



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



We need not walk alone.

Volume 11, Issue 4

Tyler, Texas

April 2010

Monthly Group Meeting

Tyler Area Meeting

Monday, April 19, 6:30 p.m. Bridging The Gap, 12872 Hwy. 155 S.

Jacksonville Meeting

Tuesday, April 6, 6:30 p.m. Sam Smith's office, 1401 E. Rusk

Lufkin Meeting

Thursday, April 15, 6:30 p.m. Southside Baptist Church, 1615 Tulane Drive

Contact

Phone: (903) 258-2547

www.TylerTCF.org • info@TylerTCF.org
P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

We will be holding our 7th Annual Butterfly Release on May 15 at 1 p.m. at the First Baptist Church south campus, 2813 and Hwy. 69 W.

We are personalizing wood butterflies for an additional charge again this year. If you want a butterfly designed specifically for your child, please let us know. Football, baseball, softball, cheerleading, dance, military, etc., are a few of the designs available. Personalized butterflies are \$20 and need to be paid for in advance. Live Monarch butterflies are available for \$10 each. If you are interested in donating refreshments this year, or would like to help with the set up in loving memory of your child, please contact us at (903) 258-2547.



Chapter LeaderTina Loper
Chapter Leader.....Pat Settle
Newsletter/Web SiteMary Lingle
Steering Committee: Sam Smith,
Carol Johnson, Carol Thompson,
Patricia Miller, Charisse Smith, Mary
Ann Girard, Cheri Zucca, Mary Lingle,
David & Teresa Terrell, Janet Majors,
Don & Leslie Dixon, Kathy McKinney

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	2
Self Help	2
Love Gifts/Announcements	3
Birthdays	4
Anniversaries	5
What Does Time Have to do With Grief?	6
After Some Time... ..	6
A Siblings View... ..	7
Spring Comes Once More	7
Butterfly Order Form	8

Photos from Previous Butterfly Releases



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.



We need not walk alone.

“You don't heal from the loss of a loved one because time passes; You heal because of what you do with the time.” —Carol Crandall

Welcome

We extend a warm welcome to those who attended their 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 to 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.”

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 M.B. ~ TCF, Katy, TX
In Memory of her son, Todd, July 24, 2005

Please share your stories, poems or love messages for inclusion in our newsletter.

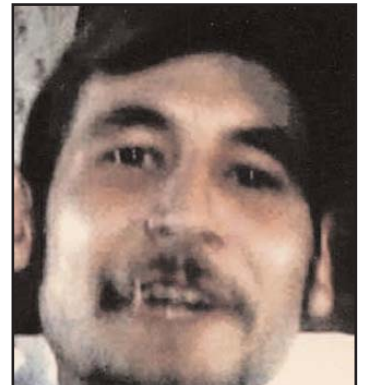
In Loving Memory of Tim Minatrea

A dear member of the TCF family went to be with his beloved daughter, Tasha, February 23, 2010. Our thoughts are with Tim's family and friends.



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Shirley Hall.

**In loving memory of
James Permenter
4-2 ~ 7-12
son of
Shirley Hall**



Call (903) 258-2547 to sponsor a monthly newsletter.



We need not walk alone.

“The healing began when a friend embraced me, leaving some of his tears on my cheek.” —Author unknown

Love Gifts



Muriel Rogers in memory of Karen Lowe & Felicia Hobb

Lisa Schoonover donated in memory of Jake

Lisa Dunford in memory of Jonathan Sanders

Dolly Mobley in memory of Shannon Scheffler & Shane Crim

Claudette Brown in memory of Terry Wayne

Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad



Special Thanks!

Thanks to Janet Majors, Mary Delaney and Patricia Miller for working a table for TCF at the Extreme Community Fest on March 6.

Thanks to Carol Thompson, Carol Johnson, Patricia Miller and Tina Loper for helping with the assembly of last month's newsletter.

Thanks to the following people who make a monthly contribution to TCF of Tyler:

Claudette Brown in memory of Terry Wayne, Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad, Sam Smith in memory of Stacey - use of his office for the Jacksonville meeting, Bridging The Gap Ministries - Tyler meeting location, David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy - use of a storage building

Newsletter Submissions

TCF Tyler welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to: TCF Tyler, 5401 Hollytree Drive, 1204, Tyler, Texas 75703. 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 Chapters may copy articles from this publication provided credit is given to the author and the original source. Errors and Omissions: Please notify us if any of your information is incorrect.

Email Addresses: If we do not have your email address or it has changed, please email it to Tina or Pat so that we may email you announcements and updates about TCF of Tyler. Tina's email: butterfly6@nctv.com ~ Pat's email: pdsettle@wmconnect.com

Announcements

We will be holding our 7th Annual Butterfly Release on May 15. We are personalizing wood butterflies for an additional charge again this year. If you want a butterfly designed specifically for your child, please let us know. Football, baseball, softball, cheerleading, dance, military, etc., are a few of the designs available. Personalized butterflies are \$20 and need to be paid for in advance. Live Monarch butterflies are available for \$10 each. You must place your order and pre-pay by May 8. If you are interested in donating refreshments this year, or would like to help with the set up in loving memory of your child, please contact us at info@tylertcf.org, or call (903) 258-2547. (See order form in this newsletter or find it online at www.tylertcf.org)

Jacksonville TCF Meeting: The meeting in Jacksonville is held on the first Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at Sam Smith's office, 1401 E. Rusk, Jacksonville. For more information, please email pdsettle@wmconnect.com or butterfly6@nctv.com, or call 903-258-2547.

Lufkin TCF Meeting: Join us at the Lufkin meeting held at 6:30 p.m. every 3rd Thursday of the month at Southside Baptist Church, 1615 Tulane Drive, Lufkin, TX 75901. For more information, contact Lauri Maner at 936-854-2002 or Sherri Tutt at 936-404-9517.

The Touched by Suicide meeting is held the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The meeting is held at the East Texas Center for Independent Living, located at 4713 Troup Hwy, Tyler, in the Highland shopping center. Anyone who has lost someone they love to suicide is welcome to attend this peer support group. Note that it is not the proper forum for those who have attempted suicide and survived. For more information please call 903-574-3127.

Steering Committee: If you are interested in participating in our chapter by serving on the steering committee, please plan to attend a steering committee meeting in 2010. The dates of the remaining meetings are as follows: May 3rd, August 9th, October 4th and November 8th.

General Assembly: Join us each month to assemble the newsletter and mail out cards. We hope to get some new volunteers to help with this monthly project. Call 903-258-2547 for details.

Bonfire Sept. 2010: We will hold our 3rd Annual Bonfire at Carol Johnson's on September 25. More details later.

If you would like to buy a copy of the documentary, *Motherland*, on DVD, we have it available for \$20. Visit www.motherland-thefilm.org for information on this very inspiring film, and call 903-258-2547 to buy your copy.





We need not walk alone.

"Grief is a great teacher when it sends us back to serve and bless the living. We learn how to counsel and comfort those who, like ourselves, are bowed with sorrow. We learn when to keep silent in their presence, and when a word will assure them of our love and concern." —*Gates of Prayer, Reform Judaism Prayer Book*

April Birthdays



Matthew Thomas Crooks
4-17 ~ 12-24
Son of Sylvia Crooks



Jarren Moser
4-28 ~ 5-31
Son of
Robert & Misty Hendrickson



Jeremy Newman
4-15 ~ 1-10
Son of Victor & Margie Newman



Timothy Treadwell
4-1 ~ 11-23
Son of Tammy Treadwell



Christopher Loper
4-28 ~ 12-21
Son of Tina Loper



John Patrick Carnahan
4-17 ~ 10-13
Son of Rod &
Shirley Carnahan



Brady Bryant
4-30 ~ 5-2
Son of Windy &
Bradley Bryant



Brian St. Clair
4-24 ~ 7-26
Son of Janet St. Clair



Tim Cole
4-15 ~ 9-15
Son of Mary Miller



Kaila McKinsey Payne
4-6 ~ 5-28
Daughter of Keith Payne



James Permenter
4-2 ~ 7-12
Son of Shirley Hall



Ricky Edmiston
4-26 ~ 6-29
Son of Woody & Barbara
Edmiston



James Lee Lary, II
4-20 ~ 10-30
Son of Elgin L. Lary, Sr.
& Ann Lary



Cheryl Cook
4-25 ~ 12-10
Daughter of
Connie Graebner



Kathy Robertson
4-23 ~ 10-23
Daughter of
Carolyn Love



Margie Starkey
4-30 ~ 12-3
Daughter of Betty Abbie



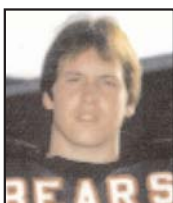
Russell McGilvray
4-15 ~ 4-29
Son of
Fran McGilvray



Herby Parr
4-19 ~ 7-30
Son of Sandy &
Herbert Parr



Allen Price
4-11 ~ 3-29
Son of Deborah &
Floyd Holcomb



Christopher Baggett
4-23 ~ 1-8
Son of Anita Demby



Joe Maland
4-2 ~ 8-17
Son of MaryAnn Girard
Son of Dave & Jeanelle Maland



Jeremy Kersh
4-30 ~ 3-25
Son of
Brad & Debbie Kersh



Joshua Walker
4-29 ~ 6-25
Son of
Crystal Walker





We need not walk alone.

"For you, I hold out the hope that soon your days will be just a bit better, your sorrow a little lighter, your tears healing, your friends strengthening and your memories filled more with the good times and less with the unhappiness of your grief." —Dory Rooker

April Anniversaries



Sarah Harvey
12-12 ~ 4-26
Daughter of
Brian Harvey & Lisa Kirley



Jill Tompkins
11-3 ~ 4-24
Daughter of Karen Tompkins



Stephanie Carol Hester
5-9 ~ 4-2
Daughter of
Troy & Glenna Nicolls



Bobby Knott
11-6 ~ 4-24
Son of
Bobby & Virginia Knott



Shane McDade
2-17 ~ 4-12
Son of Lajeania Culligan



Jeremy Mark Lawler
10-25 ~ 4-19
Son of Mark & Sue Lawler



Chad Cavazos
9-24 ~ 4-20
Son of Phyllis & Dale Cavazos



Kody Maner
2-10 ~ 4-16
Son of Lauri Maner



Quinn Martin Muirhead
8-12 ~ 4-30
Son of Alice Fiedler



Christal Murphy
8-14 ~ 4-22
Daughter of Debbie Johnson



Deanna Holcomb
3-31 ~ 4-19
Daughter of Pat Smith



Joshua Carl Tucker
5-17 ~ 4-15
Son of Judy C. Googins



Lindsey Stewart
11-6 ~ 4-2
Daughter of Stephanie Stewart



Ron Mitchum
8-3 ~ 4-15
Son of Glenda Mitchum



Russell McGilvray
4-15 ~ 4-29
Son of Fran McGilvray



Jamye Marie Crawford
3-10 ~ 4-12
Daughter of
Judy & Robbie Crawford



Zackery Browne
12-14 ~ 4-13
Son of
Tim & Kay Browne



Heath Hopson
12-8 ~ 4-23
Son of Karen Hopson



Kristi Diaz
11-7 ~ 4-7
Daughter of Julie Diaz



Ashley Allison
8-3 ~ 4-12
Daughter of
Roger & Robin Allison



Shanette Bland
8-9 ~ 4-26
Daughter of
Clarence Thomas





We need not walk alone.

“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.”

—Wilfred A. Peterson

What Does Time Have to do With Grief?

Everything. Time is precious to us. We live in a society that reminds us that every moment counts, and some of us are masters at cramming as much activity as possible into every moment. And when we are grieving, our experience still has much to do about time.

Time stands still. When we are grieving we may feel like the rest of the world is going on as usual while our life has stopped.

Time's up. Most people will allow us about a one-month grace period where we are permitted to talk about our loss and even to cry openly. We may be surprised how many of our friends (and relatives too) will become uncomfortable with our need to dwell on our sorrow.

Doing time. Grief may make us feel imprisoned in our own version of hell. We won't like it that our loved one has gone. We won't like it that our friends can't make us feel better. We just want out of here.

Wasting time. Though in real life I pride myself in being a master at multitasking, in the land of grief I'm much less sure of myself. I admit, quite frankly, that I'm not sure I even care enough about anything to make the effort. What's the use, since it seems like everything I love sooner or later gets taken away from me.

Looking back in time. When we grieve we spend most of our time, at least at first, looking back. It seems safer that way. That's where our missing loved ones are. If we were to look forward, that would mean we would have to imagine our lives without those we have lost.

First times. It is natural for us to gauge our life after a loss as we anticipate and then go through the first times — first day, the first week, the first month, the first time we venture out in public, the first vacation, the first time we laughed. The first times are like benchmarks, notches in our belt that prove we are surviving when we weren't sure we wanted to, or didn't know we could.

Dinner time. There's an empty chair at the table. There's the conversation that seems to be just noise, having little to do with the absent one about whom we are all thinking not daring to speak.

Time out. Sometimes what we need to do is to take a time out from our regular activities to reflect on what has happened to our personal world, as we knew it before our great loss. To do so is not to run away from life, but simply to realize that to act as if nothing happened doesn't work.

Time heals what reason cannot. In the end, time will change things. The intensity we experience when grief is new, where we can see nothing but our loss and where every moment is filled with thoughts of the one who died, will gradually diminish and become softer. Time forces the big picture of life back into our vision whether we like it or not.

Time is a gift that we have taken for granted. We've been given our lives one moment at a time. This is good.

From www.griefwatch.com

After Some Time—It Is Still Okay To Cry

It seems to be acceptable to go for counseling or therapy during the early months of grief. But what happens after a certain amount of time has passed and you feel yourself being "ambushed" by the first raw feelings of grief? Most people think you should just "buck up" and look around you and count the blessings you have left. These are worthy and meritorious attitudes, but sometimes they are simply unattainable, at least for a little while. We have lost MUCH when we lost our child. Sometimes we have to remind ourselves that it is okay to relapse, that there is nothing wrong with us when we feel alone and sad, that there is no shame in backtracking to the dark recesses of grief, for it is in those times when we give way to the hurt and pain that we acknowledge how MUCH our child continues to matter to us. We sometimes have to allow ourselves "space" to be sad and permission to cry over the simple sadness of no longer having our child with us. They MATTERED to us. They still do. WE CONTINUE to remember them, to love them, and to miss them. "IT IS STILL OKAY TO CRY." May each of you weep tears of release for the child you so deeply continue to love and miss.

Faye M. ~ TCF, Jackson, MS, in Memory of Lane





We need not walk alone.

"If we could hear them right now, they would be saying "LIVE, for life is but a moment," "LOVE, for that is what really matters," and "go on, for we shall be together again some day." —*Mary Ann Lambden*

A Sibling's View—I'm Still Here

Laura Wexler, writer & assistant editor of "George" Magazine, wrote this article four years after the death of her sister Rachel.

At first "I'm still here" was the mantra I chanted inside my head, chiding myself for sadness, urging myself that, unlike Rachel, I was still living and must not be sad, must not miss a moment of time or anything else precious. Months later, unable to contain my grief, I said I'm still here as if I were the only one of my tribe to escape slaughter and wandering plains alone. I wanted to die. Not because I hate life, but because I wanted to see Rachel.

Many times my parents, washed in grief, looked at me through salt water, saying "You're still here. You're all we have left." Those words weighed heavily upon me, made me feel too loved, too lucky. And they made Rachel feel too gone. But, just as many times I wanted to shake my parents out of depression and back into life before Rachel's death, saying, "I'm still here. Don't you leave me, too."

For almost a year after Rachel died, I didn't say her name out loud. The sound of R and the A and the I felt foreign on my tongue. Later, when I joined a support group, the facilitator noted that I never said Rachel's name. It just hurt too much. And if I'd had my choice, I would have asked my parents not to say Rachel's name either. Any instance we now used her name was unhappy.

Talking about family or home or anything in my past was terrifying for me. Sometimes, as I told my story or recounted a memory, I said, "we" instead of "I." Pretty soon, though, I got the hang of checking over everything in my head before I opened my mouth. The thing is, though, if you tell a lie enough times, you start to forget the truth you're trying to cover up in the first place. I started to feel my memory blurring and that frightened me. Memory was my only link to Rachel.

I ask myself why I have such trouble talking about Rachel's death or even her life, and come up with a couple of things. I really believe no one understands my particular pain, the things I've lost, tangible and intangible, since Rachel's death. The only person that knows exactly how I feel is dead.

It's hard to worry about your own grief when your parents are not parental anymore. My mother, who probably told me when to take my first breath and how long it would last, abruptly withdrew from being an overbearing presence in my life. She never left me completely, but there were enough times when she'd look down at her feet and say quietly, "Laura, I just can't take this right now. I'm lucky if I can get up in the morning." Just as I wanted my old self, my old world back, I wanted a mother I could fight with.

My father sits at the head of the table, head bent to his chest, and pulls his glasses off to sob freely. This idea that you should be able to protect and comfort and be there for your parents even more than for yourself is particular to people on the brink of adulthood. Like me. In other words, if I were 12 or 13, few people would expect me to assume a parental role. But as I was 18, it was apparently okay for people to continually ask, "How are your parents doing? Are you helping them as much as you can?" I felt guilty enough being alive. And then to have people insinuate that my main function in life thereafter was to be a comfort to my parents made me feel worse. Because I honestly didn't see that my parents were remarkably comforted by me. They were sad when I was there and when I wasn't. And I couldn't do a thing about it.

Spring Comes Once More

In the first years of our bereavement, spring is often a painful time of year. Nature reminds us of rebirth when we are not yet ready for it. Easter arrives with its religious significance for those of us who are religious. Despite the fact that nature is giving us signals of renewed life, we don't feel renewed and are uncertain that we ever shall again. The flowers, the dogwoods, the blooming shrubs remind us of the fact our child cannot experience the beauty, and we are sad. However, believe me, a time will come when we again will feel the stirring of happiness at warm days and green grass and the bursting forth of buds. Then spring will seem a promise that love, experienced as we have known it without our child, never goes away, is always there, even when our child is not. The cycles of nature will be a reassurance that as the earth experiences its ups and downs, so will we—that is natural. Laughter will come, and lethargy, and joy, and tears, but changes will take place, just as the earth experiences them and we will move forward or backward as we can, carrying the love for our child with us. Love does not die, cannot be buried and continues just as the changing seasons do.

Elizabeth E. ~ TCF, Green Bay, WI



For A Personalized Butterfly Sign (\$20)

Please give us an idea of what you would like for your child's personalized butterfly to be.

Child's name: _____

Parent's name: _____

Contact information: _____

Here are some ideas:

Favorite color: _____

Favorite activity or hobby: _____

Favorite food: _____

School mascot or sport: _____

School activity: _____

Bible verse: _____

Favorite saying or poem: _____

Favorite expression: _____

Nickname: _____

Other thoughts: (please include your child's name, birthday and anniversary date)

Thank you! We look forward to seeing you at this year's TCF Butterfly Release. It's always held on the third Saturday in May.

Mail your \$20 check with this form to: **TCF of Tyler • P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711**
The Compassionate Friends, Tyler, TX • 903-258-2547 • www.tylertcf.org

The Compassionate Friends of Tyler

P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, TX 75711

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: _____

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.

Please continue sending the newsletter.

No thank you, I'd prefer to stop receiving the newsletter. (Newsletters are posted monthly on our Web site.)

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 _____
Please make check payable to TCF

In memory of _____

Please use this gift for:

TCF Newsletter Butterfly Release Candle Lighting TCF Events Other _____

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.

(Signature) Date: _____

Please return completed form to: The Compassionate Friends of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711



"I don't think you ever stop giving. I really don't. I think it's an on-going process. And it's not just about being able to write a check. It's being able to touch somebody's life." —Oprah Winfrey



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, Texas 75711



We need not walk alone.



www.TylerTCF.org