



Quad City Chapter



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Ron and Sandi Sacco  
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**To** those who are receiving our newsletter for the first time, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that your family and you have many friends. We who have received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help.

***You are not alone in your grief.***

# The Quad City Chapter



October 2009, Volume XXII, Number 9

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Dear Compassionate Friends,

We recently celebrated 35 years of marriage. When we said our vows and committed to death do us part we could not have imagined the breadth and depth of the joys and sorrows we would face as a married couple. This summer I came across the following quote:

"It is a curious thing in human experience, but to live through a period of stress and sorrow with another person creates a bond which nothing seems able to break."

Eleanor Roosevelt

While we know this is not the case for every married couple, our experiences as Anna's parents as well as other sorrows that have shadowed our life together cemented our couple bond in a way we could not have

imagined. For those of you in the depths of your grief you may feel distant from your spouse because you are both grieving in such different ways. That is normal. I think what helped us most was having the freedom in our relationship to be able to openly share our feelings and receiving loving and respectful acceptance no matter what those feelings were.

Choose to show love to your spouse today even though you feel empty with nothing to give. Lovingly listen and accept your spouse's feelings. Trust that your marriage can be strengthened rather than torn apart. Your marriage does not need to be a casualty of your child's death.

Sincerely,  
Jerry and Carol Webb

Michelle Cauwels and Rosemary Shoemaker have recently taken over leadership roles for the Quad City Chapter of Compassionate Friends. In September they were able to attend a leadership conference in the Chicago area and came back with lots of food for thought and some excellent ideas. We encourage you to come alongside and work together to reach out to grieving families. Please note the change in the meeting time. (6:30-8:30)

# V i n e   a n d   D i n e

Wine Pairings, Dinner, and Silent Auction

Friday, November 6, 2009 – 6:00 p.m.

**Davenport Country Club**

**Fundraiser for the Iowa SIDS Foundation**

For more information, call (563) 332-6265 or visit [www.iowasids.org](http://www.iowasids.org).

The Iowa SIDS Foundation provides support to families touched by SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), educates professionals and the public on ways to reduce the risk of SIDS, and funds research into the causes of SIDS.



**T**hank you to **Bethany for Children & Families** and **Maggie's Fund** for printing this month's newsletter. If you are able to assist in the final preparation for mailing of the newsletter in any given month, please contact Jerry and Carol Webb at (309)654-2727.

**I**f you read or write an article or poem which might be helpful to other bereaved parents, please share them with us, Jerry and Carol Webb, Box 71, Cordova, Illinois 61242.

**I**f you move and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, please send us your new address. Because we send the newsletter bulk rate, the post office will not forward it.

**I**f you know someone you think would benefit from receiving the newsletter, we would be happy to add them to our mailing list.

**I**f you prefer to no longer receive the newsletter, we would appreciate you letting us know. Thanks. Jerry and Carol Webb (Editors), Box 71, Cordova, Illinois 242, (309)654-2727.

## Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

### The Compassionate Friends of the Quad Cities Monthly Meeting: October 22, 2009 at 6:30 pm

Bethel Assembly of God Church, 3535 38<sup>th</sup> Ave., Rock Island, IL  
From John Deere Road, turn right at 38<sup>th</sup> St. (by Kmart) and go up the hill. Turn left on 38<sup>th</sup> Ave. The church will be on your right. We meet in the downstairs fellowship hall. (Or you can turn into the church driveway off of 38<sup>th</sup> St.; the church is on the west side of the road.) Alan and Rosemary Shoemaker — 309-441-5586, or Michelle Cauwels — 309-755-0783 for directions or information. Next month: November 19, 2009.

<b>The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine</b>	Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the George M. Wittich-Lewis Funeral Home, 2907 Mulberry, Muscatine, Iowa. Chapter Leaders are Linda and Bill McCracken. You can call them at (563)263-2737 for directions or information.
<b>Helping Heavy Hearts — Grief Support Group</b>	Meets the second Tuesday each month at 7:00 pm in the office of Family Resources located in Building 9 of the Annie Wittenmeyer Complex off Eastern Avenue in Davenport. For more information, contact Kirby White at (563)271-5908.
<b>Mom's Group meets in Aledo</b>	A group of moms who have had children die meet once a month in Aledo to support and encourage one another as they go through the grief process. You are invited to join them at 12:30 on the third Saturday of the month at the Happy Joe's in Aledo. For directions or more information, call Kay Forret at (309)582-7789.
<b>Rick's House of Hope</b>	Located at 4867 Forest Grove Drive in Bettendorf is a community resource is for children and adolescents dealing with grief. "Children and adolescents experiencing grief and trauma often need a safe place to express their feelings. They need companions for the journey of grief who are outside their family and not themselves grieving." The volunteer mentors at Rick's House of Hope provide this for young people and their families during painful and confusing times of grief. There is no fee for services. For more information, call 563 324-9580 or (563)421-7970. Find Rick's House of Hope on the web: <a href="http://www.genesishealth.com">www.genesishealth.com</a> — keywords "children and grief."
<b>Quad City SHARE</b>	A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, still-birth, or early infant death. SHARE meets the third Thursday of each month at Grace Lutheran Church, 1140 East High Street, Davenport, Iowa. For more information, call Chalyn Fornero-Green at (309)496-2568.
<b>Survivors of Suicide Support Group, Fulton</b>	Location: Second Reformed Church, 703 14th Ave., Fulton, Illinois. This support group meets the second Monday of each month and is open to anyone who has lost a loved one through suicide. It's a safe place where survivors share their experiences and support each other. The group is completely free and light refreshments are served. For more information, call 589-3425.
<b>Survivors of a Suicide Loss Support Group, Moline</b>	For those who have lost someone to suicide, this group, facilitated by a peer survivor and a professional, meets the third Monday of the month in the Moline Library, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. For details, contact Joel M. Moore (309)235-7174 or <a href="mailto:qcsos@yahoo.com">qcsos@yahoo.com</a>

The years of our living were woven together,  
A tapestry for growing.  
We shared a gift of love, each for the other,  
And became more whole.

Our lives danced joy and  
Our beings reflected hopes,  
In future dreams mirroring our present.  
They were not to be.

Gentle sorrow entwined with memory  
'Softly stalks the silence  
Of empty space and unfilled promise.  
I pause and contemplate in farewell.

But you are not dead,  
I hear you whisper  
In the shadows creeping at dusk,  
In the snowflakes gathering in twilight.

Your song rides the wind at morning and  
Sunrays on the trees mark your passing.  
Your joy dances in firelight and reflects  
In starshine on calm waters.

Your love unfolds in sunset's glory,  
Its sweetness aught in morning dew.  
I seek a new tomorrow  
Beyond a hillside I had long forgotten.  
Wait softly, my child, over the crest where I cannot see.  
Slowly and in gladness I will someday follow.

Donald Hackett



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**There are simply no answers to some of the great pressing questions. You continue to live them out, making your life a worthy expression of leaning into the light.**

Barry Lopez, Arctic Dreams

## HOPE

I saw a husband and wife last night, standing close to one another to better see and to show the pictures of their son. The pictures were in a little flip folder which had a hard paper cover and was a little bent around the edges. They must have shown these pictures many, many times. Their son, such a nice looking boy, was about 18. I watched how the husband put the picture folder away in his pocket. It must have been in and out of there many, many times. Still, he handled it so gently, so tenderly, almost with reverence. Their son was dead.

They were attending their first meeting of HOPE, acronym for Helping Other Parents Endure, a chapter of The Compassionate Friends. It's a place where they could mention their son. Other fathers with boys 18 can laugh about their sons' latest hijinks and grin knowingly. But what does a man say about his son who is dead! Or a daughter?

And what does a mother talk about? What does a mother do with the mementos of her child that remind her of the funny tender stuff of childhood? The time he or she was not yet two and dressed for church and found the only muddy place out front. The trophy won by mistake. The homely TV lamp they bought thinking how much I would love it. And there it sits in the closet. And it will never go to Goodwill. And there will never be another. And we will never sit and laugh together over the stories of "when you were little."

The one thing about The Compassionate Friends is that mention of your child's name won't cause an awkward gap. You know, the kind that makes you feel somehow you shouldn't have said anything. How can anyone else know that your child is still real! That they were real and are real? I want to scream sometimes that my boys are real! See, he's here in my heart. Oh and when I stopped at a traffic light today, there was a boy in the car next to me who put his hand to chin, just like my son did. It was amazing – that gesture, that hand – just like my son's.

The little one is not so clear in my mind anymore, but he's real. How many children do I have! My daughter is married and living in New York. And the boys? Well, one will always be four and a half. I heard him laughing the other day in the giggles of some preschoolers. And my oldest son? I told you he got his black belt, didn't I? And that he made sergeant? And that I saw him this morning in the gesture of a boy waiting at a traffic light?

La Vergne Dunn TCF/Ottumwa, IA

# TCF Bulletin Board

Contact [www.preciousparents.org](http://www.preciousparents.org) which publishes a newsletter titled HEARTLINE for parents whose infants have died.

The next monthly meeting of the QC Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is on October 22nd at 6:30 PM at the Bethel Assembly of God Church in Rock Island.

Thursday, October 22 – Handling the Holidays  
Thursday, November 19 – Sharing Your Child  
Thursday, December 3 – Christmas Candlelight

### GRIEF MATERIALS

Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than the Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief-related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you're looking for – or they'll be able to tell you where to find it. Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at (402) 553-1200 or visit their Web site at [www.centering.org](http://www.centering.org). When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.

**Our Newsletter**  
*For parents who have experienced the death or deaths of multiple birth children during pregnancy, at birth, in infancy, or in childhood, contact Jean Kollantai at P.O. Box 91377, Anchorage, AK 99509.*

### Amazon. Com

When making a purchase from Amazon.com, enter through the link on the home page of The Compassionate Friends national Web site, and a portion of the purchase price will be donated to further the mission of TCF. This donation applies to all purchases, not just books, made from the Amazon.com site.

### We Need Not Walk Alone

The Compassionate Friends National Newsletter  
One complimentary copy is sent to bereaved families that contact the national office.  
The Compassionate Friends, Inc.  
P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
(877)969-0010  
Email: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)  
Web site: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)  
Visit the [sibling resource](#) page at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

**Looking** for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to [www.Bethany-qc.org](http://www.Bethany-qc.org) for copies of the last four years of The Quad City Chapter of The Compassionate Friends Newsletter. They are download-able in Adobe Acrobat format.

## Hope for the Holidays

Saturday, November 14, 2009  
at 6:00 p.m.

Homewood Evangelical Free Church  
3303 60th St. Moline IL

Hope for the Holidays is an annual service hosted by Homewood Evangelical Free Church. The service is especially designed to minister to individuals and families who have lost a loved one during the year or recent years. The service brings hope, peace, and a renewed sense of confidence in God's love. Join us this year to bring healing as you grieve the loss of a loved one.

## Love Gifts

There are no dues or fees to belong to TCF. As parents and other family members find healing and hope within the group or from the newsletter, they often wish to make a Love Gift to help with the work of our chapter. This is a meaningful way to remember a beloved child.

Love gifts are used to provide postage for the newsletter and mailings to newly bereaved families. Some of the love gifts are used for materials to share with first time attendees at our meetings or to purchase books for our library. Our thanks to the many families who provide love gifts so that the work of reaching out to bereaved parents and families can continue. If you would like to send a love gift, please send it to our treasurers, Larry and Joyce Molitor, P.O. Box 191, Cordova, Illinois 61242. Checks can be made out to *The Compassionate Friends*. Your gifts are tax deductible.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

## What's it all about?

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information and education to help others be supportive.

Founded in England in 1969, the first U.S. chapter was organized in 1972. Since then, 635 chapters have been established. The current Quad City Chapter was formed in 1987.

### TCF National Office

P.O. Box 3696  
Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696  
Toll Free (877)969-0010  
TCF National Web site — [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

### Mission Statement

The mission of the Compassionate Friends (TCF) is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child at any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

### The Quad City Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

meets on the fourth Thursday of the month in Rock Island, Illinois. See the newsletter for schedule.

### Quad City Chapter Newsletter Editors

Jerry and Carol Webb  
Box 71, Cordova, IL 61242

**e-newsletter** is now available from the National Office! The monthly e-newsletter will contain notes and happening of interest to all TCFers. To subscribe to the e-newsletter, visit the TCF National Web site home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter Link. This newsletter is available to everyone.

## Loneliness and How to Overcome It.

**Why** are there times when a bereaved parent feels lonely even though surrounded by loving people and people the bereaved parent loves? Loneliness is the outgrowth of separation from one who has given meaning to life. Yes, other relationships offer meaning, but it is normal for the searing pain from the loss of one's child to supersede the pleasure from other relationships and experiences. Part of yourself had been invested in another person. When that person has died, in a sense, you are lonely for a part of yourself that has been destroyed. At times you look around you and think that no one else is experiencing the pain you are feeling; no one else's world has been shattered. This self-centeredness is a natural part of the grief process. Do not deny it, but do not hold on to it as a way of life. Give yourself permission to accept help from others and then to reach out and help others. Although your child is not here to give continuity to your life, by having lived and having given purpose to your life, your child can be the bridge to your continuity with life as a thinking, loving and active person.

Ruth Eiseman TCF, Louisville, KY

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### Understand the Role of "Linking Objects"

Grieving parents are often comforted by physical objects related to the child who died. It is not unusual to save clothing, jewelry, toys, locks of hair and other personal items. Such "linking objects" will help you remember your child and honor the life that was lived. Such objects may help you heal.

Never think being attached to these objects is morbid or wrong. If someone tells you you're crazy for wearing your son's sweatshirt or not washing your daughter's pillowcase, ignore them. You're not crazy; you're simply holding on to what you have left.

Never hurry into disposing of your child's belongings. You may want to leave personal items untouched for months or sometimes years. This is okay as long as the objects offer comfort and don't inhibit healing.

When and only when you're ready, ask a friend or family member to help you sort through your child's belongings. Fill a memory box with significant objects and mementoes.

Dr. Alan Wolfelt

*Healing A Parent's Grieving Heart— 100 Practical Ideas After Your Child Dies*

## For My Son, Who Lives

I remember the ride in the car that day.  
I was talking about Brian, who'd just gone away.  
He was all I talked about it seemed to me,  
But then, in those days, he was all I could see.

I was wondering aloud just how it would be  
When we saw him in Heaven, what would we see?  
Would he still be a small boy of four or so then?  
Or is Heaven full of boys who grow up to be men?

My passenger said, "Let's just wait and see,"  
With all the wisdom of a boy who is three.  
Then he asked me something that started me crying,  
"Will you ever love me as much as you love Brian?"

I want to thank my precious son  
For waking me up to what I had done.  
For making me see beyond my loss,  
That life is worth living, whatever the cost.

Jane Daulton  
TCF/Virginia Beach, VA



## JUST ONCE!

**JUST ONCE**, I wish I could have spent a late hour rocking you in my arms. **JUST ONCE**, I wish I could have gently lain you in your crib. I wish I could have changed a diaper, chosen an outfit for the day, given you a bath, soothed your skin with lotion . . . **JUST ONCE**, I wish I could have heard you cry out in loneliness for me, spent time alone with you, just the two of us: strolled you proudly through the shopping mall . . . **JUST ONCE**, I wish I could have heard the words, "What a beautiful, healthy baby girl!" **JUST ONCE!**

**Barbara Daniels,**  
in memory of **Ariel Jean Payne**



The road to recovery from grief . . . is to take time to do things which will enable us to give a renewed meaning to our lives. That's when our journey through grief becomes a journey of discovering ourselves, our potential, and our resources in the encounter with life. That's when we become *better people* rather than *bitter people*. In grief, no one can take away our love. That call of life is to learn to love . . . again.

**Father Arnaldo Pangrazzi,**  
from *Overcoming Grief*

Tears do not flow only from the pitiful and the weak.  
They spring also from the love and tenderness of the strong.  
We should never be ashamed of our tears, whether in private sorrow or public grieving.  
Tears alleviate our grief and encourage the healing of our wounds.

**TCF/Nacagdoches, TX**

## I'll Never Be The Same

By **Peggy Kociscin**  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Confusion reigns within my heart,  
Within my soul, because  
I know I cannot ever be  
The woman I once was.

How can I be complete and whole  
When part of me is gone . . .  
A special part . . . a precious part . . .  
The part that was my son?

Conceived in love, how gratefully  
I bore you . . . filled with pride;  
A bit of my heart, a bit of my soul  
Went with you when you died.

One cannot lose a child to death  
And still remain the same,  
Untouched by tears of emptiness,  
Undaunted by the pain.

The cruelest nightmares come to pass  
Life's bitterest pill to swallow;  
In light of this, I can endure  
All else that's yet to follow.

There's nothing that can fill the empty  
Spaces that remain;  
I've tried and failed so many times,  
I cannot try again.

No trying to regain the past . . .  
That's all a bitter sham . . .  
It's time that I resign myself  
To being who I am.

To be the woman I've become  
(No acting out a part) . . .  
A mother with a shattered dream  
And a broken heart.

*Bereavement Magazine*, June 2001

## Grandparents

In our involvement in the grief over the death of our child, we fail to realize that grandparents also grieve. Although not in the same way or to the same extent we do, they do grieve. Their grief is two-sided; one for the child who is so dear to them and the other for their own child who is suffering. Just as the parent does, the grandparent loses his future. One of the joys of grandparenthood is the knowledge that through grandchildren they achieve immortality. It is expected that their name will be carried on through them. At the death of their grandchild, that branch of the family tree is cut off. What should have been will not be. In cases of an only child, there will be no future generation. Just as for the parent, the family of the grandparent will never be complete again. They, too, feel the empty place at family gatherings. We bereaved parents must consider the needs of the grandparents and at the same time be open and honest with them about our needs. We must let them know how they can help us, but at the same time we must be aware that they, too, need help. Mutual sharing of feelings between bereaved parents and grandparents will be helpful to both in the recovery process. The sharing not only of painful feelings but also happy memories of the child with grand parents can be helpful for both and it can also create a deeper relationship in the family.

**Margaret Gerner,**  
**TCF/ST. Louis MO**