writing, producing, and mailing the monthly *The Compassionate Friends* newsletter. They give solace and comfort to those who suffered as did they from the loss of a child."

Others to be recognized at the Family Awards event are:

Foster Family of the Year: *Kurt and Carrie Fanderclai – Bettendorf, Iowa*
Kurt and Carrie Fanderclai have opened their hearts and home to babies waiting to be placed with their adoptive families. They have disrupted their lives to care for four babies as if they were their own.

Adoptive Family of the Year: *Eric and Jolene Davidson – Joy, Illinois*
Eric and Jolene adopted their great nephew who had many complex medical issues requiring multiple surgeries, doctor appointments, and early interventions. They have gone above and beyond to ensure his safety and well being.

Advocate of the Year: *David Griffin – Eldridge, Iowa*
For the past 19 years, Dave Griffin, an educator and school administrator, searched for

new and better ways to address the health and well-being of his students. He provided opportunities for children to enhance their self esteem, strengthen their character, and develop skills to become productive members of our community.

Corporate Friend of the Family: *Quad-City Times*

The *Quad City Times* walks the talk. It's integral to the Student Hunger Drive, the March of Dimes Walk, the Bix 7, the United Way Campaign, and many other events. It encourages its 275 employees through flex time to volunteer, manage family doctor appointments and day care, and become involved in a multitude of community efforts.

Volunteer of the Year: *Kathy Heiser – Davenport, Iowa*

Folding, sorting, organizing, and mending clothing for a community full of children, homeless men, and young mothers and families is no easy task, but Kathy Heiser has volunteered to be the "community mother" to those who need a little extra help and struggle to make ends meet through Bethany's west side clothing pantry.

Margaret Brooks Employee of the Year: *Vickie Wickersham – East Moline, Illinois*
Challenging cases do not faze Vickie Wickersham; they only motivate her to look for different avenues to provide services to families in need. She has worked relentlessly over the last eight years to help families overcome their difficulties.

Honor these outstanding individuals by making a reservation for Bethany's 2010 Family Awards Night. Tickets are \$35 or \$260 for a table of eight. Please register by November 15. For reservations or questions, please call 309.797.7700 or email events@bethany-qc.org.

I said, "God, I hurt."
And God said, "I know."
I said, "God, I cry a lot."
And God said, "That is why I gave you tears."
I said, "God I am so depressed."
And God said, "That is why I gave you sunshine."
I said, "God, life is so hard."
And God said, "That is why I gave you loved ones."
I said, "God, my loved one died."
And God said, "So did mine."
I said, "God, it is such a loss."
And God said, "I saw mine nailed to the cross."
I said, "God, but your loved one lives."
And God said, "So does yours."
I said, "God, where are they now?"
And God said, "Mine is on my right and yours is in the Light."
I said, "God, it hurts."
And God said, "I know."

Author unknown (placed at the Oklahoma City bombing site) Shared by Kirby White in memory of his daughter, Elizabeth.



What's it all about?

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information and education to help others be supportive.

Founded in England in 1969, the first U.S. chapter was organized in 1972. Since then, 635 chapters have been established. The current Quad City Chapter was formed in 1987.

TCF National Office

P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696
Toll Free (877)969-0010
TCF National Web site —
www.compassionatefriends.org

Mission Statement

The mission of the Compassionate Friends (TCF) is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child at any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

The Quad City Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends meets on the fourth Thursday of the month in Rock Island, Illinois. See the newsletter for schedule.

Quad City Chapter Newsletter Editors

Jerry and Carol Webb
Box 71, Cordova, IL 61242

e-newsletter is now available from the National Office! The monthly e-newsletter will contain notes and happening of interest to all TCFers. To subscribe to the e-newsletter, visit the TCF National Web site home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter Link. This newsletter is available to everyone.

Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Compassionate Friends of the Quad Cities Monthly Meeting: Thursday, November 18, 2010, 6:30 pm –8:30 pm

Bethel Assembly of God Church, 3535 38th Ave., Rock Island, IL
For information and directions, call

Rosemary Shoemaker (309-441-5586) or Michelle Cauwels (309-644-0486).

From John Deere Road – follow the signs to Rock Island, turn right at 38th St. (by Kmart) and go up the hill. Turn left on 38th Ave. The church is on your right. We meet in the downstairs fellowship hall. (Or you can turn into the church driveway off of 38th St.; the church is on the west side of the road.) Next month: Candle Lighting Service on December 2, 2010 at 7:00 PM.

The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine	Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the George M. Wittich-Lewis Funeral Home, 2907 Mulberry, Muscatine, Iowa. Chapter Leaders are Linda and Bill McCracken. You can call them at (563)260-3626 for directions or information or contact them at linmac67@machlink.com.
Helping Heavy Hearts — Grief Support Group	Meets the second Tuesday each month at 7:00 pm in the office of Family Resources located in Building 9 of the Annie Wittenmeyer Complex off Eastern Avenue in Davenport. Please call ahead to verify the meeting location. Contact Kirby White at (563)271-5908.
Mom's Group meets in Aledo	A group of moms who have had children die meet once a month in Aledo to support and encourage one another as they go through the grief process. You are invited to join them at 12:30 on the third Saturday of the month at 403 SW 10th Avenue, Aledo. For directions or more information, call Kay Forret at (309)582-7789.
Rick's House of Hope	Located at 4867 Forest Grove Drive in Bettendorf is a community resource is for children and adolescents dealing with grief. "Children and adolescents experiencing grief and trauma often need a safe place to express their feelings. They need companions for the journey of grief who are outside their family and not themselves grieving." The volunteer mentors at Rick's House of Hope provide this for young people and their families during painful and confusing times of grief. There is no fee for services. For more information, call (563)324-9580 or (563)421-7970. Find Rick's House of Hope on the web: www.genesishealth.com — keywords "children and grief."
Quad City SHARE	A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, still -birth, or early infant death. SHARE meets the first Thursday of each month – 6:30 p.m. in the Wallen Room at the Larson Center next to Illini Hospital, 855 Illini Drive, Silvis, IL and the 3rd Thursday at 6:30p.m. in the Adler Room # 1 in the lower level of Genesis Heart Institute, 1236 East Rusholme Street, Davenport, Iowa. Questions? Contact Chalyn Fornero-Green at (309)373-2568 or chalyn@shareqc.com or www.shareqc.com
Survivors of a Suicide Loss Support Group, Moline	For those who have lost someone to suicide, this group, facilitated by a peer survivor and a professional, meets the third Monday of odd numbered months in the Moline Library, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. For details, contact Joel M. Moore (309)235-7174 or qcsos@yahoo.com .

Cemetery Visits

Are you one of those people who have a need to go to the cemetery often? The non-bereaved frown on that as a rule. Many people feel there is something morbid about those visits; that you're obsessing. Unless you know the pain of losing someone you love better than yourself, you can't understand that need. Some people need to visit every day; others go now and then; and still others never go back once the funeral is over. There are no rules. If it makes people uncomfortable when you make your cemetery visits, go alone. Don't feel you need to get anybody's permission or approval. Call a friend who won't judge you by the number of miles you travel to and fro.

It is important to understand that how often you go to the cemetery has absolutely nothing to do with the length and depth or your expression of your grief. Do what comforts you, not what pleases others. Your needs should and must come first, especially right now. You won't always require visits this often, and when that happens, don't feel guilty. It means you are progressing. For right now, do what makes you feel better.

Mary Cleckley, Atlanta
from BP/USA, *A Journey Together*, www.bereavedparents.org

When All You Can Do is Buy Flowers

One of the many hurdles that I faced after my son Matthew died was not being able, during the holiday season to buy him anything ever again. When the holidays rolled around, I had such an empty feeling. I was buying gifts for my surviving children and all I could get Matthew was flowers for his grave. That just wasn't enough! Shopping was such a chore because I didn't have the energy and the Christmas spirit just was not there. Not being able to buy anything for my Matthew was just unbearable. What has helped me so much throughout the years is our St. Peters BP/USA support group meeting. At our December Potluck, Picture and Gift Night, we are asked to bring a gift. The gift is something that we would have bought for our child if he/she were alive. This is not mandatory, but the majority of the group does participate. We go around the table and each person displays what they bought and explains why they bought it. Hearing funny stories that are told is just wonderful. I hear laughter and see tears at the same time. The gifts are later taken to a local children's home. At first, the gifts that were taken to the children's home consisted of a couple of bags. However, the generosity has grown more and more each year. The parents that don't attend meetings anymore throughout the year will come to the meeting in December, just to bring a gift for their child. On Christmas morning, when my surviving children are opening their gifts, I sit and I picture a child that probably would have not gotten a gift at Christmas, opening the gift that I bought Matthew. That gives me such peace. I will not wish you joy this holiday season. That is something that will come later. But I will say this, do as much or as little as you can handle. Don't push yourself too much. I will however, wish you peace.

Sabra Penrod St. Louis, MO

BP/USA

Editor's note – While we have not had this tradition at our TCF meeting, there are many organizations that would welcome a gift purchased in memory of your child – Bethany for Children & Families, Toys for Tots, Salvation Army, The Crisis Pregnancy Center, your local school or library are just a few of the possibilities.

Thanksgiving

The first Thanksgiving after a loved one's death can be very difficult. All the traditional thankfulness that bereaved families once acknowledged and shared with others no longer seems joyous. One might even feel cynical or bitter. What have we to be thankful for when our loved ones have been plucked from our midst? And, in some cases, there has not even been an opportunity to say goodbye. We feel as if other people who have never experienced such



death go about totally oblivious of the great pain we bereaved endure. Of course others have reason to be thankful. But why should we be forced to join this celebration or any other just because the rest of our family included us, or just because society in general views us suspiciously if we do not participate. The answer to these questions is that we need not celebrate if we do not feel like it. We may ignore the day altogether, we may go out of town or otherwise be unavailable to join other family members for the traditional feast; weather permitting, we may take a picnic to our child's grave site; we may confine the day to immediate family members or close friends. We may have the meal catered if we want the customary dinner but cannot muster the energy to prepare it. We may skip the festivities and plan something else instead, such as arranging old snapshots and photographs in albums, enlisting all the other family members' participation. Such gatherings might spark the sharing of favorite anecdotes; so be sure, if you are recently bereaved,



that you would be able to welcome all the memories. If you try this latter approach and find it more overwhelming than you anticipated, do not hesitate to halt the project or excuse yourself to go to bed while others finish the album. Others may think of additional ways to spend Thanksgiving Day. The point is that you should spend it however you think you would benefit most. If anyone else tells you what is best for you, he or she is being very presumptuous. Sometime during this season you may discover, in spite of yourself, that there are a few things for which you are actually thankful. On my first Thanksgiving after my daughter's death, I found that, although I still terribly resented her death, I remained thankful for her life, however brief it seemed to me. That was about all I was consciously thankful for that year. The following year, when grief was less intense and real healing had begun, I could be truly thankful not only for her life, but also for all the rest of my family and friends who had borne this grief with me.

Shirley Ottman, BP/USA of Northern Texas

SOME COMMON THOUGHTS FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF YOUR CHILD

It is not uncommon to feel bitterness or a sense of injustice when one loses a child. So if you find yourself thinking, *Why me? Why my child? Why our family?* You are in good company.

Some parents describe "an irrational sense of self-blame" following the death of a child. I never was able to figure out what a rational sense of self-blame might be. But I do know that many of us blame ourselves. We replay the what-ifs of our child's life and death a thousand times a day. Almost always, self-blame is misplaced.

Grief over the loss of a child lasts longer than any other kind. It heals more slowly and causes the most monumental disruption for those who survive.

Most experts believe that loss and helplessness are the greatest tests any human can face. A child's death is off the charts in both categories.

You may be strong, smart and highly resilient, but nothing can prepare you for the loss of a child.

One reason the loss feels so enormous is that a child's death violates an implicit generational contract, that our own children will survive us.

A child's death also challenges the fundamental instinct of parents to protect their child. That is what we are supposed to do, isn't it? To make the world safe? The feeling that we have failed to do so can haunt us, compounding our sadness.

In an era of medical miracles, we are less culturally conditioned to expect a child's death than in previous generations. On the contrary, the prevailing assumption is that science and technology can and will work wonders.

Some experts estimate that in the face of a child's death, two years is a reasonable grieving period. Others double that figure. The truth is, it takes as long as it takes, sometimes a whole lifetime.

Elizabeth Mehren – After the Darkest Hour, the Sun Will Shine Again