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We need not walk alone.



Tyler, Texas 75711
P.O. Box 9714

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



We need not walk alone.

Volume 16, Issue 9

Tyler, Texas

September 2015

**Monthly Group Meeting
Tyler Area Meeting**

3rd Monday of Each Month
1901 Ricketty Ln., Tyler

Contact

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

Chapter LeaderTina Loper
SecretaryPat Settle
Newsletter/Web SiteMary Lingle
Tyler Meeting Facilitators: Leslie & Don Dixon

Steering Committee: Pat Settle, 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

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.

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Another School Year Begins

We hosted a college graduation party at our house for our nephew last weekend. My husband's family was here, including our 95-year-old great-grandmother, all four grandparents in various levels of physical health. This made five generations gathered to hear my brother-in-law speak of his three children, who have now all graduated from college, and we toasted their accomplishments.

I sat on the porch with my beautiful daughter Izzy, 16, listening to the toasts and thinking that it won't be too long before she is graduating high school and heading to college. But our sweet Mack, who died suddenly of sepsis on New Year's Eve 2012, was not there. Mack, hilariously funny, silly, and determined, just two weeks shy of his 9th birthday when he died, is always missed.

It is a real tension, and one that those of us who are bereaved understand. We are keen to celebrate the joys of life with family and friends—we are all allowed to live! But I have grown another eye that senses another space and time. It is with Mack, in the eternal.

As I prepared the flowers and the buffet table, filled the pitcher with ice cubes, I could sense Mack's presence. He loved when we entertained. I recalled a sentiment written by Martha Whitmore Hickman, who lost her daughter to sudden death in a horseback riding accident. "Keep your spirit open" to your beloved, she wrote. Whitman's book, *Healing After Loss*, is a daily meditational book that I carry in my purse. The cover has ripped off, the pages are dirty, tear-stained, and full of notes, but I come back to it for a little courage everyday, throughout the day.

I felt Mack's joy and smiled through my tears remembering how he skipped around the house, complained about having to dress up, filled up bowls of Fritos and munched on the extras, and would huff that lighting candles was still the realm of his big sister. I laughed out loud at one point remembering when he told me guests would be "personally offended" if I served them stuffed grape leaves for appetizers. "I miss you," I whispered out loud to him. "I love you, Mackie."

Once the last guest left, I was exhausted and had to rest on my bed. My daughter curled up next to me reading funny stories from BuzzFeed. I chuckled to encourage her to read more, but I really just like the sound of her voice.

As Facebook posts fill up again with photos of the first day of the new school year, it is easy for each post to be a poignant reminder that there are no new photos of Mack. Every milestone is an opportunity for self-pity. After I have shed some tears, I have to take the emotional reins back, log off from Facebook for a few days, and center myself again.

I come to my desk every morning with a cup of coffee and spend time in prayer, I read, and I think of Mack. I picture his face, I remember a moment, I laugh, I cry. Then, I ask God to help me choose gratitude for his beautiful self, his beautiful life, for life with my daughter and husband, and for this day. And tomorrow, I will be back here at my desk and I will need to choose gratitude again.

Written by Elizabeth Brady, posted on opentohope.com

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.

"Adversity often activates a strength we did not know we had."
—Joan Walsh Anglund

The Compassionate Friends of Tyler

P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, TX 75711

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.

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).

The Compassionate Friends of Tyler
P.O. Box 9714
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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.

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?

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

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

Smith County Victim Services Division
www.tdcj.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.tdcj.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 brings comfort to families grieving over the loss of an infant from miscarriage, stillbirth or death shortly after birth, and honor and dignity to the memory of the precious baby. Angel Layettes provides without charge custom designed burial layettes and keepsakes.angellayettes.org • 903-534-5212

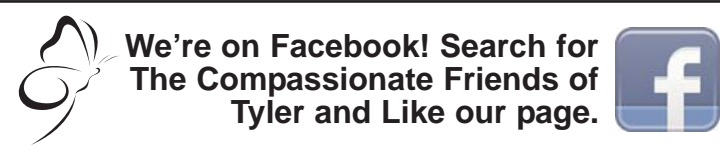
University of Texas at Tyler Psychology and Counseling and Training Clinic: 903-593-2348

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 - grieve, 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 903-266-3400 (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. 69 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: _____

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.

- checkbox Please continue sending the newsletter.
checkbox No thank you, I'd prefer to stop receiving the newsletter. (Newsletters are posted monthly on our Web site.)
checkbox Please include my child's name and picture in the slide presentation at the Candle Lighting Ceremony.
checkbox Please include my child's picture and information on the TCF Tyler Web site. (www.TylerTCF.org)
checkbox I am enclosing a memorial to support The Compassionate Friends in the amount of _____ Please make check payable to TCF
checkbox In memory of _____

Please use this gift for: checkbox TCF Newsletter checkbox Butterfly Release checkbox Candle Lighting checkbox 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.

(Signature) Date: _____

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



We need not walk alone.

The experience of grieving cannot be ordered or categorized, hurried or controlled, pushed aside or ignored indefinitely. It is as inevitable as breathing, as change, as love. It may be postponed, but it will not be denied.
—Molly Fumia

September Birthdays



Justin Dover



Chad Cavazos



Jon Lee Hardwick



Theresa Kay Talley



Tommy Gresham



Bobby Jack Stanley



Robert Attaway



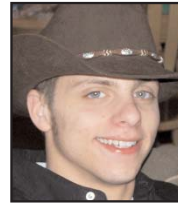
Shantrice Willingham



Autumn Dale Romine



Michael R. Peymon



Austin Cheek



Chase Cyrus Naquin



Gary Dean Arnold



Stacey Smith



Michael Toby Tobias



Ava Faith Knight



Betsi Marie Wyatt



Bill Bouslog



Joshua Jolley



Douglas Johnson, Jr.



Amanda Claire Miller



Leah Zucca



Aaron Willman



Chance Aaron Chandler



Samantha Johnson



Adam Thomas Pritchard



Joshua Washburn



Jake Schoonover



Lee Sammons



Kyle James Horn



Lillian Oldham



Jiree Mobley



Melinda Orr

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



We need not walk alone.

“Hope is faith holding out its hand in the dark.”
—George Iles

The Depths of Grief

We are all bereaved parents or bereaved family members. We live with the pain of loss each day, every day. We are veterans of a most unholy pain, rising each day to begin again the struggle to survive, the fight to make sense of a world that—for us—has become senseless. Now our ranks have sadly swelled. On the eleventh day of September many thousands of innocent people perished. The killing was as indiscriminate as it was impersonal; husbands, wives, daughters, sons, brothers and sisters died. Each life lost on that day represents, as we know all too well, a forthcoming struggle of the survivors to go on in a newly painful world that will make little sense.

As the relentless news poured in on that black day, my sorrow grew exponentially. Grief and horror mushroomed—demanding to be expressed. Tears fell as they had not in a number of years. Inside of me, the raw pain of grief blossomed anew. “What’s going on?” I asked myself. “Why this overwhelming reaction? This isn’t the first tragedy you’ve been witness to since the death of your little girl!” My pain seemed disproportionate, yet I continued to feel raw and weepy. I was unable to hinder the tides of emotion that swept over me that day, and all the days that have followed. Eventually I began to realize I was closely relating on two levels to the thousands who—without warning—had lost those most precious to them. The devastation that occurred in New York had happened in the place my heart called home, so on that level this was a personal tragedy. And as a grieving parent, I cringed at the unimaginable agony of those left behind—the weeks, months and years of anguished days and sleepless nights that lay in store for those frantic with fear on this horrendous day. I suspected that each of them was convinced that this was the most devastating day of their lives, and while I would not dispute that, I knew they were innocently unaware of the battles to come—the nightmares that lay in wait in the days and weeks ahead.

The tears I could not control were also for the innumerable acts of selflessness seen so many times throughout this horror. People put themselves at risk to help others; the injured lent a willing hand of support to those whose need seemed greater. As I watched this on television I was again so deeply moved. It seems our strongest bonds can be forged during the worst times in our lives. This lesson is one I learned first-hand when my own tragedy struck, and my anguish led me to The Compassionate Friends. There, other grieving parents held out their hands to me, and it was there I found the unwavering support that helped me survive my pain.

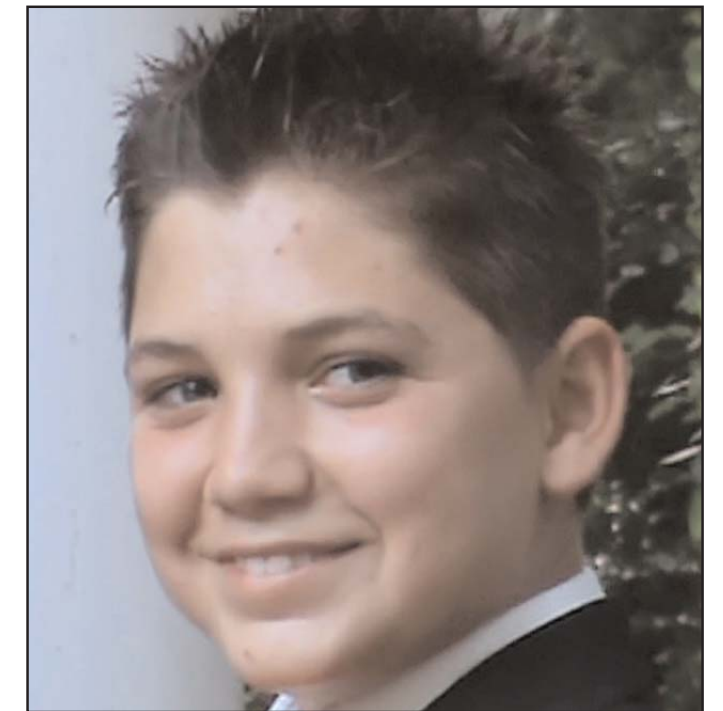
Now I could only hope each of these survivors would find a safe place to voice their grief. So many have been so cruelly thrust into our world. We are here, hands outstretched, for those who need us.

Sally Migliaccio, Editor ~ TCF, Babylon, NY

Chase Naquin

In loving memory of Chase.

Trudy & Dell Ferguson



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Trudy & Dell Ferguson.
Call (903) 258-2547 to sponsor a monthly newsletter.





We need not walk alone.

"Grief is not an illness that needs to be cured. It's not a task with definable, sequential steps. It's not a bridge to cross, a burden to bear or an experience to 'recover' from. It is a normal, healthy and predictable response to loss."
—Donna L. Schuurman

Anniversaries (cont.)



Daryn Keith Selman



Wayne Davis



Doug Bennett



Amanda Anderson



Derek Russell



James Rawls



Christopher Forzano

I believe we must be open to the balm of forgiveness. Through its expression in our lives, be it through thought, word or deed, we find small ways to seek life once more. Deep within us, forgiveness is capable of treading the wasteland of our souls to help us feel again the love that has not died. —Don Hackett

In Our Circle

In our circle, we noticed that the temptation can exist for Christians to sugarcoat everything and act like bad things are really good things in disguise.

"Gifts come in all kinds of packages," someone said to me recently in reference to the painful things we face in life.

I don't think I will ever reach a place where I could consider [my son] Seth's death a "gift" any more than I consider rape or child abductions, terrorist attacks, murder, genocide, or famine "gifts."

While it is true that the strength or the insight we gain from God to get through these times could be considered as gifts, the event itself is not, and I believe that God grieves just as much as we do.

Why can't we just admit that painful things are painful?

Why can't we just sit down with people and cry along with them as we admit that what happened is cause for tears?

We don't need people to rush in and frantically try to wrap it all up pretty with a bow, like it is something we should savor.

In time, we may see goodness that seeped out of badness, but we should leave it to God to show us that, when our eyes are not so full of tears and we can see more clearly.

Elizabeth A. Price, in *Helping the Bereaved: A Few Basic Rules*, *Bereavement Magazine*

Our condolences to Phyllis Cavazos on the passing of her mother, Patsy Murray.



In loving memory of
Richard Alexander
by Lana Kaye Taylor



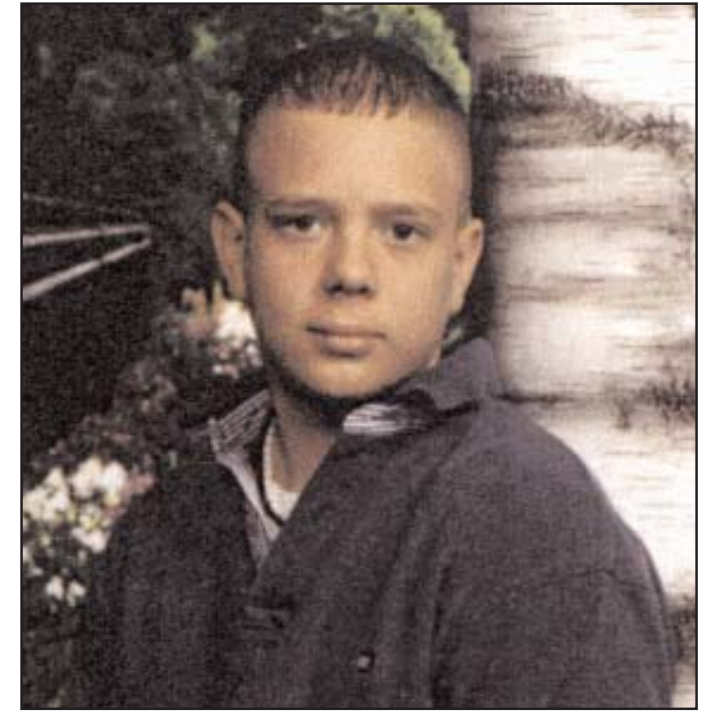
Thanks for your continued support of TCF of Tyler.



We need not walk alone.

"The people we meet in Compassionate Friends understand us. They are us. They listen and speak with their hearts. They have each experienced the loss of a child. They hurt with us, and their pain is as real as ours. We learn from each other."
—Annette Mennen Baldwin

Chad Cavazos
In loving memory of Chad
Phyllis Cavazos



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Phyllis Cavazos.
Call (903) 258-2547 to sponsor a monthly newsletter.

Jake Schoonover
In loving memory of Jake
Sue Roberts



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Sue Roberts.
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We need not walk alone.

"Are we dwelling on our loss? Absolutely. But we are learning to dwell on it constructively, to dwell on it without guilt and without the isolation we have all felt. We learn how to reach out (in time) to others with a compassion that brings healing to others as well as to ourselves." —Philip Barker

Leah Zucca

**In loving memory
of Leah**

Jim & Cheri Zucca



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Jim & Cheri Zucca.
Call (903) 258-2547 to sponsor a monthly newsletter.

Stacey Smith

**In loving memory
of Stacey**

Sam Smith



This month's printing of our newsletter sponsored by Sam Smith.
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We need not walk alone.

"When it seems that our sorrow is too great to be borne, let us think of the great family of the heavy-hearted into which our grief has given us entrance, and inevitably, we will feel about us, their arms and their understanding." —Helen Keller

September Anniversaries



Tim Cole



Cindy Dingler



Stephen Townsend



Cason Gimble



Jonathan Lee
Daniel Sanders



Nathaniel
Blake Dark



Stephanie Harris
Reed



Amanda Stone



Mahlon Acres



Joshua Brandon
"Josh" Wilcox



Michael Angelo Perez



Jennifer Booth
Musick



Mary Jennifer
Stone



Toni Wood



Joshua Malone



Ashlee Ann Davis



Cameron Weatherly



Robby Cano



Shantrice
Willingham



Robert Attaway Jr.



Seth Henry Porter



A.J. Frazier



Cobin Frazier



Alec Heath Thigpen



Sarah Thompson



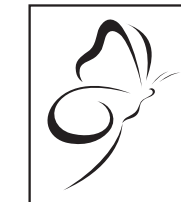
Jared Sheets



Ava Faith Knight



John Shade



D. Anriloten
Bennett



Sarah Wheeler



Doug Norton



Daniel Wayne Thornton



Randall Thorton, Jr.



Colton James Bain



Amber Drake



Keisha Knauss

Continued on next page.





We need not walk alone.

"With the passing of years, I have learned that if I can hang on for just a little longer, these emotions—strong as they are—will pass and I can live again with the longing hidden deep inside my breast." —*Shirley Muller*

What Might Have Been...What Is

I want what might have been...
And I want what is.
I want the child I do not have,
And I want the child that has come after.
I cannot choose
One or the other,
My heart wants both.
What might have been,
A sturdy lad,
Baseball bats,
Football helmets,
Squiggly worms on hooks
Dirt and mud and
Burps and booms.
What is now,
A charming girl,
Raggedy Anne,
Stuffed bears,
Curls and ribbons on hair
Tea and cookies and
Squeals and giggles.
How can I choose
From two blessings,
One gone too soon,
One here by a miracle?
I cannot...
But if I could...
I would want both...
What might have been...
And what is.

*Lisa Sculley, In memory of Joey Sculley
7/16/92 to 10/7/92 - SIDS*

Don't Steal My Grief

Don't try to make me feel better,
By quipping your cute jokes.
Don't try to rob me of my pain,
When I need it as my cloak.
I know you probably think,
You're doing me a favor,
But what you don't understand,
Is that my sadness is my savior.
Don't try to steal my right,
To express my grief in my own way.
You see, I lost my child,
And grief is the price that I must pay.
I need to feel the hurt and pain,
As it beats inside my chest.
Don't try to steal my grief,
When it's the only feeling I have left.

*Faye McCord, TCF Jackson, MS
In loving memory of my son, Lane McCord
(1/26/65-9/13/98)*

Last Moments

Last moments
Snatches of conversation
That echo across all decades...
Priceless words
Indelibly etched on the heart.

Sometimes
Thoughts were never spoken
But unexpected sentiment—
A quick embrace, a silly smirk,
Or joyous laughter—
Reaches through the pain
And warms the heart.

We came too soon to understand
The folly of harsh words
Or neglected touch,
For who can know which
Taken-for-granted event
Will become
A last moment.

Diane Fields, TCF Westmoreland, PA

Where Do I Go?

Now that you're gone, where do I go
to see your fair smile
to hear your tingling giggle
to smell your dank hair after a swim
to listen to your questions
to touch your gentle cheek
to feel your bear hug?

Where do I go
to share all my years of wisdom
to find someone who'll tell me truth
to answer the phone that won't ring
to tell you I'm sorry
to know that I am loved and
to pour out my love and my tears?

I shall go
to the pictures that hold you forever
to the books we shared
to the music you taught me to love
to the woods we explored as one
to the memories that never fail
to the innermost reaches of my heart
to where we are always together.

Marcia Alig, TCF Mercer Area Chapter, New Jersey



We need not walk alone.

"In this life we cannot do great things. We can only do small things with great love." —*Mother Theresa*

Love Gifts



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

(For monthly donors we will post photos of your children on their Birthday and Anniversary dates.)

- Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O'Leary - rent
- Martha Lewis in memory of Burke - rent
- Carol & Shane Johnson in memory of Jared Sheets - rent
- Danny & Pat Settle in memory of Stephanie - rent
- Claudette Brown in memory of Terry Wayne - 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 6.



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: We try very hard to be sure that all of the names and dates of our children are correct. If you see an error in the newsletter, please contact TCF at 903-258-2547. We want to get it right and will correct the information for future use. Thanks very much.

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: lilbluebutterfly6@gmail.com ~ Pat's email: beachbum2201@gmail.com

Thanks to all our families who Support TCF of Tyler with their love gifts.

Announcements

Tyler TCF Meeting: The meeting in Tyler is held on the third Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at 1901 Ricketty 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.

MADD Heart meets 2nd Tuesday of the month at the MADD office, 215 Winchester Dr. Ste., 100, Tyler, TX 75701. For more info call 888-665-6233 or email Carol King at carol.king@madd.org.

News from National: Compassionate Friends National offers webinars for the public on grief related topics. Upcoming public webinars will include Death of a Child By Suicide, Pregnancy and Infant Loss, The Death of a Special Needs Child and How Can I Help When A Child Dies? Check out www.compassionatefriends.org for dates and times.

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 lilbluebutterfly6@gmail.com.

