


The Compassionate Friends TCF of POTOMAC , MD

TCF meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM
Potomac Presbyterian Church
10301 River Road
Potomac, MD 20854

Winter / Spring 2010

Co-Leaders	Nancy Frank Mary Mandeville
Treasurer	George Beall
New Members	Barbara Beall
Remembrances	Mary Nader
Librarian	Lynn Lee
Hospitality	
Newsletter	Katherine Bloom

The Compassionate Friends Mission

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is an international, self help organization offering friendship, understanding and hope to bereaved families, who have experienced the death of a child or sibling. TCF members provide information and support . Volunteers run the more than 600 local chapters in the U. S. and TCF has chapters in many other countries.

The Compassionate Friends:
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60255-3696
National Website:
WWW.Compassionatefriends.org



Special Announcements



TCF's National Conference will be held July 2-4, 2010 Arlington, VA

TCF National Conferences



"Reflections of Love, Visions of Hope" is the theme of The Compassionate Friends 33rd National Conference which will be held in Arlington Virginia July 2-4, 2010. The event will be held at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City promising a beautiful venue for the 33rd TCF National Conference. Independence Day will not only feature our Walk to Remember, but will include a world-class display of fireworks over the National Mall, visible from Arlington, although not from the hotel.

Please Visit Our 2010 Conference Page

At

[Reflections of Love—Vision of Hope](#)

"Reflections of Love, Visions of Hope" is the theme for this year's TCF National Conference

An event unlike any other! Bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents are able to share with others walking the same grief journey - with well-known speakers, entertainment, and more than 100 workshops on most topics of grief following the death of a child. And join us for our 4th of July **WALK TO REMEMBER** or sponsor a walker in remembrance of your loved ones. (You don't have to attend the conference to participate). While you're in the area, visit other nearby attractions or catch the world-class display of 4th of July Fireworks over the National Mall.

Learn more, sign up, to attend, or find out how you can help

For more information, contact the Potomac Chapter or visit

WWW.COMPASSIONATEFRIENDS.ORG

*******MORE SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS*******

Jeremy's Run

Cyndi Glass invites you to join Jeremy's Run on May 21, 2010 in Olney, MD. The race will benefit Saving Teens in Crisis Collaborative and the Partnership for a Drug Free America. 5K Walk/ Run in Memory of Jeremy Glass. Please visit <http://www.jeremysrun.com>

Joe's Ride

GOCA's 8th Annual Joe's Ride...Remembering Olney's Kids - Saturday, May 22, 2010

To Register, please visit WWW.joesanford.com

A Very Special Notice

As many of you know by now, Barry Gordon has started a Google email group. Many of us are already writing to one another and Barry invites every to participate. Many of the emails recount very intimate feelings about our loved and lost children. The responding emails offer insight and comfort. The email address, in case some have not received it is:

Compassionate-Friends-Potomac@googlegroups.com.

We all thank Barry for undertaking this challenge and encouraging us to share out thoughts during the days when the Group does not meet.

Compassionate Friends Bracelets are available for \$3.00. Each Bracelet is Blue & White, with a butterfly and the words "Forever in My Heart" imprinted

Sibling Group

An Informal sibling group has formed. They meet the 1st Saturday of every month at 10:00 AM at La Madeleine in Mid Pike Plaza, Rockville

Support Group

Montgomery Hospice Monday night Loss of a Child Support Group starts on May 3 runs for 6 weeks at 1355 Piccard Drive, Rockville, MD 20850.

Pre-registration is required, call 301-921-4400. www.montgomeryhospice.org.



Sibling Section

Dear Friends:

My name is Andrea Keller. I lost my younger brother and only sibling, Jon, on May 2, 2009. I am rebuilding an adult sibling loss support group thru TCF Potomac chapter as well as other venues.

I wish I was writing to you for a different reason.

I want to first say that I am so sorry to hear about the loss of your sibling. I attended a couple meetings of The Compassionate Friends ("TCF") Potomac chapter several months ago and while I know my parents have found it to be very helpful to them, my grief was profoundly different from theirs. Since I am not one to shy away from a cause that I believe in, I have made it my mission to find and create other forums for adult siblings who, like me, need somewhere to go where they can vent their grief to other siblings that understand the type of grief that we are going through.

Here are the ongoing events that are open to all grieving adult siblings...

1. There is a group that is sponsored by the Montgomery Hospice at their Gaithersburg location in the Cottage. The program is for adult siblings only and runs for a six week term, meeting on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30pm. There are no fees associated with this group. There are two fabulous facilitators: Carol and Lorine. Neither has lost a sibling, but they've had a lot of experience and are always well-received. The current group began on April 20th and has 6 members.

If you want more information, go to their website (www.hospicecaring.org). If you are interested in joining the group, please call Toby Rabbin at 301-990-0854 or contact her by email at toby@hospicecaring.org.

2. The Compassionate Friends Group (TCF) Potomac Chapter meets the first Tuesday of each month that is ongoing. They meet at the Potomac Presbyterian Church at 10301 River Road, Potomac, MD 20854. If you are interested, I would be more than happy to arrange to have a facilitator for us at the TCF meeting, or we can just meet informally there as a group. So far, we have not had a sufficient number of adult siblings present to establish our own siblings group under the auspices of TCF. But check out option #3 in this regard.

3. A group of us have been meeting informally at La Madeleine in Rockville the first Saturday of each month at 10 am. It is low key and without a facilitator. Toby Rabbin may be able to offer us the use of the Cottage for these Saturday morning get togethers.

4. If you are on Facebook, I have formed a support group of siblings and you can reach out to me there anytime - Andrea Blank Keller - or thru my email: andrea@kellerprinting.com.

5. Also, I created a closed group on Facebook just for siblings to post comments or any thoughts they were having in a forum where a response may or may not be expected or needed. This invite only group (Adult Sibling Loss Support Group - MD/DC/VA) is a place to voice those feelings to people who are going thru the same experiences.

6. Another group that I have participated in is the weekly TCF online support group chats that is for siblings only on Thursday nights from 9-10pm. To sign up, go to the website which is:

http://www.compassionatefriends.org/Online_Support.aspx.

I hope at least one of these adult sibling support groups will be of interest to you. Please feel free to email me with any other options you know of or just to provide feedback. I am here for you and would be happy to help if I can.

Unfortunately this is one club none of us wishes we were members of, but hopefully we can help each other.

Look forward to hearing from you.

Andrea Keller
andrea@kellerprinting.com (Email)
301-802-1855 (Cell)

Siblings Walking Together (Formerly the Sibling Credo)

We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.
We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters.
Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us.
Sometimes we will need the support of our friends.
At other times we need our families to be there.
Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us,
continuing to become the individuals we want to be.
We cannot be our dead brother or sister;
however, a special part of them lives on with us.
When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed.
We are living a life very different from what we envisioned,
and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak.
Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others
the value of family and the precious gift of life.
Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are,
but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of
The Compassionate Friends.

©The Compassionate Friends

Dangers of Driving Drowsy

On January 26, 2008, my daughter, Nicole Lee, was killed in a car accident when the driver, a 19 year old male, fell asleep driving and missed a curve in the road hitting a tree at 55 MPH. To make others aware of the **Dangers of Driving Drowsy**, Nicole's family and friends **will be manning the Maryland** Welcome Centers/Rest Area (on I-95 between RT 216 and RT 32 in Howard County), from 10-4pm, Friday May 14 to provide coffee and information on Drowsy Driving.

Drowsy Driving is something that affects families through out the US everyday. Thousands of deaths occur each year due to **drowsy driving**. Many people are aware of the effects of alcohol on driving but do not realize that being sleepy and driving is as dangerous as being drunk and driving. Sleepiness impairs judgment, performance, and reaction time as much as alcohol. According to the Nation Sleep Foundation more then half of adults have driven sleepy and 20% have actually fallen asleep at the wheel. This is a major issue for drivers, which people just aren't talking about. You can learn more about the problem of drowsy driving at: <http://www.drowsydriving.org>

We hope to honor Nicole by bringing awareness to drivers who are at risk of drowsy driving. Be safe and get enough sleep!!!

We thank you in advance for all your support,
Lynn Lee (Nicole's Mom)

Contact Info: Lynn: lmlee37@comcast.net (240) 687-6311

Sandy: sandymmyers@gmail.com (301) 802-9077

PLEASE Read more about Nicole at <http://www.love4nicki.com>

Letter From The Editor

I started writing this newsletter introduction in December as the first snow was quietly falling, long before the next storms blanketed the area with unbelievable amounts of snow and creating chaos for days and weeks over the entire winter. Now, we are looking at forsythia and crocuses bursting through the otherwise drab vista. My name is Katherine Bloom, and I have volunteered to be the new editor of The Compassionate Friends Newsletter. With the help of my new friends, I hope to be able to bring news, announcements, stories, poems, love and ideas to the Potomac Chapter.

For a little background, I will briefly tell my story and how I came to Compassionate Friends.

My beloved daughter, Kira, died on May 21, 2009. In a season of life and renewal, she lost her struggle against a deadly, yet silent killer of young women, and some young men. She died of sudden cardiac arrest from the effects of the eating disorder, Bulimia, she battled for years. She had just turned 25 last March, and left behind not only her forever grieving immediate family, but also a baby boy and his father. Kira's story is the tragedy we will endure for all our lives. Her son, Lex, will only know the love of his mother through our stories. His first birthday was on December 25, 2009, Christmas Day.

A counselor I knew recommended I go to a support group, and gave me the website for Compassionate Friends. Kira's father, Larry, and I waited a few months before we could even consider going to a meeting. Neither of us had ever been to a support group of any kind, and this type seemed almost too unbearable to attend. Yet we did, and in so doing, found a community of people who share our collective grief and truly understand the path we now sadly travel together.

This past December, The Compassionate Friends held its Annual Candle Lighting ceremony. It was the first I attended. It was an evening of profound sadness, yet

also of hope. The guest speaker, Chuck Collins, gave a courageous and impassioned speech. Chuck told us of the terrible loss he and his wife Kathy endured by the terrible loss of their daughter, Tiffanie, a young college student. The struggle he and Kathy went through in the years afterwards, and the choice they made to live their lives for their two young sons, and for others, was inspirational. Chuck and Kathy work tirelessly for Compassionate Friends, and Chuck has written a book called : Searching for Hope When a Child Dies. Chuck's talk was filled with honesty, emotion and hope. As I sat and listened, I felt the room was embraced by his compassion. Chuck talked about the incredible emotional and physical suffering he and Kathy endured after Tiffanie died. He bravely spoke about their thoughts of ending their own lives, so as not to feel more pain. He talked about the isolation, the so-called well meaning friends who think time will heal all wounds. As they worked through their grief in the ensuing years Chuck talked about how working with The Compassionate Friends gave their lives added meaning. We are all grateful for his encouragement and kindness.

Afterwards, the group held the Candle Lighting Ceremony. We honored our children, one by one, quiet tears falling. Some said a few words to their lost beloved child, some lit candles in sorrowful silence. For some, it marked another year of not being with their child, and for some, like me, it was only the beginning. The ceremony is one of sharing, yet intensely personal for each of us. It was an emotional and touching moment, and one I will never forget.

As the new editor, I welcome every member of the Potomac Chapter of Compassionate Friends to offer suggestions for the upcoming editions of the Newsletter, personal stories you wish to share, poems, book reviews, and any other information which members may find helpful. As we go along this journey together, it is my hope the newsletter will help bring us a little closer, and go forward, one step at a time.

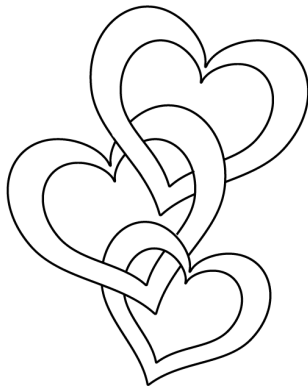
POETRY CORNER

Kira

Child of my heart,
I could not have loved you more
had you been born of my flesh and blood
Child of my heart,
whose life I cherished and in whose eyes I saw
the love and joy for years to come,
gone now and in the flood
of tears that flow,
and in the darkest night
no love will again be just yours
no one can take that right
Your heart is in my broken heart
through all the lonely years
and nothing will be bright again
to shine through all my tears

by Katherine Bloom

June 2009



Death is nothing at all
it does not count.
I have only slipped away into the next room
Nothing has happened.
Everything remains exactly as it was.
I am I, and you are you, and the old life that we lived so
fondly together
is untouched, unchanged.
Whatever we were to each other, that we are still.
Call me by that old familiar name.
Speak of me in the easy way which you always used.
Put no difference into your tone.
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.
Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes that we
enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.
Let my name be ever in the household word that it
always was.
Let it be spoken without effort, without the ghost of a
shadow upon it.
Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same as it ever was.
There is absolute and unbroken continuity.
What is this death but a negligible accident?
Why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?
I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very
near, just around the corner.
All is well. Nothing is hurt, nothing is lost.
One brief moment and all will be as it was before.
How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when we
meet again!

Bu Henry Scott Holland

1847-1918

Ludgate Hill, London

The days drag by
the nights so long.
His bed is empty it
feels so wrong
My son, my friend
it hurts so deep.
The pain I feel
the tears, I weep.

*The Compassionate Friends, Brookhaven Chapter in
Medford, NY*

Endowment

Hope gives us vision for regaining
the tenderness of memories.
Hope carries us through
to survival and healing.
Hope offers us courage
for acceptance and overcoming.
Hope gives us
new spirit and new laughter.
Hope is among the greatest gifts
to be found in time of sorrow.
But hope cannot restore on earth
what is lost to death.
Hope can only go forward
and make us new.
Give space to hope in your life.

My soul is broken
a life out of touch.
Why did you leave me
it hurts so much.
Your bright young
smile your heart of
gold. Your carefree
spirit
My world's gone cold,

Sascha, From LARGO, Fall 2001

Holding Onto Love

I feel so lost
without you near.
Dear Scott my son
the future I fear.
Trees and flowers seem suddenly reborn,
As another spring arrives fresh and new,
Surrounded by such beauty,
My thoughts tum to you.
As another college graduation looms,
Great excitement fills the air, Glancing at
the smiling students,
I still search for strawberry blond hair,
No matter what I do in life
You are always there,
I feel your presence constantly, As
each new experience we share.
Though physically, you have left us,
Your love remains here to stay,
A bond so strong and nourishing, It gets
us through another day.

*By John Mazzio, TCF Brookhaven in Medford in
memory of Scott Mazzio
passed away on 11/30/09*

LOVE GIFTS

Gloria Hensel	Christopher Fink
Elise & Woodson Ward	Bryce Manning
Micki & Irv Koniak	Lesley Garelick
Ellen Lee	Stephen Lee
Herman & Mary Nader	Carolyn Nader
Andrea & Douglas Keller	Jonathan Blank
Barbara & George Beall	Barbara Lynn Beall
Doris Sensabaugh	Tammy Sensabaugh
Bonnie & David Hodsdon	Kira Bloom



The Compassionate Friends is a self supporting, non-profit organization solely dependent on LOVE GIFTS and other donations for operating expenses of all TCF chapters. If you would like to send a LOVE GIFT in memory of your child or any other loved one, or in honor of any occasion, it would be greatly appreciated. Love Gifts are fully Tax Deductible. Please give your Love Gift to our Treasurer, George Beall. You may mail Love Gifts to:

George Beall
798 Kimberly Court E
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Gifts received by the monthly meeting deadline will be acknowledged in the next newsletter.

Our Children Remembered



November 2009 Birthdays

David & Lisa Daniel	David Daniel
Hally Dunn	Jacob Dunn
Barry & Barbara Gordon	Jonathan Blank
Gerald & Lilyan Heupel	Robert Heupel
Andrea Keller (sibling)	Jonathan Blank
Ellen Lee	Stephen Lee
Patty McKinley	Timothy McGinley
German & Mary Nader	Carolyn Nader
Percy & Carolina Navarez	Alexander Navarez
Sjef & Betty Otten	Daniel Otten
Linda Overstreet	Steven Flanary
Thomas & Kathleen Pape	Barnaby Pape
Julian & Carol Cohen Seidel	Jennifer Seidel
Alison Snow	Nicolas Colwell
Daryl & Debbie Thornton	Crystal Thornton

Anniversaries

Joann Gelman	Julia Gelman
Beth Hilliard	Jeanette Hilliard
Irwin & Micki Koniak	Lesley Garelick
Philip & Margaret Waclawick	Carl Waclawick
David & Joece Yuen	Michael Yuen

December 2009 Birthdays

Lance & Theresa Aug	Grant Aug
Terry Bendel	Teresa Bendel
Jacqueline Bernard	Darcy Bernard
Gary & Anita Fields	Adam Fields
Larry & Lyne Friedman	Brian Friedman
Jack & Margaret Gelin	Martha Gelin
Wanda Michael	Stacy Gross
Thomas & Kathleen Pape	Barnaby Pape
Gail Tsui	Paul Regan
Philip & Margaret Waclawick	Carl Waclawick

Anniversaries

Beverly Freund	Paul Quattlebaum
Olivia Featherson	Troy Featherson
German & Mary Nader	Carolyn Nader
Percy & Carolina Navarez	Alexander Navarez
Tim & Ginny O'Conner	Robert O'Conner

January 2010 Birthdays

Lionel & Sandra Chaiken	Pamela Sue Chaiken
Carol Danforth	M.Soroco Danforth
Paula Davis	Justin Davis
William & Janet Frank	Alexander Frank
Maryam Jangali	Minoo Barzin
Carl & Susan Johnson	Carol Johnson

Anniversaries

Anita Ferguson	Jerry Joe Ferguson
Gary & Anita Fields	Adam Fields
Maryam Jangali	Minoo Barzin
Fred & Lynn Lee	Nicole Lee
Charles & Linda Lubin	Todd Lubin
Geoffrey & Cheryl Mack	Brenton Everson
Paul & Marian Smith	Rachel Smith
Bill & Margaret Simpson Smith	Benjamin Smith
Lise Valenta	John Troy Valenta

February 2010 Birthdays

John & Joan Frank Bartell	Jenna Bartell
Olivia Featherson	Troy Featherson
Lorie Fisher	Audrey Fisher
Patty McGinley	Jonathan McGinley
Dave Nelson	Clare Nelson
Jack & Laurie Dove Purdum	Matthew Purdum
Fritz & Nancy Schultz	Steven McGrath
Arlene Stein	Sonora Stein

Anniversaries

Terry Bendel	Teresa Bendel
Michael & Evelyn Byrne	Madalyn Byrne
Joe & Ann Duffy	Caroline Duffy
Lorie Fisher	Audrey Fisher
Mary MacDonald	Keith Sovey
Wanda Michael	Stacy Gross
Sjen & Betty Otten	Daniel Otten
Gail Tsui	Paul Regan
David & Mary Wilmot	David Wilmot

March 2010 Birthdays

Phyliss Belzer	Alan Belzer
Lawrence & Katherine Bloom	Kira Bloom
Michael & Evelyn Byrne	Madalyn Byrne
Carol Danforth	C. Diego Danforth
Manny & Penny Flecker	Norman Flecker
Judith Friedenber	Sebastian Herbstein
Mark & Gail Garfinkle	Harris Garfinkle
David & Julie Walker Gribbon	Matthew Walker Gribbon
Richard & Rita Helgeson	R. Andrew Helgeson
Kelly Heller	Margaret Hernandez
Gerald & Lilyan Heupel	Gerald Heupel III
Denise Hyman	Alex Hyman
Ray & Maggie Jones	Ryan Jones
Geoffrey & Cheryl Everson Mack	Brenton Everson
Mike & Ginny Mazzuca	Joseph Mazzuca
Dave Nelson	Clare Nelson
Al & Lucille Reifman	Elizabeth Reifman
John & Lise Valenta	John & Troy Valenta

Anniversaries

Colleen Boskin	Patrick Elasi
Jack & Rosanne Carney	Tracy Daniel
Jack & Margaret Gelin	Martha Gelin
Fred & Karen BrinkmannJohnson	Katherine Johnson
Carl & Doris Sensabaugh	Tammy Sensabaugh
Lori Goldstein Somers	David Goldstein
Lori Goldstein Somers	Paul Goldstein
Alex & Marlem Stein	Claudia Stein
Linda Vasquez	Sonya Vasquez

April 2010 Birthdays

Herman & Sandra Coles-Bell	Corrine Bell
Vicki Bender	Kenneth Ramsey Jr
Fulvio & Gilda Carboraro	Alex Carboraro
Jack & Rosanne Carney	Tracy Daniel
Matt & Stella Chubski	Ramona Connors
Rovi faber	Jody Ann Faber
Anita Ferguson	Jerry Joe Ferguson
Mark & Gail Garfinkle	Harris Garfinkle
Gloria Hensel	Christopher Hensel
Walter & Rita Pancik	Bruce Liebowitz
Jerry & Cecile Smith	Christian Smith
Claire Wilk	James Wilk
Matt & Joece Yuen	Michael Yuen

Anniversaries

Carol Danforth	C. Diego Danforth
	M. Socorro Danforth
David & Julie Walker Gribbon	Matthew Walker Gribbon
Alison Meske	Kristin Meske
Fritz & Nancy Schultz	Stephen McGrath
Fred & Edye Smith	Stephen Smith
Ted & Barbara Tate	James Tate
Linda Vasquez	Kathleen Vasquez

May 2010 Birthdays

Coleen Boskin	Patrick ElasiK
Mike & Nancy Frank	Daniel Frank
JoAnn Goldberg	Victoria Lewis
Fred & Karen BrinkmanJohnson	Katherine Johnson
Maurice & Nedya Gonzolez-Lewis	Maurice Lewis Jr
Donald & Margery Moores	Tige Miller
Brian & Nancy Pinto-Orton	Claire Pinto
Kenneth Rowe	Nicole Rowe
Steve & Theresa Spencer	Lucas Spencer
Ted & Barbara Tate	James Tate
Linda Vasquez	Kathleen Vasquez

Anniversaries

David Allison	Joshua Allison
Lawrence & Katherine Bloom	Kira Bloom
Fulvio & Gilda Carboraro	Alex Carboraro
Rebecca Domaruk	Paul Domaruk
Joseph & Louise Ellinger	Doug Ellinger
JoAnn Goldberg	Victoria Lewis
Robert Goor	Andrew Goor
Barry & Barbara Gordon	Jonathan Blank
Richard & Rita Hegelson	R. Andrew Helgeson
Leroy & Joan Jerry	Leroy Jerry III
Mike & Ginny Mazzuca	Joseph Mazzuca
Sandi McGee	Thomas Mizerek
Dave Nelson	Grant Nelson
Arlene Stein	Sonora Stein
Leslie Thomas (sibling)	Scott Thomas