



**Monthly Group Meeting**

Tuesday, November 15, 6:30 p.m.  
707 W. Houston St., Tyler, Texas

**Contact**

Phone: (903) 258-2547  
Web Site: [www.TylerTCF.org](http://www.TylerTCF.org)  
E-mail: [info@TylerTCF.org](mailto:info@TylerTCF.org)  
Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

Chapter Leader .....Tina Loper  
Chapter Co-Leader.....Pat Settle  
Newsletter/Web Site .....Mary Lingle  
Steering Committee: Tina Loper,  
Pat Settle, Sam Smith, Sherri Tutt  
Margie Newman, Mary Lingle

TCF National Organization  
Toll Free: (877) 969-0010  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

**The Meeting Agenda**

6:30 p.m. ....  
Meeting will begin with refreshments followed by announcement of birth-days 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  
One .....2  
After October .....2  
Love Gifts/Announcements .....3  
Memorial Quilt .....3  
First Thanksgiving .....3  
Birthdays/Anniversaries .....4  
Butterflies in November .....5

**Thanksgiving**

You may ask, "What do I have to be thankful for now that my child is dead?" After the death of a child, where is the joy in a day off from work? What pleasure can we derive from sitting around a table when someone is missing, and an uttered prayer of thanksgiving echoes hollow in our hearts?

Maybe we have been concentrating on the loss which has brought the overwhelming sorrow of death, and have forgotten the complete joy of life. When I remember laughing brown eyes, a mischievous grin, a scraped knee that Mommy could fix, a new word learned, even the memory of the realization that I had a baby boy, I have a great deal to be thankful for. I had 1 1/2 years of a dream come true, and I'm truly thankful I had my child.

Sure, the agony of grief, the anguish of losing my precious child to death, the torture of wanting to see that child grow and mature and the pain of never knowing, rips me up.

There is no Thanksgiving in entertaining these thoughts, so this month I am going to concentrate on the Living of my child, The Life that brought me so much joy. In this I am thankful that Evan was born, thankful that he lived, thankful that even for those short 30 months—I lived them too. Even so, as he lived once, I live now and want a productive life.

I am thankful I have come that far in my grief work to know I want to live and remember the good times without sorrow. And, I am thankful for my husband, who stood by me during the rough times. The husband who is the father of the child of our love. In him I have found my child, in our marriage I have found love, and that love taught us how to love that child. I am also thankful for you, my real friends—Compassionate Friends.

*Eddie Kaplan ~ TCF, Ft. Lauderdale, FL*

**The Broken Chain**

In memory of Christopher Pope  
Brenda Pope ~ TCF, Tyler, TX

We little knew that God was going to call your name. In life we loved you dearly, in death we do the same.

It broke our hearts to lose you, you did not go alone, for part of us went with you, the day God called you home.

You left us peaceful memories, your love is still our guide; and though we cannot see you, you are always at our side.

Our family chain is broken, and nothing seems the same, but as God calls us one by one, the Chain will link again.

*Author Unknown*



**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.*

"The dreams of lifetimes die when children die. The hurt is often nearly unbearable. But if we allow ourselves the freedom of grief and sorrow, we also open the paths of new happiness and new hopes and new dreams. And the child who was a part of us will live in our memories and our hearts." —from *We Need Not Walk Alone*

## 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 (always the third Tuesday 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.”

## One

It was only 1 second, *one* thought, *one* decision, *one* action in a lifetime of seconds, and thoughts, and decisions, and actions. It was so fast, so permanent, so irreversible, so hopeless. This moment, this thought, this decision, this action do not define him, do not honor him, do not immortalize him. It is the preceding 946,080,000 seconds, and thoughts, and decisions, and actions that define him, that honor him, that immortalize him.

I remember my brother in all of the other seconds, and thoughts, and decisions, and actions that preceded this *one*. I remember him coming home from the hospital, lip syncing in the basement, falling out of the tree, biking across campus, coming home from school, from boot camp, from war. I remember him hiking, and skiing, and running, and laughing, and crying. I remember how safe I always felt when he was around. I knew he would take care, protect, defend.

I don't remember exactly when my brother became an amazing human being—I just looked at him one day and knew he was. I knew that nothing would make him change his mind about me. He was without judgment, without prejudice, without preconception. I knew my brother because we talked and he listened. I respected my brother most for his humanity—for being so sensitive, so vulnerable, so honest. I loved my brother for sharing the load when it was too hard for someone he loved to carry alone. I knew my brother because he left so much of him in me.

I trusted and respected my brother's decisions in the preceding 946,080,000 seconds, I have to trust and respect this *one* decision the same. I honor my brother by honoring myself. I do not dwell in that *one* moment, instead I celebrate and cherish all of the others. In that 1 second, *one* thought, *one* decision, *one* action, I found the strength he had given me and I will not let him down. I will not let that *one* moment be the only *one*.

*Michele Mallory*

## After October

and if there be a perfect month,  
for me, it is October . . .  
with days and nights like laughing fauns,  
with mornings bright and sober.  
when wind will dance in sudden glee  
to do the autumn-sweeping  
or cloud and fog and wistful rain  
can move a heart to weeping.  
and in October you were born,  
four days before November...  
and four years later you were gone,  
my little son, my only son,  
I love you.  
and remember . . .

*sascha*



*We need not walk alone.*

"The way I look at it, if you get comfort from a dream or a sign...enjoy it. You've suffered enough, and believing in signs, butterflies, dreams or what ever else gives you comfort and hurts no one else, is your right as a bereaved person."  
—Lynn Vines



### Love Gifts

David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy

Victor & Margie Newman in memory of Jeremy

Danny, Pat & Stephen Settle in memory of Stephanie

Tina Loper in memory of Christopher

Mary & Erin Lingle in memory of Candice

Brenda Pope in memory of Christopher

Mary Delaney in memory of Ryan

Douglas & Shelly Johnson in memory of Douglas, Jr.

Charlotte Nelson in memory of Wade Goetze

**Thanks to David & Teresa Terrell for donating the use of a storage building for TCF of Tyler.**



### Announcements

Hospice of East Texas will be offering **WINGS CHILDREN'S GRIEF WORKSHOP** on Saturday, November 12, from 10:00 a.m.-1:30 pm.

**We are collecting non-perishables to donate to the hurricane victims.** Please bring items to the meeting or contact us at (903) 258-2547 or (903) 780-7104 if you would like to help.

**The Compassionate Friends of Tyler has a new meeting location!** We will be meeting at 707 W. Houston St. The new TCF phone number is (903) 258-2547.

**November:** Lacks Furniture Christmas Tree and Canned Food Drive; **December 11:** World Wide Candle Lighting

### Newsletter Submissions

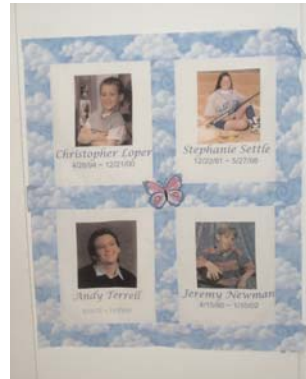
TCF Tyler welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to:

TCF Tyler • 5401 Hollytree Drive, 1204 • Tyler, Texas 75703  
Or e-mail text and photos to: [info@TylerTCF.org](mailto:info@TylerTCF.org)

We reserve the right to edit for space and/or content. Deadline for submissions is the 3rd Tuesday 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.

### TCF of Tyler Memorial Quilt



If you would like to have your child's photo included on our memorial quilt, please mail a \$25 donation to P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711. For more information contact us at (903) 258-2547, or email us at [info@TylerTCF.org](mailto:info@TylerTCF.org).

The first quilt is expected to be complete in time for the Live Butterfly Release in May 2006. Progress on the quilt will be displayed at the Candle Lighting on December 11th 2005.

Thanks to Teresa Terrell for donating her talent and time on this beautiful quilt which will be displayed in our meeting room and at special events.

### First Thanksgiving

The thought of being thankful  
fills my heart with dread.  
They'll all be feigning gladness,  
not a word about her said.

These heavy shrouds of blackness  
enveloping my soul,  
pervasive, throat-catching,  
writhe in me, and coil.

I must, I must acknowledge,  
just express her name,  
so all sitting at the table,  
know I'm thankful that she came.

Though she's gone from us forever  
and we mourn to see her face,  
not one minute of her living,  
would her death ever replace.

So I stop the cheerful gathering,  
though my voice quivers, quakes,  
make a toast to all her living.  
That small tribute's all it takes.

*Genesse Bourdeau Gentry  
from Stars in the Deepest Night—  
After the Death of a Child*





*We need not walk alone.*

"We never stop and ask ourselves who said we have to keep busy, that crying is weakness, that talking about our deceased child is morbid, that we must think only of the good memories, or that time heals all wounds. We just take societal dictates as truths. They are not!" —Margaret Gerner

### November Birthdays



**Wade Goetze**  
11-29-76 ~ 10-28-01  
Son of Charlotte Nelson



**Rusty Welch**  
11-29-57 ~ 1-1-67  
Son of Travis & Martha Welch



**Christopher Jordan Pope**  
11-10-90 ~ 6-16-03  
Son of Edward & Brenda Pope



**Lindsey Stewart**  
11-6-87 ~ 4-2-04  
Daughter of Stephanie Stewart



**Kayla Smith**  
11-7-89 ~ 3-5-04  
Daughter of Debbie Smith



**Bobby Knott**  
11-6-68 ~ 4-24-83  
Son of Bobby & Virginia Knott



**Jill Tompkins**  
Daughter of Karen Tompkins  
11-3-77 ~ 4-24-99



**Mikel Conway**  
11-17-57 ~ 10-11-01  
Son of Viola Conway  
Brother of Margie Newman



**Thomas Carroll**  
6-2-73 ~ 11-13-93  
Son of Linda Carroll



**Scottie Baker**  
8-3-86 ~ 11-29-04  
Son of Steve Baker



**Candice Lingle**  
2-21-91 ~ 11-8-93  
Daughter of Mary Lingle



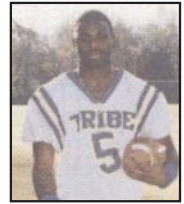
**Crystal Greene**  
8-6-82 ~ 11-13-00  
Daughter of Lory Greene  
Niece of Audrey & Claude Mapps



**Salvador Estrada**  
12-11-79 ~ 11-3-01  
Son of Charlotte Estrada



**Jonathan Reynolds**  
12-14-98 ~ 11-16-02  
Son of Addison & Debra Reynolds



**Ijuan Simms**  
2-20-79 ~ 11-7-01  
Son of Sharon Simms



**Timothy Treadwell**  
4-1-80 ~ 11-23-04  
Son of Tammy Treadwell



TCF of Tyler has  
"Forever in My Heart" wristbands.

You can get your wristbands at the monthly meetings or at the Candlelighting in December.



**Brooke Wallace**  
1-16-81 ~ 11-24-98  
Daughter of Charles & Tammy Wallace



**Andy Terrell**  
2-11-72 ~ 11-25-03  
Son of David & Teresa Terrell

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



*We need not walk alone.*

"Life can become good and whole and complete once again, not when we try to fill up the empty spaces left by loved ones no longer within hug's reach, but when we realize that love creates new spaces in the heart and expands the spirit and deepens the joy of simply being alive." —*Darcie Sims*

## Butterflies In November

Thanksgiving was Chad's favorite holiday. He loved the food and the football games without the hassle of all the Christmas going ons. I have so many memories of Thanksgivings past. I remember the last Thanksgiving we were together. Chad called me from Alabama and said he and Mandy were on their way to Atlanta and to please save him something to eat. I said "of course I will save you something to eat, but I thought you were eating with Mandy's family?" Chad said "Mom, I think they make their stuffing with "GRITS"—need I say more? Just save me some."

That really made me feel good. He loved my Southern Cornbread Dressing, Turkey, Ham, and all the fixins. We enjoyed so much just being together and preparing the dinner and enjoying the meal.

Chad died in September of 1996. Thanksgiving came way too fast. For those who have gone through their first Thanksgiving you know the feelings I am describing. Everything seems to go in slow motion with the inability to move forward—the heaviness and the physical and mental fatigue—the pain in your heart, the lump in your throat and the tears in your eyes. No, I did not want Thanksgiving to come this year or ever again. My daughter was away at school and I knew she would be coming home. My mother was struggling with lung cancer and I knew there would not be many more Thanksgivings with her. What do I do? I think we all decided that if we could just go through the motions it would be better than doing nothing and I think we all did it for each other.

I cried the whole time I was preparing the meal. I do not remember anything other than the tears. Several friends wanted to join us for Thanksgiving that year and they volunteered to bring a turkey and dessert. I readily accepted their offer.

We gathered together at noon, my husband said the blessing (which I really had a hard time with) and then I wanted to read a poem in Chad's memory. I asked everyone if they would bear with me as I read this. Several times I could not speak. The words would not come, but I was determined that I was going to read this poem. When I neared the end of the poem I felt the lump in my throat and I knew I was going to start crying out loud. As soon as I finished I got up from the table and left the room.

There was dead silence. No one spoke a word. Then I heard one of our friends say "Look at that butterfly. I can't believe there is a butterfly this time of year. And he looks as though he wants to come in. He is hitting himself against the glass door."

My tears turned from sadness to tears of joy. I knew that was Chad. I knew he had come to get some of my cornbread dressing. The only regret that I have is that I did not let him come in. I knew if I went back to the dining room and told my friends that was Chad they really would think I was crazy. If I had to do it over again—it wouldn't matter but at that time I had not gotten involved with TCF or did not know another bereaved parent—so to me my "crazy thoughts" were just that and I thought they probably were not normal.

We do not have butterflies in Atlanta in late November. I choose to believe it was a sign from my son.

This will be our fifth Thanksgiving without him. The pain has softened. My tears do not come as often. The memories are sweeter. My heart is a little lighter. My love for my son is as strong as ever. I feel his presence in everything I do. I do not fear I will forget anymore. I know he is with me.

This Thanksgiving my plan is to make a LARGE pan of my southern cornbread dressing along with Chad's favorite ham recipe and take these to the hospital to share with my daughter, who is an RN, and all the staff in the PICU at Children's Hospital, Eggleston Campus and the parents who are spending Thanksgiving with their children in the Intensive Care Unit. For some, this will be their last Thanksgiving with their own children.

The staff at the Children's Hospital work very long and stressful hours. They are away from their own families on this holiday to take care of the children who are in the hospital. I feel this is a way I can help others and also include some precious memories of my Thanksgivings past with my own son and daughter. I am looking forward to this very much and I am thankful I can be with my daughter. I wish for those of you who are facing your First Thanksgiving that you can read this and know that it will get better. You will find joy again. There is hope. The love will always remain and your child will always be with you. Of course, it is not like we hoped it would be but it can be good. Our children will always be a "present" part of our lives—they will not be forgotten.

I pray you find peace this holiday season. I pray your sorrows will soften and your memories bring smiles. I pray you will be able to enjoy your other family members. I pray you know you are not alone.

*In Memory of All Our Children ~ Jayne Newton ~ TCF, Atlanta, Ga ~ In Memory of Chad Gordon ~ 5/21/72 - 9/3/96*

**Please detach and return completed donation form to:  
The Compassionate Friends of Tyler • P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711**

We rely entirely on voluntary donations to support our group. With your help we can continue to provide our valuable services to everyone affected by the loss of a child.

Yes, I would like to make a donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ . (Please make check payable to TCF)

My donation is made in honor and in memory of \_\_\_\_\_ .

Tyler TCF greatly appreciates your support. These 'love gifts' are used to provide our monthly newsletter, printed materials, website, special events, our library and more.



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](http://www.TylerTCF.org)