



Dear Compassionate Friends,

We recently facilitated the donation of our grandson's walker to an organization that transports used medical equipment to people in need in third world countries where something like a pediatric walker would be far beyond the means of a family with a child in need. Last Saturday, we received a nice thank you note from the local representative. I was totally blindsided by the flood of tears that filled my eyes and the intense emotion I struggled with for a while. It has been just two years since our grandson's seizure and while he still faces many challenges, he has made amazing progress and no longer needs the walker. And so, I was totally unprepared for the wave of grief that hit me so suddenly, triggered by a very gracious note. While our grief for our grandson's situation is not the same as the grief of a bereaved parent, the blindsiding nature of grief is the same. We can be moving forward, coping, re-negotiating our life without our child when suddenly something, perhaps seemingly insignificant, will trigger a wave of grief, and without warning we are struggling to keep our head above water.

After our daughter died, it was things like pregnant women, little girls in Easter finery, a family gathering with all my family in attendance (except our family had an empty spot), or seeing a friend's child the age that Anna should have been. For others it may be a song, a favorite restaurant, a certain aisle in the grocery store, seeing children heading off to school or playing in the park or the figure of someone who just for a moment you think might be your child. As the years pass, the triggers are fewer and further between but they will probably never completely disappear because your beloved child, their memory and their loss will remain with you always. As hard as those grief trigger moments may be, I think they are useful. Once they are past, they are a reminder of both how far we have come and perhaps how far we may still have to go, as we both grieve and grow.

*Sincerely,
 Jerry and Carol Webb*

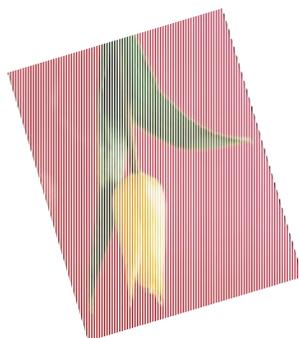
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You are not alone in your grief.

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.

To



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 U.S. POSTAGE
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 Rock Island, Illinois



Loving Listeners

If you need someone who understands and will listen, feel free to call or email (if address is given):

Michelle Curtis
309-644-0486

Judy Delvecchio
563-349-8895 or
delvecchiojudy@hotmail.com

Kay Miller
309-738-4915

Kirby White
563-271-5908 or
kombo100@msn.com

Michelle, Judy, Kirby, and Kay are willing to take calls from bereaved parents, grandparents, or siblings who want to talk to someone who cares that they don't feel alone.

TCF "Online Support Community" Offers Opportunity for Grief Sharing

The Compassionate Friends national website offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends, friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. These include "Pregnancy and Infant Loss," "Bereaved 2 Years and Under," "Bereaved 2 Years and Over," "No Surviving Children," "Survivors of Suicide." There are also sessions for surviving siblings.

The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit www.compassionatefriends.org and click "Online Support" in the "Resources" column.

TCF National Office Seeks Your Stories and Articles!

For many years, The Compassionate Friends National Office has provided on its Leadership Site stories and poems by TCF members that can be cut and pasted into chapter newsletters around the country. The National Office, in order to better serve its newsletter editors and members who receive support from chapter newsletters, has committed to doubling, over the next two years, the number of articles and poems available to the chapter newsletter editors. Currently, the Newsletter Editor Database has 500 stories and 150 poems. The National Office would like to include your personal grief related stories and poems. Please submit your articles and poems to TCF's Public Awareness Coordinator, Wayne Loder, at wayne@compassionatefriends.org. Please include your name and chapter affiliation.



"Pick more daisies" was the most popular expression in our family. I picked it up from a magazine article about a 94 year old lady in Kentucky who, when asked what she would do differently if she had her life to live over, responded "I would take more chances; I would eat more ice cream and less beans; I would have more real troubles but fewer imaginary ones; I would climb more mountains; I would swim more rivers; and I would pick more daisies."

Our son, Mark, seized the daisy expression as the theme both for his life and his entrance exam essay at UCLA. It helped him live his brief 18 years; his essay helped him get an academic scholarship.

Daisies became our family flower. They marked our attitude about living. And they marked our son's memorial service. After it was over, his friends and fraternity brothers each threw a daisy into the ocean. Daisies still mark his grave every week. It has taken me almost two years to return to really thinking about daisies and what that quote by a 94-year-old lady really means. During that time I made a pretty big mess of things. I did the best I could, but I was often going through the motions outside, but empty inside.

To me, what this quote means is we really do have to pull ourselves together again and go on. Dr. Charles Heuser, a former pastor at our church, notes "going through the steps of grief is like walking through the valley and shadow of death. Keep walking, but don't camp there."

Our children would not want us to "camp there," but to go pick more dai-

sies—to somehow live an even more meaningful life in their name. As I go on I am truly a different person. I don't suffer fools or superficiality very well any more. As one of my best friends said..."I get tired of beige people." Yet, I will drop everything to help another bereaved parent. I certainly have more "real troubles and fewer imaginary ones." But it's OK—I like myself better that way.

And I am returning to embrace life each day again. But this time I am following my heart instead of my expected career. I am taking more chances, climbing more unfamiliar mountains, and picking daisies in huge handfuls.

Mark would want it so.

Rich Edler
TCF South Bay, CA
In Memory of my son, Mark

Compassionate Friends Offers Grief Related Webinar Series

The Compassionate Friends is expanding its outreach to bereaved families by offering a series of free online grief related seminars. The webinars, to be held once per month, are on various grief topics and guests are well-known experts in the field. Webinars have included such topics as "Handling Grief Through the Holidays," "Getting 'Stuck' and 'Unstuck,'" "Caring for Your Health While Grieving," and "Coping with Guilt During Bereavement." These webinars were recorded and are available to view on demand on TCF's national website.

To reserve a seat for the next webinar (or to view the previous month's webinar), go to http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Special-Events/Webinars.aspx. Webinars are being archived in TCF's Webinar Library, accessible from the webinar page.

Love Gifts

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.

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 five years of The Quad City Chapter of The Compassionate Friends Newsletter. They are downloadable in Adobe Acrobat format.

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.



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.

CHALKBOARD REFLECTIONS

Journey one day at a time!
Don't try to solve all the problems of your life at once.
Each day's survival is a triumph.

Earl Grollman

From *Living When a Loved One Has Died*

A Promise

The colors of life change as we go through grief.
We begin black and white;
Then gray settles over us, seeping into our pores, surrounding us,
Smothering us for a long period of time; then slowly the colors change.
We may not even be aware of their changing
'til one day we see a rainbow,
And know it was meant for us.

Faye Harden TCF/Tuscaloosa, AL

**THERE ARE THINGS THAT WE DON'T WANT TO HAPPEN BUT
HAVE TO ACCEPT, THINGS WE DON'T WANT TO KNOW BUT
HAVE TO LEARN, AND PEOPLE WE CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT BUT
HAVE TO LET GO.**

AUTHOR UNKNOWN - TCF NEWSLETTER - TUSCALOOSA AL

Good memories are the perennials that bloom again after the hard winter of grief begins to yield to hope.

Sascha Wagner

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shells as we left the beach to have lunch. After we parted, I returned to the shore to walk alone before heading home.

I find that these days of remembrance bring a sense of freedom and lightness to my heart. I do not know why that is



so, but it has been true since the first year. May this be true for you and your beloved children, those who are with you still and those who have gone too soon, as you create your own special ways of remembering and celebrating their lives.

Kitty Reeve,
TCF/Marin County, CA

Never Really Over

Many counselors speak of grief never really ending, which is true, and of "heavier" grief enduring for two to three years. From the many bereaved parents I have known personally or professionally, I would say that for most the second year is harder than the first because by then the reality of the death and just how long a time they will have to live without their child's physical presence is really becoming clearer. Grief continues to be difficult through the fifth year. Even parents who may have resigned themselves to their fate and appear to be coping better are still experiencing intense hurt.

It is not uncommon to visit with parents and learn that they've experienced the death of a child 40 or 50 years ago and have them tear up still as they tell it. This does not mean that they never dealt with their loss. It's just that as long as we live, it's never really over. Life can be good and beautiful and meaningful again, and yet there will still be moments of sadness and longing for our children and what might have been.

Deb Kosmer
excerpted from an article in
We Need Not Walk Alone
Winter 06-07

Seven Years

It's a date we wish would never roll around, the day that marks another year since our child died. It's often difficult to know what to do for ourselves and what will be meaningful to our surviving children, if we are fortunate enough to have them. I want to share with you some ideas, some original and some learned from others. These are on my mind, as last week marked the seventh year since Philip died.

One year I made albums for both surviving sons, with photographs that took them through the years of growing up with each other and Philip. I added notes I'd saved that they had written to me or to one another. One year I sent special T-shirts; the next it was a new book by a favorite author. Another year it was gift certificates for sports items, since they all three played sports together. Stephen used it to get a baseball glove, and David got a backpack.

This year I sent them a new book on the Chicago Cubs, because the boys spent a lot of good times together at Wrigley Field. I also sent them photos of the three of them together at different ages and a poem by Philip about an adventure they had shared when they were teenagers.



For myself, I always take the day that Philip died off. My ritual now includes meeting my friend Nell at a beach. Her son, John, died the year before Philip and we celebrate both boys on each of their anniversary dates. (Nell and I met at a TCF meeting five years ago.)

We usually bring flowers to the beach, and this year Nell began to put the stems in the sand. Soon we had a colorful beach garden of irises and daisies, freesia and roses. We lit a candle, and after a few minutes of silence, we shared memories of both our beloved sons. I read some of Philip's writings to Nell; she told me about the band John played guitar in. We tossed the flowers in the ocean waves, and then gathered sea

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Continued on page 10

Spring

is a time for growth and renewal. As a child, teen, and then an adult, I always looked forward to spring with anticipation. The thoughts of green grass, budding trees, and blooming flowers of all varieties and colors were a welcome change from the long cold, dreary Michigan winter. It was magical time of year. When I was a child, each member of my family watched anxiously to lay claim to being the first to spot the familiar hop-hop of the returning robin, the first sign that spring was actually here. We could finally take off the gloves, shed our heavy winter coats and boots, and roll down the windows on the car to hear the laughter of children playing outside and smell the fresh mown grass as we'd drive down the road.

That's the way it was for me on the first day of spring 12 years ago. I remarked how beautiful the tulips looked as they danced in the wind. The trees were budding, and there was magic in the air. My kids and I shed our heavy winter coats, flinging them in the backseat, rolled down the windows of the car, and started singing in celebration of the beautiful day we were experiencing.

And then . . . IT happened.

Suddenly, undeniably, horrifically, my world, my spring, my life changed.

My 5-year-old son, Stephen, died that first spring day. His 8-year-old sister, Stephanie, my firstborn, died a few hours later, enough past midnight to list the next day on the death certificate. Gone was the laughter, the mag-

ic, the beauty of my world.

The springs that followed were no longer filled with anticipation or magic. They were dark and ugly and filled with memories too painful to talk about. I wanted nothing to do with "spring." If H.G. Wells's time machine had existed, I would have entered it at the end of winter and fast-forwarded through spring.

As time marched on and one spring followed another, I learned an important lesson in my journey through grief. As much as I wanted to, I couldn't fast-forward through the hard spots. I couldn't go around them. I had to go through them slowly, like a paddling through water, so I could get to the other side. Somehow doing this taught me to cope, to endure, to face tomorrow and all the first days of spring that followed. It's much like the transformation that takes place when a butterfly emerges from a dark, cold, seemingly lifeless chrysalis.

A few years ago, as winter was drawing to a close and first day of spring was quickly approaching, I looked out the kitchen window toward the budding pear tree in the backyard and discovered it was full of chirping robins. I smiled and knew that spring somehow wasn't going to be so bad. It was once again time to enjoy the smells of the season, the beauty of the budding trees, and the magic that the season had to offer. And I knew Stef and Steve would have wanted that for me.

Pat Loder – TCF Executive Director
from *We Need Not Walk Alone – Spring 2003*

Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Compassionate Friends of the Quad Cities

Monthly Meeting: Thursday, April 25, 2013 at 6:30 pm

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

Call Rosemary Shoemaker (309.945.6738) or Bill Steinhauer 309.736.6601 for information and directions. Directions to Bethany are: from the 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: May 23, 2013, at 6:30 pm at Bethany for Children & Families.
Quad City Chapter Website: <http://www.orgsites.com/il/tcfquadcityearchapter/index.html>

<p>The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Helping Heavy Hearts—Grief Support Group</p>	<p>We are a support group for people who have suffered a tragic loss of life whether a child, sibling, or other. We are great at listening and offer tender shoulders when you contact us. We are flexible to meet any time of day or night. Death needs no appointment and neither do you. We are not professional counselors, but we do have a degree in life experiences. Please contact Kirby White, 563-271-5908 or kombol100@msn.com</p>
<p>Rick's House of Hope</p>	<p>This is a community resource for children and adolescents dealing with grief. 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. The group for 14 year olds and older meets Sunday from 3:00 pm until 5:00 pm. All meetings are held at 5022 Northwest Boulevard, Davenport, 52806. For more information, call Emily Gordon, Program Director, by phone (563-324-9580) or email (egordon@rhoh.org) or go to www.rhoh.org.</p>
<p>MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support</p>	<p>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 Waggoner Library, 505 10th Street, DeWitt, Iowa 54742. Contact Betsy Loehr, (563)843-3655, there.is.hope@hotmail.com — http://www.mjlfoundation.org.</p>
<p>MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support</p>	<p>Survivors of Suicide Support Group Meets on second Monday of each month in Fulton, Illinois, at the Second Reformed Church, 703 - 14th Avenue, Fulton, Illinois 61252 from 7:00pm - 9:00pm. Contact: Laura Wessels, 815-589-3425 or laura@secondreformedchurch.net</p>
<p>SHARE</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Alive Alone</p>	<p>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: alivelone@bright.net -- Website: www.alivelone.org.</p>



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, 650 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, and everyone who finds us will be helped.

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
<http://www.orgsites.com/il/tcfquadcityearchapter/index.html>

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.



I Am Spring

I am the beginning.
I am budding promise.
I spill cleansing tears of life.
From cloudy vessels
Creating muddy puddles
Where single-cell creatures abide
And splashing children play.
I am new green growth.
I softly flow from winter's barren hand.
On gentle breeze I fly – embracing sorrow.

With compassion, we feather nests
Where winged voices sing winter-spring duets.
As frozen ice transforms to playful stream
I whisper truth-life is change.

I am spring.
I bless long, dark wintry days.
I crown mankind's pain
With starry skies
In deepest night

Lighting solitary paths from sorrow to joy
As the wheel of life turns round and round.

Carol Clum,
in memory of her son, Jason,
and her granddaughter, Hannah.

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. 3-D renderings of the proposed Angel of Hope Memorial Garden are contained below and on the next page. Fund raising efforts by the Chapter's Steering Committee had started in earnest in the hopes of establishing the memorial garden in the next 12 months.

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 approximately \$50,000. 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.

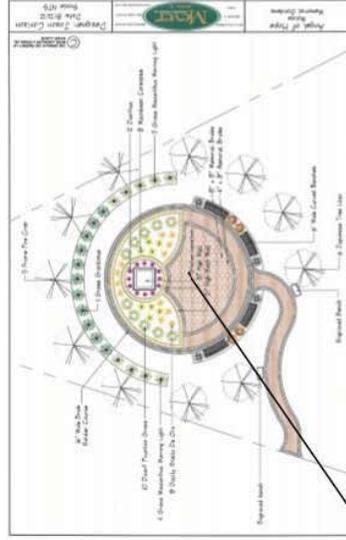
Three dimensional renderings of the proposed Quad City Angel of Hope Memorial Garden to be erected in the Moline Memorial Cemetery.



Color versions of these drawings are available on-line at bethany-qc.org.



The memorial will have areas with designated paving stones that are suitable for inscription. These stones will be available to parents, siblings, and families who would like to remember a deceased child, adult-child, sibling, or grandchild. Further information will be printed in future newsletters.



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