



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Bluegrass Chapter Newsletter

**"We need not walk alone."
www.tcfbluegrass.org**

P.O. Box 647, Nicholasville, Kentucky 40340

July 2011

Chapter Co-Leaders

Suzie McDonald
catholic20@windstream.net

Janie Fields
butterflymom@windstream.net

Treasurer
David Fields

Newsletter Editor
Lisa Fields

**Bluegrass Chapter
The Compassionate Friends
Regional Coordinator**
Dusty Rhodes
(502) 330-4769

Telephone Friends

Sometimes it helps to be able to talk to someone who understands. The following bereaved parents are willing to provide support and comfort.

Jim Sims
(859) 858-8288
(859) 797-2168

Mary Camp
(859) 737-0180

Suzie McDonald
(859) 576-7680

Janie Fields
(859) 881-1991

Welcome

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the new attendees at our recent meetings. We hope you were able to take home at least a small glimmer of hope.

New to Lexington:

**Jackson and Teresa McReynolds, parents of
Adeline Kennedy McReynolds**

New to Winchester -

**Ruthie and James Willoughby, parents of
Justin Branham**

While we are very sorry for the reason you are here, we are glad that you found us.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you would like to give of your time to our chapter, we always welcome volunteers. This is your chance to give back and to help out with the efforts of our chapter. Volunteer opportunities range from helping to set up a meeting, facilitating meetings, and just helping in any way that you can. This is a great way to give back in memory of your child after you have found hope, encouragement and strength from TCF. Making the change from needing and finding help to giving help and support to new parents is another healing milestone.

Create a Page in Memory of Your Child

Janie and I would like to invite any of our bereaved parents seasoned and new to do a newsletter page in memory of their son and daughter. If you interested, please contact Lisa at garandsmom@yahoo.com. We would love to hear your stories.

Love to you all:
Suzie & Janie

Coming in September

Our meetings are changing to the 1st Tuesday of each month!

Same time and location - different day!

Our newsletter will change to an every-other-month

distribution at that time also.

**The Compassionate Friends
National Office**
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522
(877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

*Our Children
 Forever Loved and Remembered*

July Birthdates

- 7/1 **Carrie Elizabeth Griffin** Daughter of David and Debbie Griffin
 7/2 **Dusty Riggs** Son of Sharon Bellows
 7/3 **Scott Carter Jeffers** Son of Susan Jeffers
 7/4 **Justin Branham** Son of Ruthie and James Willoughby
 7/4 **John Harold Putman** Son of John and Harriet Putman
 7/5 **Taran Ray Thomas** Son of John and Keila Thomas
 07/06 **Ashley Riggs** Son of Sharon Bellows
 7/7 **Scherrie Lyn Rutherford** Daughter of Dee and Jim Whitis
 7/7 **Zane Gregory Brown** Son of Gale and Joe Brown
 7/8 **Timothy Richard Woodworth** Son of Richard and Sharon Woodworth
 7/10 **Mark Overstreet** 7/30 Son of Kay Overstreet
 7/11 **Sherilyn Annette Adams** Granddaughter of Ann Milton Adams
 7/12 **Heidi Allen Hunt** Daughter of Judy B. Horn
 7/13 **Kayleigh Page Devasher**, Daughter of Chip & Missy Devasher
 7/15 **Richard (Rick) Allen** Son of Richard and Linda Allen
 7/15 **Brandon Todd Wilson** Son of Bob and Starr Wilson
 7/19/**Ian Samuel Napier** Son of Jason & Dezna Napier
 7/18 **Larry "Boo" Crawford, Jr.** Son of Evelyn Dee Crawford
 7/18 **James William Hooper, Jr.** Son of Michelle Hooper
 7/19 **Annie Burke Courtney** Daughter of Paul and Anne Courtney
 7/20 **Christy Weldon** Daughter of Connie Weldon
 7/21 **Kyle Moore** Son of Georgia and Doug Moore
 7/22 **Bill Mahan III** Son of Bill and the late Susie Mahan
 7/22 **Nathan Winston Crim** Son of Becky & Keith LaVey and Howard B. Crim
 7/23 **Jonathan Brewer** Son of Teresa and Don Bush
 7/25 **Charles Hayden "Chip" Lampe** Son of Betsy Lampe
 7/26 **Jim Taylor, II** son of Dinah and Jim Taylor
 7/25 **Ryan Gregory Yeiser** Son of George Gregory and Rita Yeiser
 7/30 **Hillary Paige Troidl** Daughter of Jim and Barb Troidl
 7/31 **Jonathan Hepburn** Son of Jo Hepburn



But It Hurts-Differently
 By Earl A. Grollman

There is no way to predict how you will feel. The reactions of grief are not like recipes, with given ingredients and certain results. Each person mourns in a different way. You may cry hysterically. Or you may remain outwardly controlled, showing little emotion. You may lash out in anger against your family and friends, or you may express your gratitude for their concern and dedication. You may be calm one moment—in turmoil the next. Reactions are varied and contradictory. Grief is universal. At the same time it is extremely personal.



Our Children
Forever Loved and Remembered

July Remembrance Dates

- 7/2 **Glen D. Lay** Son of Erwin and Fay Lay
7/2 **Kyle Moore** Son of Georgia and Doug Moore
7/2 **Anthony Eugene Gay** Son of Larry and Gayle Gay
7/3 **Barclay "Bart" J. Knafel** Son of Karen and John Knafel
7/3 **Doug Steinkuhl** Son of Gary and Barb Steinkuhl
7/6 **Andy McLaughlin** Son of Iris McLaughlin
7/6 **Ruth Ann Proutey** Daughter of Sarah and George Hudgins
7/6 **Thomas Monroe Routt** Son of Stephanie Routt
7/7 **Jayne Lynn Wawrzyniak** Daughter of Loretta Wawrzyniak
7/9 **Mark Davis** Son of Harold and Jeannie Davis
7/9 **Joseph Lewellyn Powell** Son of Celia and David Powell
7/9 **Jeremy Daegan Hicks** Son of Joe and Sheila Hicks
7/11 **Leslie Vasser** Daughter of Ed and Libby Vasser
7/11 **James Richard Dunn** Son of Juanita Allen
7/12 **John Blair Potter** Son of Susan and James Potter
7/13 **Juan Pirir Cux** Son of Donna and Dave Uckotter
7/13 **Phillip Old** Son of Priscilla Old
7/14 **Michael Bransford Burns** Son of Emily and Mike Burns
7/15 **Evan Charles Thomas** Son of John and Keila Thomas
7/15 **Kelly Renee Powell** Daughter of Cecil and Barbara Powell
7/17 **Matthew Charles Estes** Son of Barry and Cheri Catron
7/17 **Scarlett Lynn Miller** Daughter of Ronald and Ruby Miller
7/17 **Joe Frank Banks** Son of Barbara Kinne
7/19 **Ian Samuel Napier** Son of Jason & Dezna Napier
7/17 **Isaiah Thomas Stewart** Son of Connie Stewart
7/18 **Adam Harold Cave** Son of Mark Cave and Krystal Landers
7/19 **Bradley Johnson** Son of Don and Sharon Johnson
7/19 **Kayleigh Page Devasher**, Daughter of Chip & Missy Devasher
7/20 **Michael Rhodes Burton** Son of Harold and Pat Burton
7/20 **Keeley Knuteson Hollingsworth** Daughter of Berkeley & Patty Hollingsworth
7/23 **Eugene Swisher, Jr.** Son of Nancy and Eugene Swisher
7/25 **Kiah Nicole Milsom** Daughter of Lisa Scott
7/27 **Terry Hayes** Son of Patricia Morgan
7/28 **Jonathan M. Bates** Son of Jeane Bates
7/29 **Margaret Angela Hunt** Daughter of Linda & James Litzinger
7/29 **Kevin Patrick Hogge** Son of Burl and Linda Hogge
7/30 **Jackie Peel** Son of Carl and Pansy Peel
7/30 **Mark Overstreet** Son of Kay Overstreet
7/31 **Ryan Jason Ross** Son of Mitzi and Rick Holbrook



VACATIONS

By Betty Ewart, Editor, **BE GOOD TO YOURSELF THIS SUMMER**

Adapted from **THE HOPE LINE**

From the Newsletter of the Tampa Bay Chapter of BP/USA

Whether you are grieving or not, it is wise to get away and “recreate” yourself”. When you are grieving it is even more important to relax and take time to be good to yourself. Grief work takes an amazing amount off physical, emotional and spiritual energy. The following are some random thoughts which we hope you will find helpful.

Get outside as often as possible, even if only in the backyard. The warmth of the sun, soft breezes against your skin, the scent of grass and flowers and the chirping of birds all fill your senses and help to make you feel better and more alive.

Read a good book. Light reading helps to take your mind off grief.

Exercise helps to work off anger, frustration and depression. Search out local parks and nature trails— even walk around your own block. Brisk walking, bike riding and swimming are all great ways to reduce tension. Be sure to observe safety rules and, if you can, invite a friend, family member or another grieving person to join you.

Try to visit places where there is water. Watching water and hearing it lap against the shore is soothing. As the waves recede, try to envision your grief receding; as the waves return, think of them as bring peace and comfort.

Spend some time alone. Possibly go for a drive and observe pleasant surroundings— or roll up the windows and yell and scream and vent your anger. Or go somewhere comfortable where you can just sit and reflect.

Plan a vacation that will be a peaceful, restful time. Don't try to do too much. Try to take a respite from your grief work, knowing that, undoubtedly, there will be more grief work waiting for you when you return home.

Continued on Page 6...

Laugh

Healing Your Grieving Soul, Alan Wolfelt PhD

- Humor is one of the most healing gifts of humanity. Laughter restores hope and assists us in surviving the pain of grief.
- Don't fall into the trap of thinking that laughing and having fun are somehow a betrayal of the person who died. Laughing doesn't mean you don't miss the person who died. Laughing doesn't mean you aren't in mourning.
- Sometimes it helps to think about what the person who died would want for you. Wouldn't he or she want you to laugh and continue to find joy in this life, even in the midst of your sorrow?
- You can only embrace the pain of your loss a little at a time, in small doses. In between the doses, it's perfectly normal, even necessary, to love and laugh.
- Remember the fun times you shared with the person who died. Remember his or her sense of humor. Remember his or her grin and the sound of that unique laughter.
- I've heard it said that laughter is a form of internal jogging. Not only is it enjoyable, it is good for you. It's good exercise. Studies show that smiling, laughing, and feeling good enhance your immune system and make you healthier. If you act happy, you may even begin to feel some happiness in your life again. Isn't this what your loved one would want for you?



Summertime

By Sascha Wagner, From ALIVE ALONE

It sounds so easy. A soft, warm word—time to run barefoot, time to leave windows open all night. Summertime. Somehow it seems, doesn't it, that it's especially meant for children. Children on beaches, children on swings, children in large pools, children in tiny tubs. We, who do not have all of our children with us, may feel the summertime in two ways. One is to remember shared events and adventures, there were so many, long rides in a hot car or a nap in the back seat. The famous question, “Are we there yet?” Everything from a heat rash to ice cream cones and sand castles. For us, another way to feel summertime is the special emptiness brought about by children who are no longer on this earth. They used to trot along on hikes in the hills; they used to gather wood for an evening fire.

Now summer brings us again the melancholy awareness of their absence. Have you ever walked on some unfamiliar path, surprised about not having been there with the children? Even when there's nothing to remember, we are reminded of the children's absence. We have been diminished by death. Some of us may still have living children.

Other parents have no children left. They have lost an only child, perhaps. Or all of their children died. And here we are, grateful for the warmth of summer mornings, aware of the ripe beauty of nature, trying to deal with our children's absence with all of the grace of which we are capable. Often we do not want to burden others with our grief or we may be convinced that others don't want to share our distress. We have learned, after all, that the world around us is not always able to understand how we feel. Besides, we were taught to be brave. Many of us will do everything we can to appear “normal” after our loss. But, we were also taught to be honest. And, when you feel the hurt, when you seem almost to be lost in the shadows of this golden summertime, don't hide your sorrow.

The grief of your spirit can perhaps be kept a secret on the outside. Yet your deepest feelings, unexpressed, can burn into your existence with harmful force. You can be both brave and honest. You know that it's brave to share grief, be it old grief or new grief. And revealing that sorrow is also honest. Of course, nothing can wipe away much of your pain, but sharing grief is helpful. You will know that, after you have expressed the painful sorrow you once kept hidden and find yourself, finally smiling at the memories and the blessings of past summer times.

An Angel Kiss

**Author Unknown TCF of Louisville,
KY Newsletter**

An Angel kissed my tears away today when I was sad. I wasn't feeling quite myself, my day had been so bad.

I felt a warmth brush by me that quickly dried my tears, a gentle, kind, and loving touch that seemed to hold me near.

Immediately, I felt so much better and the day seemed brighter too. I guess that's just the way you feel when an Angel comforts you.



Chasing After Closure

By Amy Florian, Hoffman Estates, IL

I have kept reading in the newspapers about survivors of tragedy or death seeking "closure." Yet no one really defines what closure means, whether it is possible or how to get there. For many in our society, closure means leaving grief behind, a milestone usually expected within a matter of weeks or months. Closure means being "normal," getting back to your old self, no longer crying or being affected by the death. It means "moving on with life" and leaving the past behind, even to the extent of forgetting it or ignoring it.

For we who have experienced death, this kind of closure is not only impossible but, indeed, undesirable. Closure, if one even chooses to use the term, is actually more a process than a defined moment. The initial part of closure is accepting the reality. At first, we keep hoping or wishing that it weren't true. We expect our loved ones to walk through the door. We wait for someone to tell us it was all a huge mistake. We just can't accept that this person has died, that we will never physically see them again on earth, that we will not hear their voices, feel their hugs, or get their input on a tough decision. Usually it takes weeks or even months for the reality to finally sink in. We come to know, in both our heads and our hearts, that our loved one has died and is not coming back. We still don't like it, but we accept it as true.

As the reality sinks in, we can more actively heal. We begin making decisions and start to envision a life different from what we had planned before, a life in which we no longer expect our loved one to be there. We grow, struggle, cry and change. We form fresh goals. We face our loneliness. We feel the pain and loss, but except for short periods of time, we are not crippled by it. We also make a shift in memory. Memories of our loved ones, rather than being painful as they were at first, sometimes make us smile or even laugh. This healing phase takes a very long time and involves a lot of back-and-forthing. We alternate between tears and joy, fears and confidence, despair and hope. We take two steps forward and one step back. We wonder whether we'll ever be truly happy again and often doubt that we will. Eventually we realize we are taking the past, with all its pain and pleasure, into a new tomorrow.

We never forget and, in fact, we carry our beloved with us; he or she is forever a cherished part of who we are. We are changed by the experience of having loved this person, by the knowledge of life's transience and by grief itself. We become different and hopefully better, more compassionate, more appreciative, more tolerant people. We fully embrace life again, connecting, laughing and loving with a full heart. Still, there is no point of "final closure," no point at which we can say, "Ah, now I have finally completed my grief." Or, "Yes, now I have healed."

There is no point at which we will never cry again, although, as time goes on, the tears are bittersweet and less common. Healing is a lifelong process, one in which we often don't even realize we are healing until we look back and see how far we have come. "Closure?" I don't think so. Acceptance—yes. Peace—yes. Hope—definitely. But putting a period behind the final sentence and closing the book on it? No! Life and love are much too complex for that. The story does not end; instead, it awaits the next chapter.

...Continued from Page 4

Sometimes it's easier if we can put the grief work aside for a bit and, when we come back to it, we see it in a different light.

Attend a support group meeting. Groups keep regular schedules all summer. The newly bereaved will gain helpful ideas on coping. For those who have been bereaved a longer time and who have not attended in awhile, go back to visit your support group and lend a hand to the newly bereaved.

Above all, hold on to HOPE!

Dear Abby:

The holidays are one of the most difficult times of the year for families mourning the death of a child. A time of festivity becomes instead one of great emptiness and sadness. would like to make the tens of thousands of bereaved families who read your column aware of the Worldwide Candle Lighting sponsored by The Compassionate Friends, a non- profit self-help bereavement organization with 600 chapters in the United States, and a national presence in nearly 30 countries around the world.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting is held at 7 p.m. local time for one hour on the second Sunday in December (this year, Dec. 9), creating a 24-hour wave of light in remembrance of all children who have died, no matter their age or the cause of death. Also available that day at The Compassionate Friends Web site will be a remembrance book where visitors can post a message in memory of the child who died.

Last year, nearly 375 formal services were held in the United States by chapters of The Compassionate Friends, allied organizations and bereaved parent groups in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico, and this year Dear Abby readers are invited to participate.

Services will also be held throughout Canada and more than a dozen countries abroad. Anyone who is unable or who doesn't wish to attend a formal service is welcome to light a candle in their home and share this time with family and friends.

— PATRICIA LODER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, USA

Dear Patricia:

I'm pleased to help you spread the word. Your worthwhile organization has helped, and continues to help, grieving families through the darkest period of their lives.

Readers, check for a local candle lighting by visiting The Compassionate Friends Web site at www.compassionatefriends.org or by calling toll-free: (877) 969-0010.

I hope this ceremony will make the holidays a little easier for bereaved families, not only in this country, but also around the world who have lost a child. The Candle Lighting is held in remembrance of their little angels that their light may always shine.

Be Patient

Healing Your Grieving Soul, Alan Wolfelt PhD

- I'm sure you have realized by now that healing in grief does not usually happen quickly. And because your grief is never truly “over”, you are on a lifelong journey.
- In our hurry-up North American culture, patience can be especially hard to come by. We have all been conditioned to believe that if we want something, we should be able to get it instantly.
- Yet your grief will not heed anyone's timetable - even your own. Be patient with yourself. Be patient with those around you. You are doing the best you can, as are they.
- Practicing patience means relinquishing control. Just as you cannot truly control your life, you cannot control your grief. Yes, you can set your intention to embrace your grief and take steps to mourn well, and these practices will certainly serve you well on your journey, but you cannot control the particulars of what life will continue to lay before you.
- When you are feeling impatient, silently repeat this phrase by St. Teresa of Avila:
 “Let nothing disturb thee; Let nothing dismay thee; All things pass; God never changes. Patience attains all that it strives for. He who has God finds he lacks nothing: God alone suffices.”
- And remember grief takes time, so above all be patient with yourself.



When you come to a meeting of The Compassionate Friends, we ask that you attend at least three meetings before you decide if the group is for you. For many... the first meeting may also be the first time they've been able to talk about what has happened to them, their family and to their child. This can bring a lot of emotion to the forefront. Emotion which seems to disappear over the months as you talk about your loss. Don't worry, we'll bring the tissues. Tears are a natural release for a grieving person and is a way to release stress due to grief.

If you're shy or unable to talk about your loss, you do not have to speak, although you will have the opportunity. Some people believe it's harder to talk in front of strangers about something as intimate as the loss of a child, but because everyone else at the meeting has had a similar experience, they understand much of what you are feeling and you will eventually reach a comfort level with those you meet. A point to always keep in mind is that what is said in the meeting stays in the meeting. The privacy of our members is important. We're all there to work toward healing. It may be hard for you to believe, but occasionally you will hear laughter. This is not a dishonor to any child. Rather it is often a reaction to a wonderful memory of a child.

Meeting Information

Lexington

Third Monday of Every Month
6:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.
Hospice of the Bluegrass
2321 Alexandria Drive
Lexington, Kentucky



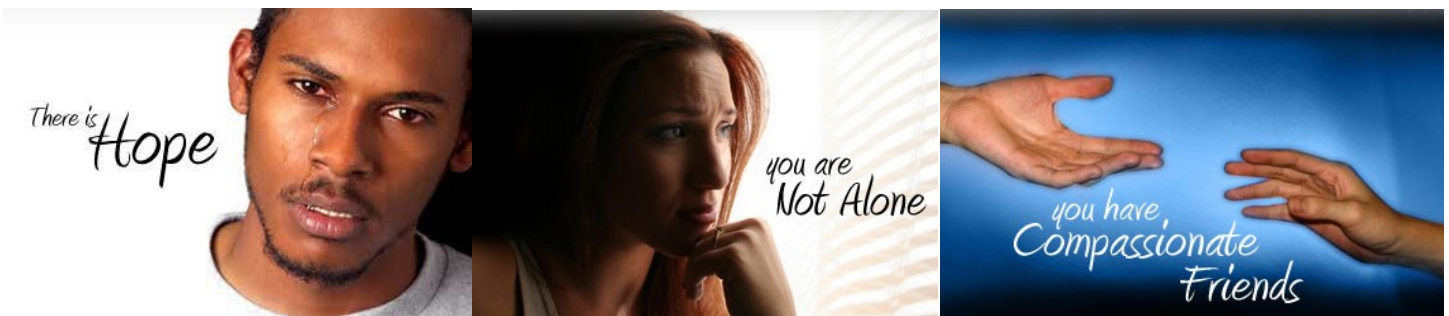
Winchester

First Tuesday of Every Month
7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.
Hospice East
417 Shoppers Drive
Winchester, Kentucky

Meeting Format

Doors open one-half hour before meeting times to provide the opportunity to visit with old friends and acknowledge new ones. Please plan to arrive early so the meeting can begin on time.

The death of a child of any age, from any cause, is a shattering experience for a family. When a child dies, a family needs emotional support for the long grief journey that lays ahead. Since 1980, the Bluegrass Chapter of The Compassionate Friends has been actively helping families toward the positive resolution of their grief following the death of a child.



Our Mission & Purpose is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age by any cause and to provide information to help others be supportive.