



The Compassionate Friends

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The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



TCF of Potomac, MD Newsletter Quarter 3 Sumer/Fall 2023

We meet the first Thursday of the month. Meetings begin at 7:00

Same time. Same place

Potomac Presbyterian Church

10301 River Road

Potomac, MD 20854

www.TCFPotomacMD.com



The Compassionate Friends Mission

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a national self-help organization offering friendship, understanding and hope to bereaved families who have experienced the death of a child, grandchild or sibling. TCF members provide information and support. Volunteers run the more than 660 local chapters in the U.S., and TCF has chapters in many other countries.

The Compassionate Friends National

48660 Pontiac Trail

#930808

Wixom, MI 48393

877-969-0019



Leaders	Danny Norris Marilyn Schuman	New Members	George & Barbara Beall
		Librarian	Lilyan Heupel
Co-Leaders	Nancy Frank Rob Goor	Facilitators	Barbara & George Beall
Treasurer	Marc Smith		Nancy Frank
Newsletter	Marilyn Schuman		Rob Goor
Outreach	Mitzi Sereno		Danny Norris
Steering Committee: all of the above + Daryl Thornton, Vickie Smith, Katherine Bloom and Mary Mandeville			

A Message from the Chapter Leaders



Quarter 3 started with the TCF National Conference in Denver, Colorado. It was a wonderful 3 days spent surrounded by 825 people from around the country, who were all there for the same reasons: to celebrate the children we've lost, and to share our stories, our memories, our joy from the years we were able to share with them, as well as our pain from the loss.

We were all together in the ballroom, sometimes for dinner or lunch, or for large group activities, which were at times, moving, and at times, fun, but always relevant to our desire to share and continue to grow and learn.

There were a wide variety of small group learning/sharing sessions from which to choose, so we could select topics that interested us. There were also sessions designed to help the body as well as the spirit, such as yoga or exercise.

The Butterfly Boutique is fun, where you can find all sorts of items celebrating butterflies and dragonflies, and a Silent Auction, where you can bid on a variety of treasures brought in by other members. Both are opportunities to help TCF National raise funds to keep going.

Guest speakers and musicians enriched the experience, as did the Sibling Group, and a large army of volunteers (all TCF members) who were there to help.

There is always a moving Candle Lighting ceremony after dinner on the last night, and a Walk to Remember on the last morning, where we all carry posters with our child's photo. This year, it was a beautiful blue-sky morning as we walked a short distance to the Capitol Building in Denver.

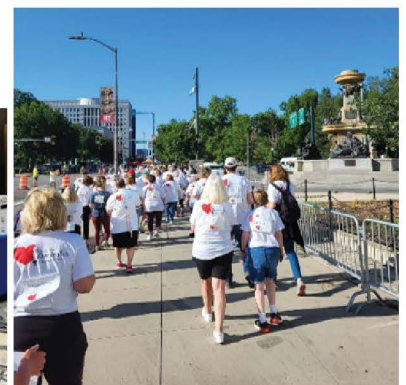
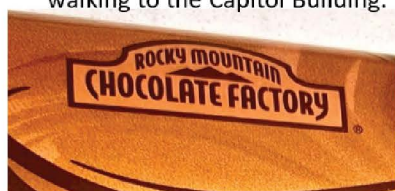
Danny & Marilyn



The Butterfly Boutique on the last day, when most of the items had been sold.



Below, left to right: 1. Danny holding up the posters we all got to display during the conference, and carry on the Walk to Remember; 2. Chocolate! - you always get time to explore the city, (next year, New Orleans!); 3. just a FEW of our TCF amazing volunteers; 4. the crowd, walking to the Capitol Building.



Our Children Remembered

July 2023

John Cole & Perita Ballov Shannon Cole
Peggy Cowan Sarah Davis
Ursula Daniels Connie
Dan & Marj Druckman Kathy Lee
Nancy Frank Danny
JoAnn Gellman William Gellman
Lilyhan & Gerald Heupel Robert Jason (Robbie)
Mitzi & Ed Sereno Andrea Katherine Sereno
Raisa Slepoy Conrad



August 2023

Lauren Adler Mackenzie Ripley
George & Barbara Beall Barbara Lynn Beall
Max Gilbert & Elizabeth Bach Sarah Jeannette Gilbert
Karen Bushell Kevin Sayer Bushell
Jennifer & Steve Cassell Jake Cassell
Debbie Coldsmith Lauren Aument
Carlos & Norma Gondolfo Carlos Gondolfo
Donald Harris Sr. & Betsy Myers Timothy M. Harris
Sandra & Robert Jacobs Lea
Susan & Carl Johnson Michael David Johnson
Carolyn & Steve Korman Xan Korman
Susan Toni & Bill Lucas Shawn Lucas
Mary Mandeville Kenneth Lee
Susan & Bill Reed Kate
Rosario & Ricardo Rodriguez Jose
Margaret Vernon & James Kurtz Charlie
Nathalie Silver Celine Miriam Michelle Silver



September 2023

September is Pamela Sue Chaiken's remembrance / angel-versary.) We have chosen this month to honor her and her family for founding our TCF Potomac Chapter. Please see the two articles featuring the Chaikens in this issue, as we look forward to honoring them at our Candlelighting in December.**

Janny Castro Jessica Castro
****Sandra Chaiken Pamela Sue Chaiken****
Diana Finzi Leo Doran
Peggy Lester Beth Hayes
Dana Chladere Maya Humeau
Rita & Walter Pancik Bruce J. Leibowitz
Sue Jacobson Becca Pardo
Susan & Walter St. Aubin Marc St. Aubin
Karen Van Loon Nick Verhoeven

NOTE FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR: If any of the information above is not accurate or the way you want it displayed, (or, worse, totally missing your child), please let me know at [Note2Mar@yahoo.com](mailto>Note2Mar@yahoo.com). And, please put TCF in the message title. Thank you. Marilyn Schuman

July's Child

The 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 ended
without rancor, without guile.

Like the fireworks that leave images
on unprotected eyes...
her lustrous life engraved my heart...
with love than never dies.

Sally Migliaccio, TCF - Babylon

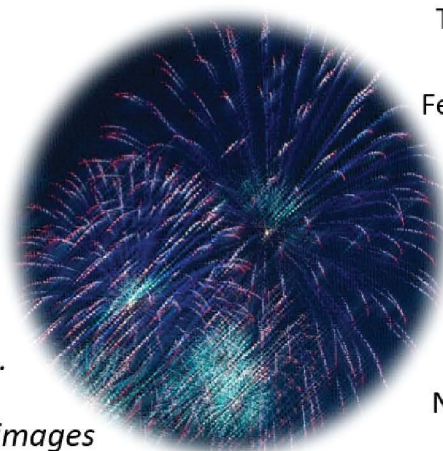


His Room

Sun splinters through
The stained-glass unicorn still on the sill
Splattering black walls with color.
Few things are as floor as a vacant room –
Furniture gone, awaiting definition
Bare, yet there on the carpet
Imprints of chair and waterbed.
And there is the whole he
Accidentally shot through the wall.
And there and there and there –
Nail holes that held pictures and posters
And eight point antlers.
And there . . . God, how can a place
So empty, be so full?

Richard Drew

From Rachel's Cry; A Journey Through Grief



This is your chapter newsletter.

You are invited to submit any article, poem or link you think the members of our special group would appreciate. Please provide the author, if it is not you.

If you write for therapy, to help you process your grief, or to allow the memories of your child to flow onto the pages of a story, poem or heartfelt description, please feel free to submit your writings to Marilyn at note2mar@yahoo.com. (Please put "TCF" as part of your subject line. We would love to publish words from your heart, to help us get to know you and your child better.



Love Gifts & A New Opportunity!

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 another loved one, or in honor of any occasion, it will be greatly appreciated.

LOVE GIFTS are fully tax deductible. There is a basket at monthly meetings with LOVE GIFT envelopes. All donations must be in check form.

You may also mail **LOVE GIFTS** to:

Marc Smith
4241 Sandcastle Lane
Olney, MD 20832



Love Gifts
A thoughtful way
to remember our precious children

SO . . . What is the "New Opportunity?"

Instead of simply sharing the list below, with just the parents' and the children's names, going forward, we invite you to dedicate your love gift to your child, or any loved one with a simple brief message. A dedication is strictly voluntary. A few examples below:

Carol & George F., "In memory of John & Colby F."

Randall & Charlotte O., "In Memory of Keith O. 7/3/73 – 11/2/2001"

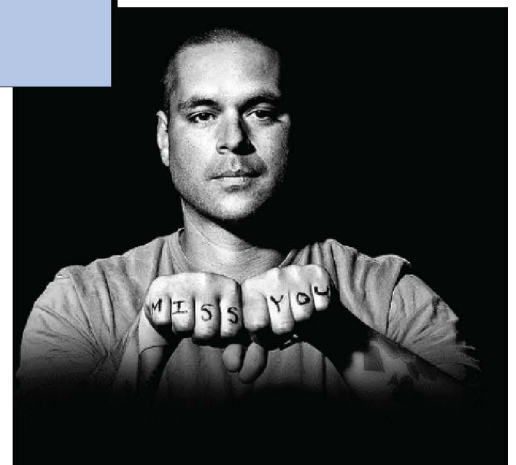
Elizabeth C., "To my Beloved son, Billy Joe C. I walk the road where I live now and think of you above me in the sky. I do talk to you often."

*When someone you love becomes a memory,
the memory becomes a treasure.*

*Photos are from the works of
Barbara J. Hopkinson*

*"Memory is a form of immortality
Those you remember never die
They continue to walk and talk with you
Their influence is with you always."*

*--Wilford Peterson
TCF Kansas City, MO*



A Tale of 3 Conferences and Sharing Photos of Our Children

Philadelphia, 2019 - We saw a small display on a few bulletin boards, where some chapters had posted a few photos of the children they had lost. We made a mental note to collect photos the following year, so we could include our chapter's kids. Alas, it was to be several years before we returned to a conference.



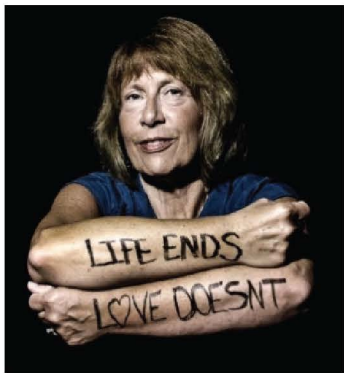
← **Denver, 2023** – After four years, and after assuming leadership, the photo boards were not on our radar, but when we got to the conference, we saw how far the displays had come, and what you see here is only a part of the lovely gallery.



New Orleans, 2024! – It is our **hope** to go to the conference next year with a lot of photos from our chapter, and a lot of members who would love to experience the fellowship, the city, the learning opportunities, and fun of the conference,



because the leadership provides a lot of the above, and they **DO** find ways to celebrate the fun, while helping members remember, grieve, learn, and deal with their loss.



The woman in the 2 photos is the author of our favorite presentation: "Resilience – The Key to Surviving Loss." Her name is Dr. Barbara J. Hopkinson, author and presenter of "Resilience – The Key to Surviving Loss." She discussed how

she survived after the loss of 3 children, her husband, both parents and sight in one eye. She shared ten tips that can be used to find resilience after loss. She co-authored the workshop with Alan Pedersen, former TCF Executive Director. <https://abutterflysjourney.org>

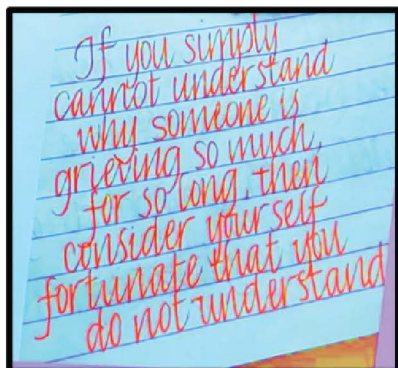
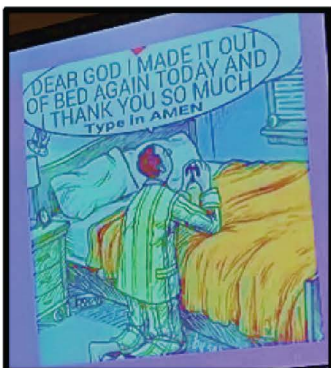
There is a wide variety of activities offered for fun and relaxation, like yoga, Crafty Corner, & a choice of exercise, dance, and others to get you moving.

There are also sessions for parents to simply share with each other. [Here is a peek inside the](#)



A Small Sample of the The Choice of Topics

- * Coping with the Stigma Due to Overdose
- * Why Did You Say That ?! ... When People Say Unkind Things to Us
- * Multiple Loss
- * Feeling Bad About Feeling Good
- * Resilience – The Key to Surviving Loss
- * Does it Ever Get Better? Finding Hope in the Face of Grief
- * Social tools for suicide Loss survivors
- * Infant & Toddler Loss



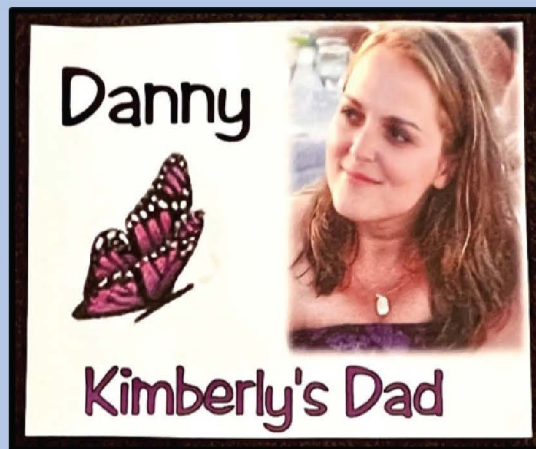
Apologies for the quality of these pictures. They were taken, (at an angle) with the presenter's permission. from slides on a screen

TWO FREE OFFERS!
(and you can have both!)



A Pin-on Button

You can wear it anywhere
to share your memories



A Personalized Clip-on Nametag

You can wear it to our meetings

For the Buttons

Please print out a square photo of your child – ***a wee bit larger than 3" x 3"***.

(The buttons are 3" in diameter, so the photo should be a tiny bit bigger.)

Please cut the photo out so it is **has** a 1/4 inch white margin on all sides.

Bring your 3 1/2" x 3 1/2" square paper with the photo to a meeting with your name and your child's name on the back.

For the Clip-on Nametags

Please email the photo in digital form to Note2mar@yahoo.com and please put "Clip-on nametag" in the subject line.

The size of the photo doesn't matter, as it will be digital.

Please include your name(s), and what you want on the bottom line.



Compassion asks us to go where it hurts, to enter into the places of pain, to share in brokenness, fear, confusion and anguish.

Compassion challenges us to cry out with those in misery, to mourn with those who are lonely, to weep with those in tears.

Compassion requires us to be weak with the real vulnerable with the vulnerable and powerless with the powerless.

Compassion means full immersion in the condition of being human

Henri Nouwen, You are the Beloved: Daily meditations for the Spiritual Living

The only cure for grief is to grieve. Emotions in grief are as different as snowflakes or fingerprints. Each person mourns in a different way. There is no timeline for grief.

Rabbi Earl Grollman



In the bottom of an old pond lived some grubs who could not understand why none of their group ever came back after crawling up the stems of the lilies to the top of the water. They promised each other that the next one who was called to make the upward

climb would return and tell what happened to them. Soon, one of them felt an urgent impulse to seek the surface; he rested himself on top of a lily pad and went through a glorious transformation which made him into a dragonfly with beautiful wings. In vain, he tried to keep his promise. Flying back and forth over the pond, he peered down at his friends below. Then he realized that, even if they could see him, they would not recognize such a radiant creature as one of their number. The fact that we cannot see our friends and loved ones or communicate with them after the transformation, which we call death, is no proof that they cease to exist.

Walter Dudley Cavert
(permission to print)



Our Children Remembered



April

Nancy Cogliano	Kevin <u>Shutta</u>
Vera Davison	Daniel
Pattie Desimone	James <u>McIvane</u>
Tom & Donna <u>Mutrin</u>	Michael <u>Mutrin</u>
Mark & Vickie Smith	Jason

May

Katherine Bloom & Larry Bloom	Kira
Stacy Bond & Karen Rogers	Cody Bond
Carl Calabro	Isiah
Ramy & Rosa Castaneda	Samuel Castaneda
Martin Deahl & Juli Swanson	Braden Deahl
Alice Edwards	Christine Kalish
Ellen Ensel & Fenwick Anderson	Lowell Ensel
Tina Fink	Margaret
Gabrielle & Joseph Fontana	Mia Gabrielle Fontana
Rob Goor	Andrew
Barbara & Barry Gordon	Jonathan Matthew Blank
& Andrea Keller, sister	Will Hartmann
Steve Hartmann & Allie Giles	Heather Jordan
Wendy Jordan	Sami
Shirin & Farhad Kayani	Jack
Janine & John Merts	Matthew Milazzo
Don Scruggs	

June

Madeline Beary	Mark Connor
Virginia Bourgeois	Jerome
Ruth & Stephen Chesler	Katherine
Charlene Fisher	Jay
Penny & Manny Flecker	Norman Thomas Flecker
Barbara <u>Kanfee</u>	Ben <u>Kanfee</u>
Laura & Pasquale Mangano	Nicolis Giovanni Mangano
Jessica & Troy Smith	Jordan
Daryl Thornton	Crystal Tomee Thornton
Madeline & Paul <u>Turkeltaub</u>	Alyssa Lynn
Kim Worth & Barbara Sosnick	Charles Worth

Excusez Moi Mis Disculpas



PARDONNE MOI SCUSA
Mea Culpa Please Forgive Me

We proofread the names and do our best to be sure they are spelled correctly, and the children's names match the parents' names.

Alas, what I didn't do was notice that the names for the **Quarter 2 months: April, May & June, actually read July, August, September!**

Can I get an "Oy Vey?!"

I sincerely apologize that the Remembrance months (or as many call them, "Angel-versaries,") for Quarter 2 did not show up accurately. Please see them corrected in this issue, along with a page for our Quarter 3 families.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Schuman, Newsletter Editor

*"Memory is a form of immortality
 Those you remember never die
 They continue to walk and talk with you
 Their influence is with you always."*

*--Wilford Peterson
 TCF Kansas City, MO*



How Did Our Chapter Get Started? We have Lionel & Sandra Chaiken, and Ann Landers to Thank

On September 29, 1995, the Chaikens lost their daughter, and Stephanie Chaiken lost her beloved sister, Pamela, age 31, to a brain tumor, after a 13-year battle.



Left to right, Sandra, Stephanie, Lionel and Pamela Sue Chaiken

To quote Sandra, “When you lose a child, you lose the tapestry of your life. You don’t want to go on living.” The family was struggling to cope with the pain and grief of their loss.

Sandra stumbled upon an item written by Ann Landers about The Compassionate Friends in The Washington Post. They attended many different groups in the area and saw there was a need for one in the Potomac area, so they started our TCF chapter.

The Compassionate Friends was originally founded in England in 1969 by Rev. Simon Stephens, a hospital chaplain, and it now has over 500 chapters around the world.

Diana Cunningham, who was the executive director of TCF in Illinois in 2000 said that The Compassionate Friends is a place of hope.

“Sharing the pain is the first step towards healing,” she said. “Being able to look at someone else who has lost a child a few years before shows parents that they will survive and that the pain does ease.”

Jan Rifkin was a member of the Arlington chapter and joined the Potomac chapter around 2000. She said, “When my son first died, TCF was the one place we could go where everyone in the room understood. It provides a great deal of love and compassion. Losing a child shows you how fragile life is. It teaches you how to savor every moment in life.”

Written by Marilyn Schuman



Pamela Sue Chaiken

In memory of daughter, Middletown couple spearhead fund-raiser for brain cancer research

Katy Brandenburg News-Post Staff Apr 19, 2005 Updated Mar 11, 2016



Sandra and Lionel Chaiken of Middletown lost their daughter Pamela, inset, to a brain tumor 10 years ago. Since Pam's death, the Chaikens' mission and passion in life has been raising money and awareness about brain cancer.

Bill Green

The Frederick
News-Post

Thanks to Nancy Frank for the link to this update in The Frederick News-Post. To read the full article, please click the link below

www.fredericknewspost.com/archives/in-memory-of-daughter-middletown-couple-spearhead-fund-raiser-for-brain-cancer-research/article_7e034fc2-672e-5c7c-8226-1b5e2c0e5d09.html