The mission of 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.

### Monthly Group Meeting

**Tyler Area Meeting**
3rd Monday of Each Month
1901 Rickety Ln., Tyler

**Contact**
Phone: (903) 258-2547
www.TylerTCF.org • info@TylerTCF.org
P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

**Co-Chapter Leaders**
Cheri Zucca & Trish Mann Taylor
Secretary ..........Trish Mann Taylor
Newsletter/Website ....Mary Lingle
Tyler Meeting Facilitators: Leslie & Don Dixon

**Steering Committee**
Sam Smith, David & Teresa Terrell, Mary Lingle, Lisa Schoonover, Cheri Zucca, Ellen Jenkins, Pam Pickett, Don & Leslie Dixon, Janet Majors, MaryAnn Girard, Trisha Mann Taylor, Barbara Barton, Heather Ogg

Joan & Bill Campbell, Regional Coordinators: (972) 935-0673
TCF National: (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

**The Meeting Agenda**
6:30 p.m. - Meeting will begin with refreshments followed by announcement of birthdays and anniversaries and reading of the Credo. We will then have open discussion.
8:00 p.m. - Meeting will close by recognizing our childrens’ names. Feel free to visit after the meeting or check out books from our library.

### In This Issue...

- **Welcome**
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- **The Dream**
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### Vacations

Vacation time can be painful for bereaved parents. Caught up with normal demands of making a living or keeping a household going, we have less time to think than we do on vacations, especially the "take it easy" kind-at a hideaway, tucked away somewhere.

In the summers following Tricia’s death, I found vacations could bring a special kind of pain. We avoided going to places where we had vacationed with her. At one time, I thought Williamsburg might be off my list forever since we had a very happy time together there. I tried it one summer three years later and found that she walked the cobbled streets with me. Now that nine years have passed and the pain has eased, maybe the happy memories we shared in Williamsburg can heighten the pleasure of another visit there.

For the first few years after Tricia’s death, we found fast-paced vacations at places we had never been before, to be the best. The stimulation of new experiences in new places with new people refreshed us and sent us home more ready to pick up our grief work. That is not to say when we did something or saw something that Tricia would have enjoyed, we didn’t mention her. We did, but it seemed less painful than at home.

One caution: Do allow enough time for sleep; otherwise, an exhausted body can depress you.

We've said it many times: YOU HAVE TO FIND YOUR OWN WAY, YOUR OWN PEACE. Let vacation time be another try at that; but do give yourself a break in choosing the time and locale where that can best be accomplished. Don’t be afraid of change-it can help with your re-evaluation of life.

Elizabeth Estes, TCF Augusta, GA

### Hello TCF Family,

As you may have heard we are transitioning our newsletter to be viewed online.

If you are receiving a July newsletter via mail that’s because we currently do not have an email address for you. Please, take a moment and visit our webpage at www.tylertcf.org and subscribe to our newsletter.

If you do not have an email and still wish to receive the newsletter in the mail, please fill the last page of this newsletter and mail it back.

We are working hard to be sure each of you who want to continue to receive the newsletter will continue to get it.

Thank you!

### IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Our printed newsletter will be moving online soon. We will need your email address. Please review our form on page 11 regarding your options. We will continue to send a printed version to anyone who doesn’t have access to the Internet.

www.TylerTCF.org

We need not walk alone.

**Volume 17, Issue 7**

**Tyler, Texas**

**July 2016**

**Thanks to Skillern’s Business Systems for printing our newsletter!**

Skillern’s Business Systems
1604 Grande Blvd., Tyler, TX 75703
(903) 561-5591 • www.skillerns.com

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** We need your email address. Please review our form on page 11 regarding your options.
Welcome

We extend a warm welcome to those who attended our first TCF meeting last month.

We deeply regret the circumstances that brought you to our TCF Chapter. The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance, not-for-profit, self-help organization that offers support and understanding to families who have experienced the death of a child. You are cordially invited to attend our monthly meeting (held the third Monday of the month). The meeting is open to everyone and free of charge. You are free to talk, cry or sit in silence; we respect the individuality of mourning. Comments shared in the meetings remain confidential.

Our chapter is operated entirely by volunteers dedicated to furthering the work of TCF. Your voluntary, tax deductible donations honor your loved one(s) in a meaningful way by enabling us to print and mail this newsletter and meet other expenses involved in reaching out to other grieving families (100% of funds are used for this outreach). Donations, along with the name of the person being honored, may be sent to:

The Compassionate Friends of Tyler
P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, Texas 75711

To Our New Members

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But, you have nothing to lose and much to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person—or just the right words spoken that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Old Members

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting we have new parents. Think back—what would it have been like for you if there had not been any “oldies” to welcome you, share your grief and encourage you? It was from them you heard, “Your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer.”

We deeply regret the circumstances that brought you to our TCF Chapter. The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance, not-for-profit, self-help organization that offers support and understanding to families who have experienced the death of a child. You are cordially invited to attend our monthly meeting (held the third Monday of the month). The meeting is open to everyone and free of charge. You are free to talk, cry or sit in silence; we respect the individuality of mourning. Comments shared in the meetings remain confidential.

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Tyler, Texas 75711

Grief Resources

Note: Some resources are based on individual opinion and experience and are not officially endorsed by the organization. The hope is that you may find a grief resource helpful to you and your family. We will continue to build on our resources column. Please let us know of any of your personal recommendations. Thank you.

Compassionate Friends (International Website) compassionatefriends.org

Also offers grief support for siblings & grandparents

Children Are A Gift Foundation: www.childrenareagift.com

GriefShare: www.griefshare.org

MADO East Texas (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) www.madd.org/local-offices/tx/east-texas

Smith County Victim Services Division www.tcdj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs/counties/smith.html

The Hospice of East Texas: www.hospiceofeasttexas.org

Victim Services Division - Texas Department of Criminal Justice - Online Resource Directory www.tcdj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs

Survivors of Suicide: www.allianceofhope.org

Samaritan Counseling of Tyler: www.scctyler.org

Tyler Counseling & Assessment, LLP: www.tyler-counseling.com

Angel Layettes: www.angellayettes.org • 903-534-5212

University of Texas at Tyler Psychology and Counseling and Training Clinic: 903-593-2348

The Cope Foundation: www.copefoundation.org

Grief Camps for Kids: www.moyerfoundation.org/programs

WINGS was established through Hospice of East Texas in 1993 to help children navigate the grieving process. WINGS, “a comprehensive bereavement program that provides both emotional support and grief education,” offers a camp (Camp G – grief, grow and go forward) twice a year. For more information or to register for a grief support program, contact the Hospice of East Texas Bereavement Department at 903-206-3400 (Extension 127) or call 1-800-777-9860.

Group Meetings for Survivors of Trauma and Survivors of Suicide Loss, sponsored by Michael’s House of Hope at the New Life Worship Center, 18535 Hwy. 89 S., Tyler, room 620, Call Dr. Timothy M. Roddam at 903-681-3161 for more information. Survivors of Trauma meets the second Thursday of each month from 6-7 p.m.

We are happy to send our newsletter to you. We hope that it is helpful to you to be kept informed of chapter resources and activities and that you still wish to receive our newsletters that contain excellent material relating to grief issues.

To keep our mailing list current, we do ask to hear from you each year making sure that our information is correct and that you still wish to receive our mailings. If we did not hear from you in the last year please indicate any appropriate choices below and return the form to the address at the bottom of this page.

Your Name: __________________________ Relationship: __________________________

Child’s Name: __________________________ Relationship: __________________________

Birth Date: ________________ Death Date: ________________ Cause of Death: __________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________________________________

City: ______________________________________________________ State: ____________ Zip: ____________________

Home Telephone: ______________________________________________________________________________________

E-mail: ______________________________________________________________________________________________

Please check any of following that apply:

☑ Due to the rising cost of postage, please send newsletters via email. My email address is __________________________

☐ I prefer not to receive the newsletter via email and would like to continue having a hard copy sent to the mailing address you have on file for me.

☐ Please update my mailing address:

☐ No thank you, I’d prefer to stop receiving the newsletter. (Newsletters are posted monthly on our website.)

☐ Please include my child’s name and picture in the slide presentation at the Candle Lighting Ceremony.

☐ Please include my child’s picture and information on the TCF Tyler Web site. (www.TylerTCF.org)

☐ I am enclosing a memorial to support The Compassionate Friends in the amount of __________________________.

☐ In memory of __________________________ Please make check payable to TCF

☐ Please use this gift for: ☐ TCF Newsletter ☐ Butterfly Release ☐ Candle Lighting ☐ TCF Events

☐ The continuation of this chapter’s work depends on donations. If you have not taken the opportunity to give a donation in memory of your child please consider taking this time to give a gift that will help reach out to other newly bereaved parents.

☐ We must have your written permission on file to use your child’s name and/or picture in the newsletter, Web site, Candle Lighting Ceremony or any other TCF event. Permission may be withdrawn at any time by written request. This information is used to maintain our Chapter Database. It is confidential and is only utilized for Chapter activities such as the newsletter.

Date: __________________________

(Signature)

Please return completed form to: The Compassionate Friends of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711
We need not walk alone.

“My grief and pain are mine. I have earned them. They are part of me. Only in feeling them do I open myself to the lessons they can teach.”
—Anne Wilson Schaef

July Birthdays

July 1, 2015

Dear Zac,

Tomorrow is your birthday. You would have turned 21 years old. I imagine you would have gone to a bar and gotten very drunk to celebrate with some of your friends at UC Berkeley. I would have posted tons of pictures of you all over your Facebook page and bragged about how you are going to be a doctor someday. But none of those things happened, because you died eight months ago. You were at a Halloween Concert when you fell with “blunt force to the neck” as is states on your death certificate.

I’m reminded of the time when you were only seven years old and a very close friend of our family had moved away. Rob had been such an integral part of our family for so many years, there wasn’t a day that we didn’t see him. That is until he got married and moved several states away. We hadn’t heard from him in months when we got a letter and picture that he and his wife were expecting a baby. As I talked about it with your dad you blurted out “Rob’s dead.” Your dad and I laughed and tried to explain that he just moved away and that’s why we didn’t see him anymore. But your young mind just didn’t comprehend the distance—as it is today with my own mind. I still can’t comprehend that you’re gone.

It feels like a tremendous curse that I must continue to live day after day when all of your days are gone. The 7,241 days you were here on earth are now nothing more than a memory and all of the days that were yet to come. I loathe the fact that I will never attend your graduation at UC Berkeley, your wedding, or hug and kiss your children. I think the most difficult part is the conversations that go unspoken. I wish I could hear your voice again.

I’ve found some comfort in my Grief Share group and TCF. It’s helped me to function from one day to the next and process this chaos—somewhat. The most valuable piece of information is that I know my life will never be the same. It’s ironic how that’s the same exact truth that resonated the day you were born.

My life would never be the same.

I love you Zac. There isn’t a day that goes by that I don’t think of you.

Love Mamas

Cristal Rodriguez-Stowe, TCF Tyler, TX

The Dream

You came to me this morning in a dream just before I woke. I recognized you as you turned the corner. I looked at you; waiting for the transience of dream forms and saw it was not to be. You stayed together, the same age, with the same smile.

We both knew this was just a visit. You and I both knew this was special. We both knew that my dream was where our two worlds could meet.

I looked at you waiting for the transition, waiting for the change but it did not come. This dream was not of my own making but was shared by you and inhabited by you.

I kissed your cheek and felt your skin and felt my arm around your neck. But that’s where it ended. I closed my eyes and felt the distance grow as I rose to awareness and you retreated to longing.

June O’Connor, TCF Central Connecticut Chapter

Continued on next page
We need not walk alone.

“I knew that...the full acceptance of the finality of loss, and all the pain that goes with it, need not diminish life but could give it a new quality of fulfillment. I also knew that this could not be achieved without going through the agonies of grief and mourning.” —Lily Pincus

July Anniversaries Cont.

Erika Reyes
Sara Ann Piocheck
Shiloh Paisleigh Gray
Jamie Allen
George Washington Shaw, III
Shanna Marie Redmond
Michael Knight
Jason Bollard
Trey Dobbs
Kathy Jo Tumminello
Brian St. Clair
Ryan Delaney
Adam Grabill
Brian Christopher Harris
Christopher Andrews
Grant Williams
Gregory Davis, Jr.
Coby Deese
Herby Parr
Kody Dale Hughes
Lance Alan Massey
Scott Bradshaw
Graham Gill
Ke’Andre Ross
Justin Turbeville
Aceyn Richards
Ashley King
Keith Radabaugh
Megan Parrish
Joshua McDaniel
Brian McDaniel
Kayla Denise Wager
Linton Daniel Wilgus

To Cope and to Move Forward

As a newly bereaved parent, I had a need to tell my story, to talk about my son, Tom, and to describe my grief journey over and over again, to anyone who would listen. I was fortunate at that time to have people in my life who were willing to listen to me. However, I also found myself sometimes opening up to perfect strangers. For whatever reason, there were times when I could not contain myself, almost as if I had to prove to the whole world that Tom existed. Sometimes those conversations would lead to a story about Christopher, my twin son who died at three days old, three years before Tom died, and to the two miscarriages I experienced.

I learned through The Compassionate Friends meetings that not everyone feels comfortable in talking about their situations. Some bereaved parents are concerned about stopping conversations or about making others feel awkward if they share their story about their child who died, and I suppose that is their risk. However, what I found was that if I took the initiative and talked about my child and my situation, then it somehow gave others permission to talk about Tom, too, and that was comforting to me. It also seemed to increase the awareness and the understanding of those around me as to what I was experiencing as a bereaved parent.

This July will mark the tenth anniversary of Tom’s death. I recognize now that I don’t have that same urgent need to tell my story as I did in the early years. However, there are occasions when I am in social situations with unfamiliar people when the conversation turns to children, including the “How many?” and “How old?” questions, and just like in the early years, I cannot contain myself. I find myself opening up about Tom and Christopher and my journey since their deaths. Sometimes when I hear myself describe that part of my life, I wonder how I ever survived. However, what I have primarily discovered is that more people welcome my story and my openness than are offended by it. I have learned that by sharing that part of my life, others in turn begin to share their pain and their hardships, or arrive at a better understanding about someone they know who is suffering because of the loss of a child or a sibling. It has become obvious to me that hardly anyone goes through life unscathed, and that for most people, life is not fair. However, by sharing our burdens, we do learn to cope and to move forward.

This we owe our beloved dead, whether young or old: to wipe from our memories all that was less than their best, and to carry them in our hearts at their best.

We need not walk alone.

—Elizabeth Watson

—Lily Pincus

Thanks for your donations and continued support of TCF of Tyler.

In loving memory of
Ijuan Simms by James Simm (James went to be with his son in April 2016. Rest in peace, James)

In loving memory of
Zac Bradley by Cristal Stowe

In loving memory of
Christopher Molnari by Amy Molnari

In loving memory of
Trish Fry by Dana Fry

In loving memory of
“Missy” Rogers by Cece & Dan Brotton

In loving memory of
Andy Terrell by David & Teresa Terrell

In loving memory of
Chris O’Leary by Merri Walsh

In loving memory of
Leah Zucca by Jim & Cheri Zucca

In loving memory of
Chad Cavazos by Dale Cavazos

In loving memory of
Christopher Loper by Tina Loper

In loving memory of
Jared Sheets by Carol & Shane Johnson

In loving memory of
Stephanie Settle by Danny & Pat Settle

Carmen, Chapter Leader, TCF North Shore, Boston, MA

The Compassionate Friends

Tyler, Texas
"We need not walk alone."

**You Are My Sunshine**

As a child, I learned to sing on road trips in the family car. We sang “She'll be Coming ‘Round the Mountain”, “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” and my favorite: You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. You make my happy when skies are gray. You’ll never know, dear, how much I love you. Please, don’t take my sunshine away.

Since my son’s death, whenever I hear this song, I mentally change the spelling to ‘son-shine.’ When he left, skies surely turned gray. Gray skies continue to visit me in random moments of grief to the point that at times, it’s impossible to see the sun. And when summer brings sunny days, it breaks my heart that he can’t be here with me to light up my life.

Grief enhances our senses so that the absence of light allows us to perceive our need for light. A good example came one dark and dismal day as I sat reading, a part of me dwelling on my missing child. Ever so softly, warmth crept across my outstretched leg. I shot a glance in its direction and discovered a stream of golden sunshine. In my preoccupation, I hadn’t noticed the parting clouds outside—the transformation that brief moment when ‘son-shine’ paid an unexpected visit. What a blessed gift it is to remember my child with joy.

I push off my chair and open my bedroom window to let the sunshine in. I shut my eyes and let in the sound of the birds, the breath of the breeze. A sliver of the sun makes its way onto my face, a moment of comfort and peace.

Lack of light causes a condition called Seasonal Affective Disorder. SAD doesn’t occur only in the dark winter months. If you work the night shift or you spend all day in an office, wear sunglasses outside, spend your days off in a dimly lit home you may not be getting adequate light. There’s a scientific reason that a sunny day brings some joy and energy to our lives. Bright light makes a difference to the brain chemistry.

**July Birthdays Cont.**

Lambeth

McLean

"Jimmy" Brazell

Ben Smith

Lisa Marie Tutt

Chandler James

“Jimmy” Brazell

James E. Abbie, Jr.

Andrew Moreno

Allison Carson

Brian David Stewart

Missy Rogers

Chasen Shirley

Winifred Willford

Jason Eubank

Ryan Goff

Colton James Bain

Keisha Knauss

Travis Morris

Angela Frazier

Suzanne Renee’ Glover

Sheila Nolen

Jasmine Pruitt

Brevon McCarty

Zachary Bradley

James Rawls

Joshua Baker

Ke’Andre Ross

Renee Seale

Caleb Scott Jones

James Permenter

Matt Mears

Walter Date “Skipper” Winningham

Christopher Mize

Lisa Marie Tutt

Chandler James

James E. Abbie, Jr.

Dex Bailey McLean

Morgan Finley Lambeth

Ben Smith

Andrew Moreno

Allison Carson

Brian David Stewart

Missy Rogers

Chasen Shirley

Timothy Allen Hawkins

*Continued on next page.*

- Richard Edler

---Deborah Morris Coryell

This month’s printing of our newsletter sponsored by Barbara Barton.
We need not walk alone.

Your Compassionate Friend

I can tell by that look, friend, that you need to talk. So come take my hand and let's go for a walk. See, I'm not like the others—I won't shy away. Because I want to hear what you've got to say. Your child has died and you need to be heard. But they don't want to hear a single word. They tell you your child's "with God," so be strong. They say all the "right" things that somehow seem wrong.

They're just hurting for you and trying to say, They'd give anything to help take your pain away. But they're struggling with feelings they can't understand. So forgive them for not offering a helping hand. I'll walk in your shoes for more than a mile. I'll wait while you cry and be glad if you smile. I won't criticize you or judge you or scorn. I'll just stay and listen 'til your night turns to mor. Yes, the journey is hard and unbearably long. And I know that you think that you're not quite that strong. So just take my hand 'cause I've got time to spare, And I know how it hurts, friend, for I have been there. See, I owe a debt you can help me repay. For not long ago, I was helped the same way. As I stumbled and fell thru a world so unreal, So believe when I say that I know how you feel. I don't look for praise or financial gain, I'm just a strong shoulder who'll be there 'til the end— I'll be your Compassionate Friend.

Steven L. Channing, TCF Winnipeg, Canada

STANDING

People say "Oh you are doing so well, you are so strong, you are an inspiration!"

We do not feel strong. We feel shaken to the core. Saddened beyond belief. Pain beyond comprehension. Forever changed.

What do they see that we can not see?

"That a horrible storm, unexpectedly ripped through our lives and we are still standing"

They are amazed We are paralyzed Still Standing

In Loving Memory of Kyra, Julie Short, TCF SE, IL

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 choose to go worth 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 guilt. 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, NY

Newly Bereaved . . . Burden of Grief

As I struggle with words to find answers Reading and writing my pain The pages grow blurred before eyes that are tired From this crushing emotional chain. The relief that comes from the writing Parallels what I feel when I read— To open myself to the torture of loss Seems to soothe this unbearable need. There's no pleasure in life at this moment It's an effort to get through the day And I labor to stay above water... But the shoreline is so far away. So I pick up a pen or a book about grief And it serves as a raft for a while. And I hope, as my tears fall on pages of pain That I'll learn once again how to smile. As I swim toward the shore of acceptance I pray for the peace of belief That heaven's your home and you're waiting for me Then I'll finally be free of this grief.

Sally Migliaccio, TCF Babylon, NY

Love Gifts

Thanks to the following people who make a MONTHLY LOVE GIFT to TCF of Tyler:

- Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O'Leary - rent
- Carol & Shane Johnson in memory of Jared Sheets - rent
- Danny & Pat Settle in memory of Stephanie - rent
- Jim & Cherri Zucca in memory of Leah - rent
- Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad - newsletter
- Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper in memory of Christopher - TCF Phone
- David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy - use of a storage building

See more love gifts on page 7.

Newsletter Submissions

TCF Tyler welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to: The Compassionate Friends of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, Texas 75711. Or e-mail text and photos to: info@TylerTCF.org. We reserve the right to edit for space and/or content.

Deadline for submissions is the 5th of each month. TCF of Tyler reserves the right to publish only articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos.

Errors and Omissions: We try very hard to be sure that all of our publications are correct. However, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of all information.

We need not walk alone.

“Romance fails us and so do friendships, but the relationship of parent and child, less noisy than all others, remains indestructible, the strongest relationship on earth.” —Theodore Bikel (1888-1998)

Announcements

Tyler TCF Meeting: The meeting in Tyler is held on the third Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at 1901 Rickety Lane in Tyler. For more information, please call 903-258-2547.

Steering Committee Meeting: If you are interested in participating in our chapter by serving on the steering committee, please plan to attend a steering committee meeting. Anyone who would like to become more involved in TCF and serve on the steering committee is welcome to come! For more information about our next meeting, call 903-258-2547.


Sixth and Final Quilt

We are compiling names and photos for the 6th and final quilt. Please mail your $25 donation for a square, child's name, and make sure we have a quality picture of your child that will show up well. This will be the last quilt for our chapter so please let us know quickly as we anticipate the list of 30 will fill up fast. David and Teresa Terrell have generously donated their time and talent for the completed quilts and are no longer able to physically continue. You can mail your donation to TCF Tyler PO Box 9714 Tyler Texas 75711, please note on your check what it is for. Photos or questions can be emailed to info@TylerTCF.org.

Summer Book Club for Moms Who Have Lost a Child

Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. beginning June 4th, 2016 at the Children's Park in Tyler. For details, contact Cristal Slowe at Cristalslowe@gmail.com or call 903-262-2016.

Find us on Facebook!

We find strength in the family of friends we create through the forced separation.” —Thomas Attig

In Loving Memory of Kyra, Julie Short, TCF SE, IL

The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends

3 Tyler, Texas

10 Tyler, Texas

3 Tyler, Texas