



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



1830 6th Avenue
Moline, Illinois 61265

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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 COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
QUAD CITY AREA CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

December 2012—Volume XXV, Number 11

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Dear Compassionate Friends,

Today is our daughter's birthday. Had she lived she would have been 29 years old. She could have been a wife and a mother by now. Perhaps she would have been a teacher like her mom or an engineer like her dad, a dancer, a painter, a nurse. I am unable to reconcile my image of her with that of a grown up. To us, she remains a precious baby girl, tiny and fragile, with a mop of thick black hair, dressed in a pink sleeper and knitted sweater, wrapped in her warm wooly pastel-striped blanket to ward off the winter chill. Just over a year passed between the time we knew she was expected and the time of her death. Such a short time and so many years ago and yet the memories are indelibly etched upon our hearts and minds. While different than the impact she would have had on our lives had she lived, we are different people than we would have been had she never lived, or died. Her coming and her leaving changed our life perspective in many ways and had a major impact on the path we have followed as a couple and a family. We are grateful for the four months Anna lived in our home; we are grateful for the way she still impacts our life and we are grateful for the opportunities given us to reach out to others in her memory, to honor her life. We look forward to our reunion with her some day. Happy Birthday, Anna.



Sincerely,
Jerry and Carol Webb

When We Remember

When the snow falls, and silence drifts in white across the earth, we remember their joy, the glad cries that broke the hush of fresh winter.

When the family gathers, caught in wonderment around the Thanksgiving table or the holiday tree, we remember their excitement, the anticipation that was impossible to contain.

When the sun sets, and Christmas lights sparkle and shine to challenge the night, we remember their tired but glowing faces, alight in a thrill of happiness that made our day.

When we remember, we feel afresh that brightness, that energy, and we smile . . . and we cry.

For what was, for what can never be.

In our remembering, we are the vessels of yesterday, the bearers of the light, the victims of the dark.

And in our remembering, we are parents, hurting, healing, gathering our strength and our passion to live once more, to destroy an endless night with the sun and starlit joys of the past, forging our memories into the promise of a new and different dawn, a re-investment in life itself, even without our child.

For we have loved, love still, and have been loved in turn.

Our memories tell us, our intellect compels us, ultimately, to answer our child's love with our own unending love, showing through the quality and commitment of our own lives that both loves have enriched us beyond measure.

May the holidays, for all their sorrow and all their pain, help each of us to build anew our lives, using our joys from the past to create a new day, where sorrow, through never gone, no longer governs our every waking hour. **Don Hackett, TCF/South Shore Chapter, Hingham, MA**

REGRET

One of our

basic responsibilities as parents is to keep our children from harm. So, when anything happens to them, we feel guilty whether we could realistically have done anything or not. When the ultimate tragedy occurs, we are devastated. How could we let it happen? Why didn't we stop it? If we have compounded our guilt with any degree of human error of commission or omission, we are beyond devastation. Even words of anger or words left unspoken haunt us. Guilt implies intent. If we intended to harm our child, we can feel guilty of that. If we never intended harm to ever, ever come to our child, the correct name for our emotion is **regret**. The crushing pain is still there, but regret is softer, gentler, less judgmental, and easier to forgive and to heal. **Regret** is also more accurate. If that name doesn't feel strong enough for our feelings, it will in time. Let it float there and try it now and then. Not guilt – we feel regret.

**Kitty Sanders, Nashville, TN
Survivors of Suicide Group**



CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE

Thursday December 6, 2012
at 7:00 P.M.

**Bethel Assembly of God Church
3535 38th Ave., Rock Island, IL**

Our Candlelight Memorial Service is for every bereaved parent who would like to have his or her child remembered at our candle lighting ceremony. We will light a candle in memory of each child. (Please bring a favorite candle or one will be provided. You can also bring a photo of your child to place with the candle.) All family members are invited. A time of fellowship will follow the service.

If you plan to attend the service, or if you cannot attend but would like a candle lit in your child's memory, please complete and return this form or give Michelle Curtis a call (number below) so we will have an idea of how many candles to order.



Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Date of Death: _____

Parents' Names: _____

We plan to attend (please circle): **Yes No**

We are unable to attend, but would like our child remembered (please circle):
Yes No

I/We would be willing to help in some way. If you would like to bring refreshments: finger food or fruit, music, set-up, clean up. **Yes No**

Name _____ Phone _____

Send to: **Michelle Curtis** (309.644.0486)
18163 241st Avenue, Bettendorf, Iowa 52722

If you would like to make a love gift to TCF in memory of your child, you may do so at the service or by sending your contribution to our treasurers, Larry and Joyce Molitor, P.O. Box 191, Cordova, Illinois 61242. Checks should be addressed to *The Compassionate Friends*. Your gifts are tax deductible.

CHALKBOARD REFLECTIONS

Endowment

Hope gives us vision for regaining
the tenderness of memories.
Hope carries us through
to survival and healing.
Hope offers us courage
for acceptance and overcoming.
Hope gives us
new spirit and new laughter.
Hope is among the greatest gifts
to be found in time of sorrow.
But hope cannot restore on earth
what is lost to death.
Hope can only go forward
and make us new.
Give space to hope in your life.

Sascha Wagner

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.

Thank you to:

Nancy Hanna in memory of her grandson, Ethan Joshua Dobereiner
Shari Hilligoss in memory of their son, Tyler Bradley Hilligoss
John Page in memory of his granddaughter, Anna Katherine Webb

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.



Amazon.com

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

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 website at www.centering.org. When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.

Looking for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to www.bethany-qc.org for copies of the last four years of The Quad City Chapter of The Compassionate Friends Newsletter. They are downloadable in Adobe Acrobat format.

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.

For Those Who Grieve at Christmas

I love the Christmas season. I love the sights and sounds and smells that come with this time of year. But, for our family there is a touch of melancholy that hangs in the air.

It is grief.

Four years ago, as we were decorating our home for Christmas, our baby girl became violently sick. We raced her to the hospital and began a nightmare that would eventually lead to her death in February 2008.

And now there is an Emily-sized hole in our Christmas season. An emptiness that matches the empty stocking that bears her name. We are still a joyful family, but there will always be one less of us to celebrate these earthly holidays.

And we are not alone. Chances are you are remembering a loved one this Christmas season and you are missing them just as we miss our little Emily.

As we celebrate Christ's birth, I cannot help but consider that my God knows the

grief I bear. Amongst all the wonderment and joy of the Messiah being born, there was the knowledge that that child must one day die a violent death in order to free His people from sin and darkness.

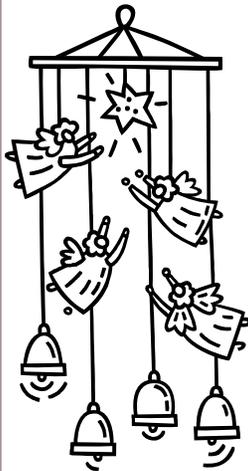
God has not asked me to give any more than He has given Himself.

So, as we take time this holiday season to look back and remember our Emily, we also take time to look ahead. Ahead to a time when Christ is no longer a babe in a manger, but a man willingly choosing the cross to save those He loves. We look ahead to the Son being lifted up in glory. We look ahead to the day when we no longer look back because everything we have ever longed for is right in front of us.

My dear grieving friends, may you look forward this Christmas season.



Amy Roberts
heartofthematteronline.com



Imagine for a moment a mobile. All the shapes are of different weight and design, but they hang together harmoniously, each catching the sunlight and creating a melodious rhythm in the wind. Now snip one of the pieces; there is chaos. Each of the remaining pieces smash into one another, and what was a melodious sound is now a clanging, almost wailing in the wind. When a child is snatched by death from a family, the results are the same, multiplied innumerable times.

Stephen Barrett, TCF/Ottawa, IL

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Christmas cards

To send or not to send, what to write, how to cope with sending a card and to include or not include our child's name in some way... That is a dilemma facing bereaved parents every year. The first couple of years after James died we did not send any cards. Then when I wanted to send cards, it seemed impossible to sign just my husband's name and mine and leave James out. How to compromise and do something in between? Every year we've added some verse or quote or phrase that includes James in the card; usually on the other side of the card is something special for that year. This year I found cards that had three ornaments on the front—three is symbolic to me representing mom, dad, and James. Beside the first red and silver ornament, "Remembering the past," next to the second green and silver ornament, "Celebrating the present," and next to the third blue and silver ornament, "Believing

in the future," these quotes seem so especially appropriate to how far we've come, this is our 12th Christmas without James. Then I wanted to come up with a poem about ornaments. This is what I wrote opposite the card's inside greeting of "Wishing you a delightful Christmas filled with joyful memories and bright hopes" which again is so perfect, what I savor the most about Christmas are memories.

Hoping everyone has a Christmas with treasured memories of years past, special new memories and treasured gifts of love, hope, joy, and peace...



Ornamental Memories

Ornaments brightly decorate the Christmas tree,
Some delicate, some sturdy, some old, some new,
Different shapes and sizes,
Crystal, glass, wood, or ceramic,
Ornaments dangle on the branches,
Catching colors from a window, or a candle,
Or a twinkling light.
The old ornaments bring back memories of Christmases gone by,
The new ornaments represent hope & promises for the future.
And when the holidays are over,
The ornaments safely wrapped & packed away in their boxes till next holiday season,
We still recall the priceless ornaments
That are our precious memories.
Some funny, some happy, some sad,
Times of celebrations, birthdays, holidays, and vacations.
They glow and sparkle in our minds, catching the light of our memory
From hearing a favorite song, or seeing a familiar sight.
We never pack away these ornamental memories,
We recall them fondly and often, they are cherished & treasured.
They brightly and forever decorate our family tree
Throughout all seasons of our life.



Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Compassionate Friends of the Quad Cities

Monthly Meeting: Thursday, January 24, 2013, at 6:30 pm

Bethany for Children & Families, 1830 6th Avenue, Moline, Illinois, 61265

Call Rosemary Shoemaker (309.945.6738) for information and directions.

From I-74: exit at 7th Avenue and go west to 18th Street. Turn right at 18th Street and enter the parking lot on the right, immediately north of the alleyway.

Next meeting: February 21, 2013, at 6:30 pm at Bethany for Children & Families.

Quad City Chapter Website: <http://www.orgsites.com/il/tcfquadcityareachapter/index.html>

The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine	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)260-3626 for directions or information, or contact them at linmac67@machlink.com .
Helping Heavy Hearts—Grief Support Group	Meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm in HomeRidge Inn Suites in Bettendorf east of the Bennigan's Restaurant. Please check at the front desk for room location. Please contact Kirby White ahead of time to verify the meeting location; komb100@msn.com or (563)271-5908.
Mom's Group meets in Aledo	A group of moms whose child(ren) have died 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 403 SW 10th Avenue, Aledo. For directions or more information, call Kay Forret at (309)582-7789.
Rick's House of Hope	This is a community resource 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. Groups meet on Monday and Tuesday nights. For more information, call Emily Gordon, program director, by phone (563-324-9580) or email (egordon@rhoh.org) or go to www.genesishealth.com .
MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support	A peer group for suicide grief support meets on the third Friday of every month, 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Frances Banta Waggner Library, 505 10th Street, DeWitt, Iowa 54742. Contact Betsy Loehr, (563)843-3655, there.is.hope@hotmail.com — http://www.mjlfoundation.org .
SHARE	A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, still-birth, or early infant death. SHARE meets the third Thursday at 6:30 pm in the Adler Room #1 in the lower level of Genesis Heart Institute, 1236 East Rusholme Street, Davenport, Iowa. Questions? Contact Chalyn Fornero-Green at (309)373-2568 or chalyn@shareqc.com or www.shareqc.com .
Alive Alone	Alive Alone is for bereaved parents whose only or all children are deceased. This is a self-help network and publications including a bi-monthly newsletter to promote communication and healing. Email: alivealone@bright.net -- Website: www.alivealone.org .



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. 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

Mission Statement

The mission of The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter is when a child dies at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

Vision Statement

The vision statement of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us.

The Quad City Area Chapter of The

Compassionate Friends meets on the fourth Thursday of the month in Moline, 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 happenings of interest to all TCFers. To subscribe to the e-newsletter, visit the TCF National Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter Link. This newsletter is available to everyone.

If 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.

If 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.

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

If 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 61242, (309)654-2727.

Thank you to **Bethany for Children & Families and Maggie's Fund** for printing this month's newsletter. If you would be willing to prepare the newsletter for the post office, please contact Jerry and Carol Webb (309) 654-2727.



Quad City Angel of Hope

The Angel of Hope Memorial Garden has a future site. The city of Moline has graciously donated a site in Moline Memorial Park, 5001 34th Avenue, Moline, Illinois, for the future Quad City Angel of Hope and its landscaping. A diagram of a possible landscaping idea that was created by Meyers Landscaping appears on the opposite page, as well as a diagram of the cemetery with the location of the Angel of Hope indicated, and a photograph of the location. Other ideas will be developed for the Angel of Hope Planning Committee to consider. If you would like to be part of the Angel of Hope Planning Committee, please contact Lisa Ornelis at (309)737-3448 or Rosemary Shoemaker at (309)945-6738.

Bethany for Children & Families is acting as the fiscal agent for the project and has set-up a restricted account for any donation made for the creation of the Angel of Hope monument. It is anticipated that the completed memorial will cost \$37,500. Donations can be mailed to:

Angel of Hope Monument
 c/o Bethany for Children & Families
 1830 6th Avenue
 Moline, Illinois 61265

About the Angel of Hope

The Angel of Hope, an exact replica of the Christmas Box Angel statue located in Salt Lake City, Utah, stands as a symbol of hope for all parents who have experienced the death of a child. Right now the nearest statues are in Rockford, Illinois; Iowa City, Iowa; and Coal City, Illinois. Peoria is in the early stages of obtaining a statue.

Lisa Ornelis has two deceased children and has been earnestly pursuing a place for all bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings to honor and remember their loved ones.

She would like to have a committee to create policies, make decisions, etc., regarding this project.

If you are interested in joining the committee, please contact: qcangelofhope@gmail.com and/or the phone number for the project is (309)737-3448.



Moline Memorial Park Cemetery
 5001 34th Avenue
 Moline, Illinois 61265-5600
 (309) 797-0790
 FAX (309) 797-0728

