



**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

March 2011

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

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Spring Is Coming

If you are newly bereaved and looking toward your "first" spring, you may be surprised at some of the feelings you may experience during the next few weeks. We hear much about the beauty of spring – the new life and the feelings of renewal that are supposed to accompany this lovely time of year. During my "first" year I expected that spring would cheer me up and make me feel lots better. How surprised and frustrated I was when, on one of those truly magnificent spring days that life seems to burst forth everywhere, I was in "the pits." When a friend said to me, "Doesn't a day like this really lift your spirits and make you feel better?" I had to reply honestly that I was having a really bad day – that sense of loss and emptiness was greatly intensified. Gradually I began to realize that my expectations for spring were unrealistically high. I had looked forward to spring with the wrong kind of hope. When we are newly bereaved, we are constantly looking for something to take away the pain and make our lives all right again. Unfortunately, there is no magical event or moment when this takes place. It does happen, but only with time and the grief work we all must do before we can "be healed". The coming of spring can't make everything okay again. What it can do, however, is remind us that regardless of what happens in our lives, nature's processes will continue and that can offer us hope. I am looking forward to spring this year. I welcome the sun's warmth, the return of the birds from their winter in the south, the forsythia, the daffodils, and the greening of the world. Know that someday you will once again welcome spring. Be gentle and patient with yourself and with nature. Don't expect too much. Be ready to let a little of the hope that Spring can offer into your heart.

A Prayer for Spring

Like **Springtime**, let me unfold and grow fresh and anew from this cocoon of grief that has been spun around me. Help me face the **harsh reality** of sunshine and renewed life as my bones still creak from the winter of my grief. Life has dared to go on around me and, as I recover from the insult of life's continuance, I read just my focus to include healing and growth as possibility in my future. Give me strength to break out of the cocoon of my grief, but may I never forget it is the place where I grew my wings, becoming a new person because of my loss.

Our Children
Forever Loved and Remembered

March Birth Dates

3/1 **John Martin Fay** Son of Mary Ann Fay
3/1 **Ryan Jason Ross** Son of Mitzi and Rick Holbrook
3/4 **Barclay (Bart) Knafl** Son of Karen and John Knafl
3/7 **Kiah Nicole Milsom** Daughter of Lisa Scott
3/8 **Robby Meeks** Son of Cindy and Rusty Meeks
3/10 **Andy Jones** Son of Jean and Cal Jones
3/10 **Victor Paul Basil** Son of Lorena Basil
3/10 **Jesse Caldwell Higginbotham** Son of Rebecca Woloch and Jerome Higginbotham
3/11 **Mark A. Romond** Son of Ed and Jan Romond
3/12 **Laura Ann Lemieux** Daughter of Vincent and Jackie Lemieux
3/14 **Eric Ritchey** Son of Lynn and Harley Ritchey
3/15 **James "Jamie" Earl Flynt** Son of Suzie McDonald
3/16 **Matthew Charles Estes** Son of Barry and Cheri Catron
3/16 **Edward Charles Campherl** Son of Martha E. Stone
3/16 **Jack Charles Bahm II** Son of Jack Bahm
3/17 **Jayne Lynn Wawrzyniak** Daughter of Loretta Wawrzyniak
3/19 **Doug Steinkuhl** Son of Gary and Barb Steinkuhl
3/20 **Matthew Patterson** Son of John and Ann Patterson
3/20 **Katherine "Kate" Tudor** Daughter of Suzanne Tudor & Lewis Perry
3/21 **Jackie Peel** Son of Carl and Pansy Peel
3/28 **David Ryan Goldey** Son of George and Julia Goldey
3/28 **Chip Cheek** Son of Betty Milton and Ercel Cheek
3/29 **Andy McLaughlin** Son of Iris McLaughlin
3/30 **Joshua Montgomery** Son of Jo Barnes and Eddie Montgomery
3/31 **Michael Wallace** Son of Jack and Carolyn Wallace
3/31 **Davey Allison Dunavant** Son of Anita and J. C. Harris
3/31 **Brandon Lee Lorange** Son of Callie Lorange

Where Are All the Butterflies?

By: Shirley C. Ottman

Grief's landscape is a barren place, as lonely as a salt flat, starkly bleak and treeless beneath the cloudless panoply of heaven. Where might we then find hope if not one solitary bloom's in sight? And where may we find faith if no auspicious rainbows span the sky? And where may we find joy in such a sterile place? And where may we find peace when tears provide the sole precipitation there? And where are all the butterflies which from their silken tombs emerge in beauty? Where is my butterfly? Where are all the butterflies?



Our Children
Forever Loved and Remembered

March Remembrance Dates

3/1 **Addison Elise "Addie" Koch** Daughter of Charles and Katie Koch
3/1 **Donald Ray Bingham, Jr.** Son of Barbara Bingham
3/2 **Patrick McDonnell** Son of Anne and Bob McDonnell
3/2 **Jonathan Derek Perdue** Son of Donna and Chris Perdue
3/6 **Grant Casey Blethen** Son of Casey Grant Blethen
3/6 **Rachel Elaine Sutherland** Daughter of Elly and Alan Sutherland
3/7 **Stephen Booher** Son of Mary McCormick
3/7 **Zack Camp** Son of Mary Camp
3/7 **Brenna Jiwon Kihlman** Daughter of Dale and Shan Kihlman
3/9 **Robin Lemaster Ratliff** Daughter of Jesse and Betty Lemaster
3/10 **Jeffrey Scott Wallace** Son of Lynn Wallace
3/11 **Randy Blake Johnson** Son of Randy and Doris Johnson
3/12 **Mitchell Allen Jaquish** Son of Ellie and Thomas Jaquish
3/12 **John Thomas Reynolds** Son of Joan & Richard Reynolds
3/12 **Christian "Chris" Ford Cash** Son of David Cash
3/13 **Glenn Cope** Son of Sheila Cope
3/13 **Charles Hayden "Chip" Lampe** Son of Betsy Lampe
3/13 **Benton (Ben) Warner Blanton, III** Son of B. W. Blanton, Jr.
3/13 **Brian Philpot** Son of Mitch and Dee Philpot
3/13 **Cole Brian Gilliam** Son of Joan B. Gilliam
3/15 **Amy Jeanine Click** Daughter of Kathy and Steven Click
3/17 **Darius Xavier Jerome Young** Son of Deborah Young
3/20 **Lauren Elizabeth Stokley** Daughter of Jackie Webb
3/20 **Robert (Robbie) Lewis Byrd II** Son of Beverly and Bobby Byrd
3/21 **Amanda Williams** Daughter of Donna Riley
3/21 **Bobby Sherman Parsons** Son of Anna McKinney
3/23 **Scott Carter Jeffers** Son of Susan Jeffers
3/24 **Joshua Montgomery** Son of Jo Barnes and Eddie Montgomery
3/25 **David Wayne Meade** Son of Sue & Fred Meade, Brother of Susan Bayes
3/29 **Matthew Patterson** Son of John and Ann Patterson
3/30 **Victor M. Martina** Son of Don and Judy Martina
3/30 **Erica "Shi" Richie** Daughter of Carol Scott
3/30 **Kimberly Varney** Daughter of Judy and Lewis Varney
3/31 **Mark Anthony Bishop** Son of Marlene and Mark Bishop

To have your child included on "Our Children" webpage, please contact our webmaster Mary at

thecamps@roadrunner.com.

Corrections to Birth Dates or Remembrances should be sent to Lisa at garandsmom@yahoo.com.

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

Hope for the Day

By: Clara Hinton

Hope shows up at the door of our heart in so many wonderful and different ways, and it always seems to know when we need it most. A caring, tender smile. A shared word of encouragement. A butterfly landing on the windowsill. The soft rain whispering a song. The bright moon lighting up the dark evening sky. The rainbow following a storm. Hope. We have to be open to it being there in order to see it more clearly. When we are feeling lonely, hope reminds us that we are never alone. When our tears won't stop falling, hope sends us a sunbeam to dry our tears. When we are so tired of struggling, hope gives our weary minds a rest by allowing us to fall asleep. Hope. It is our gift. It is our miracle. It is our reason for holding on when we want to quit!

"Hope isn't always being cheerful and filled with laughter. Hope is a still assuredness that all will be well."

When loss takes place in our lives, we feel like the weight of the world is on our shoulders as well as on our hearts. It feels like if we move one step the wrong way, our world is going to completely come tumbling down. Life hurts so bad when we lose someone we love! Trust in the fact that there will be pockets of time when you can find some relief and peace from all of the pain and heaviness of heart. Be sure to look to the heavens each day and be reminded of Who created the great expanse. Listen to the song of the birds, and be reminded that there will be a day when a song will return to your heart. Look at the evening stars twinkling in the sky, and remember that there is light to lead you down the path of the unknown. Hope. Continue to hope and believe. You are much stronger than you think. When you remind yourself that your Shepherd is always near, that will give peace and strength when you grow weary along the way. Comfort and new strength will come to you when you anchor to hope!

"Never give up - ever! Reach out your hand and there will be help to pull you across the chasm of despair. That help is called hope, and it will never abandon you!"

So You Think You're Losing Your Mind Because You Need To Go To The Cemetery Every Day

Author Unknown

There may be members of your family, some friends or neighbors who will imply that going to the cemetery every day is morbid and perpetuates your grief. Don't you believe them. What they don't understand is that we cry and think of our child whether we go to the cemetery or not. It comforts some to go every day; some only feel a need to go now and then; and still others never return to the cemetery after the funeral. How often you go has nothing to do with the intensity of your grief, it is just another example of how differently we all react. You know how you feel, and that is what is really important as you hesitate to make changes in your routine without guilt. Do what you need to do and don't worry how it may appear to someone else.



The Cord

By: Terri Apostolakas

We are connected,
My child and I, by an invisible cord
Not seen by the eye. It's not like the cord
That connects us 'til birth This cord can't be
seen by any on Earth.
This cord does it's work right from the start.
It binds us together attached to my heart.
I know that it's there though no one can see
the invisible cord from my child to me.
The strength of this cord is hard to describe.
It can't be destroyed it can't be denied.
It's stronger than any cord man could create.
It withstands the test.
Can hold any weight.
And though you are gone, though you're not
here with me,
the cord is still there but no one can see.
It pulls at my heart. I am bruised...I am sore,
but this cord is my lifeline as never before.
I am thankful that God connects us this way,
a mother and child.
Death can't take it away!

Think of Me

Death is nothing at all.
I have only slipped away into the next room.
I am I, and you are you.
Whatever we were to each other,
That we still are.
Call me by my old familiar name,
speak to me in the easy way you always did.
Put no difference into your tone, wear
no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.
Laugh as we always laughed at the
little jokes we enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me.
Pray for me.
Let my name be the household name it
always was.
Let it be spoken without the shadow of
a ghost in it.
Life means all that it ever meant. It is
the same as it ever was.
What is death but a negligible accident?
Why should I be out of your mind because
I am out of your sight?
All is well, nothing is lost.
One brief moment at all will be as it
was before.
Think of me.

Under Your Angel's Wings

(From a card that came with
an angel light catcher)
We each have an angel guardian,
Sent from Heaven above.
She keeps us safe & guards
our life-
Giving guidance, mixed with
love.
If you listen very closely,
You'll hear whispering voices
sing,
And for heavenly comfort
every night,
She tucks you peacefully under
her wing.



Heaven's Children

Do you suppose they meet like us
 To lend support and love?
 As we assemble, do they gather too,
 Watching from above?
 Do you suppose they ask our God
 To care for parents here?
 Just as we beseech Him
 To hold our children dear?
 Do you suppose, among themselves,
 They comfort one another?
 When they see deep grief consume
 Their Father or their Mother?
 Do you suppose, together,
 They wipe away our tears?
 Holding hands, as we do
 To cleanse away our fears?
 Do you suppose they listen
 To the breaking hearts we share?
 As we tell our stories
 Our tragedies laid bare?
 And, do you suppose they know the Truth,
 These children whom we adore?
 Knowing fully that God's Love
 In abundance He will outpour?
 And, do you suppose they understand
 Far better than we mortals?
 That peace and joy and soul's content
 Await us at the Portals?
 And, do you suppose until the day
 They see us face to face
 They're tugging on God's heartstrings
 To keep us in His Grace?

Happy 39th Birthday, Jamie!

God sent an Angel to us, his name was Jamie. For our family, pure **LOVE**. For others, pure **HOPE**.

So on this 4th birthday of his new life in Heaven, we honor him for the legacy he left here and the many hearts of those unknown to him that he has touched. You will always be loved and will live on in our hearts and forever be remembered.

We all love and miss you very much our Free-Spirited Angel.

Mom & Chase

A Prayer for Spring By Janis Hiel, BP/USA Ocala, FL Chapter

Like Springtime, let me unfold and grow fresh and anew from this cocoon of grief that has been spun around me. Help me face the harsh reality of sunshine and renewed life as my bones still creak from the winter of my grief. Life has dared to go on around me and, as I recover from the insult of life's continuance, I adjust my focus to include healing and growth as possibility in my future. Give me strength to break out of the cocoon of my grief, but may I never forget it is the place where I grew my wings, becoming a new person because of my loss.

The Compassionate Friends 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.

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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



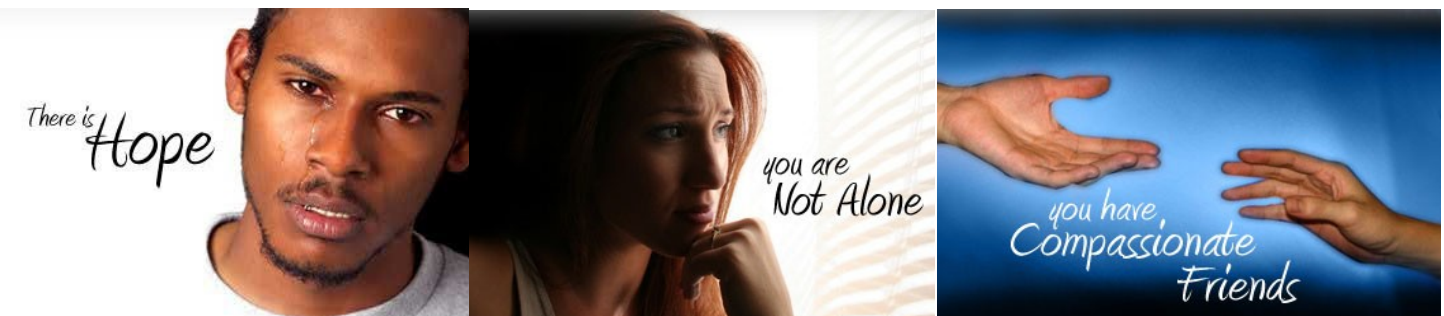
Winchester

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.

Bonding

By: Martha Whitmore Hickman, *I Will Not Leave You Desolute*

The bond among grieving parents is close. It is unfathomable. It cannot be entered into by outsiders, but is known to each of us. A quick look, an acknowledge, and we know immediately the agenda of suffering we have in common and that there is no fact of our lives more important than this: I HAD A CHILD WHO DIED.

Over the months and years we will learn to say it more calmly. Yet each time we say it – and we must, it is a part of our learning our own terrible truth- the heart will jump, the stomach contract, the temperature of the body will shift in acknowledge. I HAD A CHILD WHO DIED.

Thank You!

Many thanks to Stephanie Mayberry for facilitating our meeting in February. Many, many thanks to our wonderful co-leader, Janie and her husband David Fields, for all of their hard work and compassion. Thank-you, Lisa, for all your hard work and making the newsletter possible for all of our parents. You all do a wonderful job for the love of your children. Janie and I would also like to thank Patty for all of the goodies she brings to share at our meetings and a warm thank-you to our librarian, Joan and special thanks to Mary for all of her hard work.

There I'll Be

Please don't stand at my grave and weep;
For I'm not there, I'm not asleep.
I'm in the light from stars at night;
In morn, I'm birds in peaceful flight.
I am the soft and gentle rain;
And golden sunlight on the grain.
I'm here in sparkles on the sea,
So please, don't cry; my soul soars free.
When gentle breezes kiss your cheek,
You'll know I'm there, though I don't speak.
So don't be sad when you can't see;
Just lift your face, and there I'll be.



I Also Remember

Excerpt From When Your Child Dies By: Gloria Carton

I too have memories of the first spring after our daughter had died. One day in our garden, I saw the purple lilacs in full bloom. They were so beautiful! I ran into the house and cried and cried for hours. I remembered the previous spring. It was during the first three months that our beloved daughter, Isabel, spent in the hospital while the seasons were changing. Every morning I left home wearing my heavy winter jacket; I never knew the lilacs were there blooming!

ter jacket; I never knew the lilacs were there blooming!

That was many years ago. Nevertheless, since then, I have always looked forward to seeing spring arrive. I have never forgotten my reaction and sadness when I saw those lilac's that first spring without Isabel and I probably never will, but the following lines express how I feel:

In our time
We strike a balance
Between a past life
That should be remembered
And our new life
That must be created.

Love Gifts-A Thoughtful Way to Remember

Love Gifts are a beautiful and loving way to remember a loved one. Through Love Gifts, we are able to reach out to others with our brochures and newsletters as well as obtain books and other information for our library. We truly appreciate every Love Gift, donation and sponsorship. Our Chapter work is done by volunteers and these donations help us reach out in many ways, including the preparation and mailing of the newsletter.

In memory of Jamie Elyot
by his mother, Suzie McDonald

In Memory of David Rison
by his mother, Karla Scott

In Memory of Jonathan Magberry
by his parents, Jay and Stephanie Magberry

In The Springtime of Your Grief **By Judi Fisher, Cleveland, Ohio**

Spring has fragile beginnings; a tiny shoot of green that emerges from the cold earth, a hint of pastel against the brownish grass, a bud that awakens with the morning sun. Sometimes spring comes so quietly we almost miss it, but once it begins, it is impossible to ignore the daily growth and change. The morning sun brings sounds that were not there before. The breeze carries warmth that invites us to venture outside of ourselves. A promise is released with the budding and blossoming surrounding us. Hope emerges for the beginning of a new season; change is in the air. What we experience in the springtime of the year is what we experience in the springtime of our grief. There begins to be a glowing radiance. The radiance is not just around us; it is within us. A gradual warming of the heart silences the chill of intense pain. The natural unfolding of the grief process moves gently to remind us that we will survive. Life is changing and growth emerges through the changes. The song of our hearts that seemed off key begins to experience a harmonious blend of the past and the present. The songs of the birds invite us to join them in a celebration of new life. In the springtime of our grief, there can be a new song for us to sing. It will be a song we have composed through the heartache of loss. Heartache of loss. Optimism for a better day may awaken us one morning. Hearing laughter and realizing that it is coming from ourselves gives us promise for today. Dreams and hopes for a better tomorrow shine brightly with the morning sun. Surviving the winter of our grief with the openness to embrace change is a decision to embrace loss and integrate its impact into the fabric of our lives. It can be a willingness to explore new possibilities that create a different landscape to behold. We can make a decision that we will begin to appreciate what we still have, not focus on what is missing. We will know when we have made that decision. Something buds; something opens. The harshness of winter is softened with new life and new growth. It is not something we can force; it is something that unfolds when the time is right. The springtime of grief arrives with no dramatic entrance, no flashing lights. The stillness of the beauty unfolds and captures our attention. It is happening around us, but it is also happening in us. If spring has already crossed the path of your personal journey of grief, rejoice! But if the chill of winter remains in your heart, be encouraged; spring is on its way. Look for it, expect it, and it will be yours to experience around you and in you!



What Is Left?

By: Betty Stevens

When a child dies, you ask, among other questions, what is left? A beautiful, sensitive, intelligent child has died. What can be left after such a crushing blow? Others will point out that you have a spouse, other children or grandchildren, perhaps relatives or friends; they are left. You read books on bereavement, scarcely remembering what you have read; you attend meetings, talk with others who have suffered a loss like yours. If you are fortunate, you have one or two friends who, while they cannot fully understand, are there to love and listen. Perhaps there is a therapist who guides you in your search for an answer. But, for a long while everything you read or hear has little meaning and certainly cannot provide the answer to your question. Or can it? Does all that you have read and heard and experienced finally come together and answered the question of what is left? For me it does.

The answer was thirteen months in coming, but how clear it comes now. *I am left.* That's it! *I am left* and I have been left with the love of my child. It is a new love; it is different, more intense; it is understanding; it need not be reciprocated; there are no strings attached. I love this love of my child. It warms and comforts me. It is a wonderful love, but I cannot keep it. It is too precious to keep to myself. I am left with the love to spare and love to share. It will never run out. My child will always be with me to replenish it. I have found my answer. *I am left to share my child's love with you.*

Spring—A Time to Grow

After the snow, sleet and ice of winter, spring is a welcome season and one of new beginnings. If you are like me, there is a feeling of elation as the sun slowly warms the earth. I eagerly search for the first buds. Perhaps it is a tree groaning with sap, sending new life to the branches or a tulip leaf bravely searching for warmth as it peeks above ground, but when it happens, I rejoice. Spring is here! Now is the time to come out of hibernation, buy seeds, prune vines, and start afresh. This is symbolic of our lives, after we come through a period of winter in which loneliness and heartache plagued or stagnated us, we cherish each new glow of warmth. Or perhaps the winter of your life has been a time of contemplation and rest in which you felt you could catch your breath and relax. Whatever way we view the wintertime of life, spring will come. New relationships develop projects that have overwhelmed us before we now have the energy and courage to begin. Volunteer work, making new friends, swimming, golf, tennis among other activities are all ways we can use to break the barrier that kept us immune to the rest of society in "our wintertime."

However spring may come, it requires work, and it is no different with our grief. In order to function again we need to break the soil, smooth out the rough spots and fertilize in order to see new growth. At times this may cause more hurt, but remember, just as in the garden, we will not see growth without special effort on our part; so it is in our lives. We need to cultivate and weed to encourage a healthy garden. The areas, which need fertilization, get special care, while other areas seem to grow smoothly without effort on our part. As we rejoice in the spring of the year, and in each new bud that appears, let's appreciate the good moments, and when hard or stagnant times come, affirm one another in love and share each other's joys and burdens.

Happy gardening to you all!