



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

## Newsletter

*A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents*



Volume 3 Issue 6

June, 2008

### Brevard Chapter Web Site

[www.tcfobrevardnc.org/tcf/home.htm](http://www.tcfobrevardnc.org/tcf/home.htm)

### TCF Brevard Newsletter

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[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

## Monthly Meeting

*Always the **second Monday** of the month.*

**June 9, 2008**

**Program:**

**“Handling Father’s Day”**

*We will read short poem/story about Father’s Day and the many challenges that come with this holiday.*

### **Meeting Time & Location:**

**7:00 PM**

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

22 Fisher Road, Brevard, NC

**Compassionate Friends  
A Safe Place to Talk**



There is a need to talk, without trying to give reasons. No reason is going to be acceptable when you hurt so much. A hug, the touch of a hand, expressions of concern, a willing listener was and still is the things that helped the most. The people who were the greatest help were not judgmental. It’s most helpful when people understand that what is needed is to talk about it and that this is part of the grief process.

### **TO OUR NEW MEMBERS**

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

### **TO OUR MEMBERS WHO ARE FURTHER DOWN THE “GRIEF ROAD”**

We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting we have new parents. THINK BACK – what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF “veterans” to welcome you, share your grief, encourage you and tell you, “your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!”

## TCF OF BREVARD CHAPTER NEWS

Hello Everyone!

The Steering Committee has not establish a meeting date yet, but will soon, but Sharon Palan has graciously offered her home again, and the location by the lake in Connestee Falls to hold our annual Butterfly Release and picnic in the Fall. Those of you, who attended last year's Butterfly Release, know what a beautiful day it was, and the good time we all had honoring our children. If there are any parents who would like help in putting the event together, please let me know.

The following new parents attended our meeting last month:

- ❖ Maria and Scott Gower – parents of Matthew Mendoza Gower- 24 years old.
- ❖ Heather Strickler – parent of Olivia Claire Stickler – 2 months.

**Telephone Friends:** I would like to publish a list of volunteers to become telephone friends willing to take calls to talk or just listen when parents need to talk. So if you would like to become a Telephone Friends, please contact me.



If you would like to have an article, poem, etc printed in our newsletter, please mail to TCF-Brevard, PO Box 304, Brevard, NC 28712 OR e-mail to:

[mgollnic@gte.net](mailto:mgollnic@gte.net) by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the next newsletter's release.

*(Please be sure to put "newsletter" or "TCF" in the subject line.)*

## COME ON, DAD!

The sun's shining, not a cloud to be seen

A day made in Heaven, isn't it keen?

Wow, can you believe such a glorious sight,

A dream come true, a fantasy delight!

Dad! Hey, Dad! Something's not right.

Mom's upstairs crying, Did you have a fight?

No one is laughing or having any fun.

Dad, what's wrong? Is it something I've done?

Come on, Dad, this is your day.

Get up, get going, come on and play.

Why are you sitting and staring at space?

I'm here, Dad! Can't you see I'm right here?

I'm here in your heart, isn't it clear?

I'm here in your thoughts and all that you do.

I've never been gone from any of you.

Our love lives forever. It won't go away.

That's why we'll always share this day.

Put on a smile, not an ugly ole frown.

Come on, Dad...Don't let me down!

Enjoy your day. Share it with me.

Laugh and love our whole family.

I'm here, Dad, like I'll always be,

Come on, Dad. Do it! Do it for me!

By Carol Cichella  
TCF Rockford, IL.

## **FATHER'S DAY**

*Every father believes in his role as protector of his family He has been assigned the job of fixer and problem solver. He has been told since his youngest days that he must be strong---must not cry.*

*But each father among us has had to face that point where no amount of fixing, problem solving and protecting has been able to stop our child's death. And inside, we must ask ourselves about our failure, and we must face our lack of omnipotence.*

*Father's Day is often a forgotten holiday, overshadowed by the longer-standing tribute to mothers. But for the bereaved father it is a poignant reminder of bitter sweetness; sweet in the memory of a loved, now lost, child; bitter for the death and pain and recognition of inability to stop what happened.*

*Fathers do not often have a chance to share their hurts and concerns. Oftentimes they are unable to do so, a remnant of childhood learning's about the strength and stoicism of "big boy." A father may even be uncomfortable opening up to his wife, and the wife who pushes him to talk may be pushing too hard.*

*Father's Day does not have to be a time when everyone pours out of the woodwork to say, "I'm sorry we haven't talked. Let's do it now." But it can be a time when the family gives Dad a hug, does something special, helps with the chores, and mostly, lets him know how important and needed and loved he is*

*It is some of these things that he has lost with the death of a child. And, like Mother's Day, the day set aside for Fathers does not have to be limited to a Sunday in June. It can be any day and every day. Fathers often show their hurts differently, often internally.*

*But They Do Hurt.*

*By Gerry Hunt, TCF White River Junction, Vermont.*



**Happy Father's Day**

We would like to wish each and every Father an especially kind and peaceful Father's Day. May you spend it with memories of happier times and surrounded by family and friends whom you love and who love you!

The **June** Newsletter is dedicated to the memory of all our children...gone too soon...but never forgotten.

We Remember their **Birthday** and their **Angel** Dates.



<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Birthday</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Family</u>
Tim Goar	06/01		Son	Elaine and Jim Goar
Keith James Nelson	06/11		Son	Francine Manion
Belinda Kathleen Bach	06/16		Daughter	Belinda Bach
Steven Gerard Smith		06/23	Son	Caroline and Steve Smith
Jetske Christina Thrasher Resch		06/24	Daughter	Helen and Jerry Thrasher
Sam Cox	06/30		Brother	Melissa Murphy

**“A greater love comes from your deepest pain  
And there’s power in that love to help you rise again”**  
*From “A Little Farther Down the Road” by Alan Pedersen*

Every month at our chapter meeting, we provide a birthday table. In the month of your child’s birthday, if you are ready to do so, please bring pictures and small mementos of your child to place on the table. You may also bring a favorite cake, cookies, or other snacks, flowers, candles or balloons for the table in memory of your child. We do this to celebrate our children’s lives and to share their special day with others who understand.

**On the advice of the TCF national office, we are only including the month and date – not year – of birthdays and angel dates.**

## Love Gifts – A Way to Remember

There are no dues to belong to the Compassionate friends, because we have already paid the ultimate price; the loss of our loved one(s). A **Love Gift** is a gift of money given in Honor Of a child who has died from their family members or as a Memorial from friends. Your gifts are tax deductible and are used to reach out to other bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Your gifts support this newsletter, our TCF Library, Brochures and other Chapter Expenses.

In Memory of:

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From:

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TCF of Brevard  
PO Box 304  
Brevard, NC 28712



**We acknowledge the following Love Gift with sincere gratitude and deep appreciation towards the ongoing of our newsletter, material distribution and other outreach:**

**In Memory of All the Children Gone Too Soon but Never Forgotten  
– By Mountain First Bank and Trust**

## Ideas for Writing Your Story or Journal



Recently, several new TCF members have asked me for suggestions about what they can do at the early stages of grief and what helped me in my experience in those earlier days of grief when my son, Bobby, died.

In thinking about that, I remember my *journal* and what a meaningful and effective way of venting that was for me. As you may know, very often our close friends think we should be “moving on with life” or “letting go,” etc. Unfortunately, for me, they just didn't get it. So, I looked back through some past newsletter issues and found an article on ideas for writing your story or journal – I hope you find it helpful: Bereaved parents who have written about their loss unanimously agree that writing unleashes enormous stress and pain. In my own experience, I recall one night when I locked myself in the bathroom and wrote a

long letter to my son, Bobby. It was my chance to express my feelings without having them diminished by well meaning and caring people around me trying to be helpful. I will never forget the pressure that letter released for me. Although the letter was not saved, the positive result was everlasting.

Have you ever thought of writing your story or keeping a journal? You may find it helpful to clarify your thoughts about your child by recording your feelings in the form of a letter. Write a letter to your child, expressing your thoughts and feelings about the following:

- A special memory that I have about you.
- What I miss the most about you and our relationship.
- What I wish I'd said or hadn't said.

- *What I'd like to ask you.*
- *What I wish we'd done or hadn't done.*
- *What I've had the hardest time dealing with.*
- *Ways in which you will continue to live on in me.*
- *Special ways I have for keeping my memories of you alive.*

Choose one or several ideas that have significance for you or start at the top of the list and work your way down. These topics may serve to help you come up with your own ideas, specific to your situation and relationship. Give yourself this exercise as a gift.

If you would like to share your writing at a TCF meeting, please do. You never know how many other parents will be touched and benefit from your experience.

by Pat Akery,  
Chapter Leader,  
TCF, Medford, Oregon



## ***Our Credo...***

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. ©2007



The Compassionate Friends of Brevard

PO Box 304  
Brevard, NC 28712

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**June 2008 Newsletter**

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