



**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
FREDERICKSBURG CHAPTER
P.O. BOX 172
KING GEORGE, VA 22485
540-775-2015**

**Nonprofit Self-Help Organization for Families Who Have Experienced
the Death of a Child**

AUGUST 2008

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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive. Parents who have experienced the death of their child at any age are welcome to attend our meetings. There are no dues. If you are receiving our newsletter for the first time, it is because someone told us our sharing might comfort you. We meet the **THIRD TUESDAY NIGHT** of each month at **7:30 PM**, at the Redeemer Lutheran Church, the fellowship hall of the church, 5120 Harrison Road, Fredericksburg, VA.

CHAPTER LEADER - Kathie Kelly

TREASURER - Clyde Richardson

OUTREACH COORDINATOR - Gloria Blake

SIBLING LEADER – Vickie Headley

HOSPITALITY COORDINATOR - Odessa Cuffy

BUTTERFLY AMBASSADOR – Delores Martin-Lam

LIBRARIAN - Cathy Taylor

NEWSLETTER TEAM - Keith & Kathie Kelly

REGIONAL COORDINATORS – Chuck & Kathy Collins

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CHAPTER WEB PAGE- <http://www.geocities.com/tcfred/index.html>

CHAPTER E-MAIL - tcfred@yahoo.com

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook IL 60522-3696; Toll Free: 1-877-969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org
E-MAIL: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

CHAPTER LEADER'S CORNER

Summertime is here, or shall I say the end of summer. This a time of year that is hard on bereaved families as it is a time when other families go on vacation. For bereaved families it is a bittersweet time as we prepare for a vacation we think of our angels who are no longer with us. It is comforting for me to know that no matter where our family goes or what we do, that Kevin is still a part of the family and is with us. I hope you all have a great rest of the summer.

Our meeting will be August 19 2008 at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 5120 Harrison Road, Fredericksburg, VA in the Fellowship Hall beginning at 7:30 PM. I would like to thank Pastor Koehler and his congregation for having us at their church.

If you would like to contribute something for the newsletter, deadline is September 20th for the newsletter. Thank you!

Well, I hope that you all have a wonderful month. If you are in need of anything, please call me at 540-775-8430, if there is no answer, please be sure to leave your name and number so I can get back to you or e-mail me at tcffred@yahoo.com.

*Your Compassionate Friend,
Kathie Kelly
Chapter Leader
Kevin Robert Kelly's Momma
7/19/94 – 5/10/98*



Self Help

For many of us, the monthly meeting of our Compassionate Friends Group is the only real healing time we give to ourselves. Helping ourselves on a daily basis is critical to our journey in the grieving process.

Many of us find solace in books. Others find it in movies, music, time with friends, meditation or intense spiritual conviction. Each day we should take some time to center ourselves, to find a place of peace.

If you haven't already done so, start with a quiet time of reflection and search your soul for the key to your own solace. There will still be bad, even terrible, days. The effort to help ourselves begins with knowing ourselves and finding the unique activity that soothes our broken hearts for just a little while.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
TCF, Katy, TX
In Memory of my son, Todd M. Mennen



NO VACATION

There is no vacation from your absence.
Every morning I awake, 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.

Kathy Boyett, TCF, MS Gulf Coast Chapter



08/01/98 Remembrance Date of Samantha Mercedes Larson Johnson, daughter of Kim Larson
 08/01/06 Remembrance Date of Dominic Bastine, son of Donald & Toni Bastine
 08/01/06 Remembrance Date of Dominic Bastine, grandson of Theresa Bastine
 08/02/86 Birth of Elaine Elizabeth Dunlap, daughter of Gary Dunlap & Beth Dunlap
 08/06/63 Birth of Renee Breeden, daughter of Melvin & Myrtle Breeden
 08/06/88 Remembrance Date of Matthew Shane Blakley, son of William & Elva Blakley
 08/07/95 Remembrance Date of Jack Armstrong, son of Rick & Nancy Armstrong
 08/12/75 Birth of Eric Wayne Newton, son of Lonnie & Joan Newton
 08/12/03 Remembrance Date of Brandon, son of Nancy & Tom Lawn
 08/15/54 Birth of G. C. Freeman, III (Chip), son of Pat & Skip Freeman
 08/17/01 Birth of Micah Hill, daughter of Gloria Reynolds
 08/20/81 Birth of Joshua Adam Brand, son/stepson of Joan Brand-King & Herbert King
 08/20/81 Birth of Joshua Adam Brand, grandson of Marie Giganti
 08/22/76 Remembrance Date of Wade F. Kincaid, son of Tony & Pat Lacava
 08/23/76 Birth of Wade F. Kincaid, son of Tony & Pat Lacava
 08/23/96 Birth of Savannah Dawn Shackelford, daughter of Norma Shackelford
 08/23/96 Birth of Savannah Dawn Shackelford, niece of Mary Howland
 08/24/91 Birth of Michael Faulkner Ridgeway, son of Michael & Ann Ridgeway
 08/26/60 Birth of Joseph Andrew Spencer, son of Regina Spencer
 08/28/84 Birth of Christopher Ryan O'Neal, son of Fred & Maria O'Neal
 08/28/86 Birth of Jami R. Frazier, son of George & Deborah Frazier

** INDICATES FIRST ANNIVERSARY VERY DIFFICULT DAY!!!

NOTE: if you do NOT want your child's name listed in the newsletter, PLEASE contact the newsletter editor immediately. If you find any mistakes and any names left off, please contact me at tcffred@yahoo.com or 540-775-8430. Thank you!



BIRTHDAY TABLE

Parents bring their child's photos and other mementos to the meeting during the child's birthday month and it can be placed on the table. You may also bring a birthday cake or your child's favorite treat to share with those attending.

CHAPTER FUNDRAISER

You can still join in the Friends Asking Friends® virtual walk fundraiser! Help your chapter raise money by going to <http://www.tcfwalktoremember.org>.

Please think about making a donation to help our chapter out financially. If you do not want to donate online, you can mail your donation to TCF Fredericksburg Chapter, P. O.Box 172, King George, VA 22485. Thank you for your support!

LOVE GIFTS

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Just as our chapter is run entirely by volunteers interested in furthering the work of TCF, your voluntary, tax-deductible donations make it possible for us to mail this monthly newsletter, contact newly bereaved parents, continue our participation in TCF/National, and meet other chapter expenses.

Often, as they find hope and healing within the group, parents make a contribution usually in memory of a child who has died, or maybe a gift of thanksgiving for their surviving children.

These contributions are our only source of funds. All proceeds given to the our chapter are used within the community for outreach and to provide a place for newly bereaved fami-

Gifts are tax deductible. If you would like to make a donation, please send to The Compassionate Friends, The Fredericksburg Chapter, P.O. Box 172, King George, VA 22485. All gifts are welcome and truly appreciated.

THANK YOU!



Fredericksburg Chapter Family Cookout

We are looking at having a Chapter Family Cookout in September. We are in need of organizers and grillers for this event. If you are interested in helping out, please call 540-775-8430 and leave a message or email tcffred@yahoo.com.

More details to follow.

Our Newsletter is **going green!**

With ever-rising costs for supplies and mailing, the TCF Fredericksburg Newsletter is moving towards a more environmentally friendly and cost effective delivery. Each month we post our newsletter online at www.geocities.com/tcffred/. If you have internet access PLEASE unsubscribe from the printed edition of our newsletter by emailing a note to Kathie at tcffred@yahoo.com and she will add you to the email notification list. The newsletter is posted on our website each month. If you do not have internet access, we will continue to mail you a paper copy.

Thank you for your help.

SOME HELPFUL WEBSITES

www.thecompassionatefriends.org
www.griefnet.org
www.goodgriefresources.com
www.thebereavementjourney.com
www.nationalshareoffice.com
www.survivorsof suicide.com

www.griefwatch.com
www.journeyof hearts.org
www.lexinfertility.com
www.bereavedparentsusa.org
www.healingheart.net
www.missfoundation.org

www.growthhouse.org
www.childrenofdome.com
www.spacebetweenbreaths.com

Please let us know if you've found a helpful website you'd like to share.



NEWS FROM NATIONAL

2009 Compassionate Friends 32nd National Conference

Portland, Oregon August 7-9; Save the Date

"They just keep getting better" was a common theme among veteran conference goers in describing how they viewed the 31st National Conference just ended in Nashville. While far fewer had been expected by the organization, nearly 1400 registered for the conference, which featured excellent speakers, a wide variety of workshops, great entertainment, and the biggest Walk to Remember in Compassionate Friends history.

Plan early for the 32nd Compassionate Friends National Conference to be held August 7-9, 2009 in Portland, Oregon at the DoubleTree Lloyd Center. From the glass enclosed elevator at the hotel you can view beautiful Mt. Hood (with 12 glaciers) and Mount St. Helens.

The conference committee and the National Office are hard at work planning a wonderful conference experience for you. We hope to see you there!

FRIENDS ASKING FRIEND FUNDRAISER

You can still join in the Friends Asking Friends® virtual walk fundraiser! Help your chapter raise money by going to <http://www.tcfwalktoremember.org>.

To Our First-Time Readers and New Members and To Our Long-time Members

If you are receiving our newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us that you might find it helpful or you asked us to send it to you. We cordially invite you to attend any of our meetings which are held on the third Tuesday of each month at Redeemer Lutheran Church, in the Basement, 5120 Harrison Road, Fredericksburg from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Nothing is required of you. There are no fees or dues. You need not speak a word. Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. If you have never come to a meeting, you are probably wondering what this group of people that you don't even know can do for you. It is here that comfort and support can be given by those that "have been there". We've all had chunks of our hearts torn out. Yet those holes get smaller with the loving touches, friendly smiles and kind reassuring words from each other.

Try not judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. At your first meeting you were hoping that TCF could get you over your terrible pain and depression and loneliness and guilt and anger and all of the other faces of grief. You came expecting to go home, feeling "better, if not cured." Instead you met other parents who are still coping with forms of grief after months or even years. Perhaps you didn't notice there were some parents who were doing "OK." But the bottom line is you may go home from the first meeting feeling worse than when you came. Give it another try you will probably find, that each meeting uncovers a piece of the puzzle of life after the death of a child. It may take several meetings, but, hopefully, you will find the road to recovery like we did.

To Our Long-time Members

"TCF gives me a sense of purpose. A good enough reason for you to consider sticking around a while after you feel you have reached an acceptance or at least worked through your grief. Others need you. Pass the love on—adopt a bereaved parent!"

Fay Harden, TCF - Tuscaloosa, AL

CAN YOU HELP? Do you remember your first meeting of The Compassionate Friends, those first months of your grief journey? You desperately needed someone to talk to, someone who knew the pain of losing a child, someone to hug you, cry with you, listen to you. And there are newly bereaved parents who now need your help. Are you willing to be there for them? If two years or more have passed since the death of your child, and you feel that you are ready to give back some of the support that was shown to you, please consider a place of service in our chapter. There is a job for everyone. Don't wait call me at 540-775-8430. If you can't serve, please, at least, come to meetings to lend your support and understanding to our newly bereaved families. We have had so many new members join us the past few months. We need all the help we can get to help them. Thank you from all of our children.





SIBLING CORNER

For all of children who have lost brothers and/or sisters



HANDS OF LOVE

*We, the members of the Compassionate
Friends
have know the tragedy which death brings.
We've lived the hurts and the despair,
and so with hands outstretched in love
we welcome you to join us, and we promise you
that we will lend a listening ear.*

Lorraine Weaver, TCF, Lancaster, PA



THE BITTER TEARS OF LOVE LOST

Peter Smith, age 15; sibling to Gregory Smith

Because of my status in society
I can look below to poverty
and realize no matter how frustrated I get,
I will always be very lucky to have a family
who loves and cares for me.
But still the tears roll down my face
and my cheeks are forever stained
because I know as long as I live
my heart will always be pained.
I was left in shock, pain, and fear,
left with your unspoken words which I will never
hear
But in my days of sorrow when I feel that I will fall
I can only repeat the phrase to myself,
"It is better to have loved and lost than to never
have loved at all."



A Whisper for the New

I am new--new to myself and new to this world.
I hesitate to walk through this door.
I stare at my foot as it crosses the floor.
I didn't want to come, but I need to know more.

I hope I'm not the only one
Who tries to will back the sun.
Tell me that I'm not the only one.

Tell me your names so I know that you're real.
Describe, for me, what I feel.
I'm new to you, and I'm new to me.
I don't quite know who I will be,
But if I see that you are here,
The sight will add a hint of cheer.
If you have made it, I can too.
I'll discover this new world with you.

~Scott Mastley, Atlanta, Ga
In Memory of My Brother, Chris Mastley
9/2/67 - 12/05/94



As Long As I Can

by Sascha

As long as I can, I will look at the world for both of us.
As long as I can, I will laugh with the bird, I will sing
with flowers, I will play to the stars, for both of us. As
long as I can, I will remember how many things on this
earth were your joy. And I will live as well as you
would want me to live, as long as I can.

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
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 like a process
Of relinquishing the past.
By swimming in Hope's channel,
I'll reach the shore at last.

Cynthia G. Kelley TCF, Cincinnati, OH



BEACH SONG

Summer is here,
And for a week, I had to spend,
Conventioning at the beach
Summer, the beach and that special song.

Funny how, after almost two years,
That song, at the beach,
During the summer, almost drove me to
The brink of insanity.

Why did it happen? I think it was because,
As in the song that you loved,
You were my hero and you didn't even know
it.

Linda Walker, 8/13/92

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2008 7:30-9:00 PM
AT REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
IN THE BASEMENT OF THE CHURCH
5120 HARRISON ROAD
FREDERICKSBURG, VA**



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.

We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us.

Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.

We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.

We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.



Need to talk? Need a Friend?

TELEPHONE FRIENDS & REFERRALS: Do you need someone to talk to? Here is a list of Friends who can offer a listening ear. Please don't hesitate to call if you need someone to listen - - that is why we are here.

Gloria Blake (804) 633-9521

Dee Martin-Lam (540) 582-6921

David & Cathy Taylor (540) 582-2760

Kathie & Keith Kelly (540) 775-2015

Clyde & Cheryl Richardson (540) 659-6564

Odessa Cuffy (804) 633-6708

Wayne & Gloria Whitley (540) 371-9092

Millie Fleming (540) 373-5324

Greg & Cathleen Baker (540) 370-4838

Young Teen Accidental Death

Young Teen Accidental Death

Adult Accidental Death

Toddler/Sudden Death

Adult Sudden Death

Illness

Suicide

Adult Accidental Death

Unexpected/Expected Newborn Death

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, FREDERICKSBURG CHAPTER NEW SUBSCRIPTION – RENEWAL – CHANGE FORMS – DONATIONS

If you are receiving our newsletter for the first time...everyone within the Compassionate Friends Organization wants to say...We are sorry you have the need for this publication but we are glad you found us and we hope our newsletters will be helpful on your journey. Someone may have lovingly sent you the newsletter...and if so and you find it helpful, please complete the data sheet enclosed and return it so that we may add you to our newsletter database for future mailings. This is to insure that all the information we have is correct and complete.

(This is for internal use only.)

Please print, filling in all applicable blanks/boxes:

Your Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

Phone (including area code): _____ Email: _____

Do you prefer to receive the newsletter by (check one): Mail _____ Email _____

Child's Full Name: _____ Male: _____ Female _____

Child's Birth Date: _____ Child's Remembrance Date: _____

Cause of Child's Death (optional): _____

Child's relationship to you (e.g. son, daughter, brother, sister, grandchild) _____

Names and ages of all surviving siblings living with you:

Siblings: _____

*How did you find out about The Compassionate Friends? Please circle one: Family, Friends, Hospital, Church, School, Funeral Homes, Internet, Newspaper, Employer (Human Resources) or Other

Note: The information you have given above will be confidential (used for internal purpose only) unless you answer "yes" to one or more of the following questions:

1. Do you want your child's name to appear in the newsletter's "*Our Children Loved and Remembered*" section of birth and remembrance dates? Yes _____ No _____
2. Do you want your phone number given to another member for one on one support, otherwise known as Telephone Friends? Yes _____ No _____
3. Do you wish to have your child's name included on the Wall of Memory on our TCF Fredericksburg Web Site? This is currently in the process of being put together Yes _____ No _____

Voluntary donations are TCF Fredericksburg Chapter's only source of income. The Compassionate Friends needs to be here for the families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

Yes, I want to help with TCF Outreach...a donation is enclosed in Memory of _____

I would like to apply my donation toward the following outreach:

Newsletter ☐ (recommended amount for paper newsletter is \$15.00 which would go towards postage, paper and copying) Library _____ General Expenses ☐ Birthday/Remembrance Date Cards _____
Newly Bereaved Packets ☐ Annual Candlelight Remembrance Service ☐

Make Checks Payable to: The Compassionate Friends **Please Return To:** The Compassionate Friends, Fredericksburg Chapter, P. O. Box 172, King George, VA 22485