



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS  
LEXINGTON - BLUEGRASS CHAPTER NEWSLETTER  
207 RINEY B WAY  
NICHOLASVILLE, KY 40356

JUNE & JULY 2007

**CHAPTER CO-LEADERS:**

**JIM SIMS & STEPHANIE MAYBERRY**

Treasurer and Newsletter Mailings:  
Newsletter Editor:

Janie & David Fields  
Brandi Koenig



**WELCOME**

The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings. The primary purpose is to assist them in the positive resolution of the grief experience upon the death of a child and to support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health. The secondary purpose is to provide information and education about bereaved parents and siblings. The objective is to help those in their community, including family, friends, employers, and co-workers and professionals, to be supportive.

**MEETING INFORMATION**

3rd Monday of Every Month—6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.  
HOSPICE OF THE BLUEGRASS ▪ 2321 Alexandria Drive ▪ Lexington, Kentucky

**MEETING FORMAT**

6:00 p.m.—Doors Open. This is a good time to visit with old friends and acknowledge new ones. Be sure to check out the library.

6:30 p.m.—Meeting Begins. Please plan to arrive early so the meeting can begin on time.

**Meeting Topics**

**June**—Stephanie Mayberry: *Embracing the Mystery*

**July**—Mary Camp: *My Favorite Things*

(Bring your favorite poems and articles to read to the group.)

**Telephone Friends**—sometimes it helps to just 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

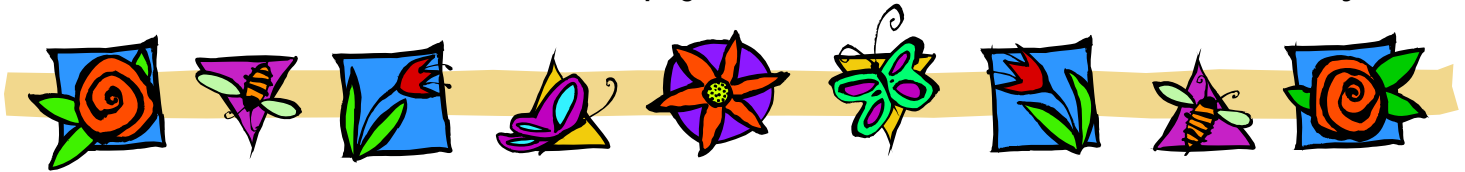
MONIQUE PODGORSKI: (859) 381-8256

ANNE AND BOB McDONNELL: (859) 278-8965

CONNIE KOTZBAUER: (859) 273-3645

**Note**—if you'd like to submit original poems or articles to be included in the newsletter, please email them to brandikoenig@gmail.com and put **SUBMISSION** in the subject line. Thanks!

Bluegrass Chapter of The Compassionate Friends Regional Coordinator: Karen Cantrell — (502) 320-6438  
The Compassionate Friends National Office ▪ P.O. Box 3696 ▪ Oak Brook, IL 60522 ▪ (877) 969-0010



## FROM THE DESK OF OUR CHAPTER CO-LEADER STEPHANIE MAYBERRY

Many of us had the honor of attending the premiere of the documentary film, "Space Between Breaths" produced by Rosemary Smith on May 31<sup>st</sup> at the Kentucky Theatre. The film was awesome and I hope that everyone has the opportunity to see it.

Rosemary met and interviewed bereaved parents from across the country. Each parent was able to tell their story through the stages of grief. Each parent was able to touch on different aspects that covered the spectrum of what we all go through. What struck me about the film is that she sought those parents out and asked them to participate. I think that those parents found the interviews and talking to be therapeutic. It is always helpful to know that we are not alone in our thoughts and feelings about our child's death, and that is what The Compassionate Friends is all about. The last line of our credo reads: **We are not alone. We are the Compassionate Friends.**

I encourage each of you to be a compassionate friend. I charge everyone to bring a bereaved parent to the next meeting. It could be someone who has not been to a meeting in a while or someone who is mustering up enough courage to attend. Imagine how powerful that would be. I know personally that TCF saved my life. We are in this together, we all need help in our grief, and who knows better what a loss of a child does to your soul better than us. I hope to walk into a jam-packed room, and I know you do too.

Notes: We have established a TCF Steering Committee for the Bluegrass Chapter. The purpose of this committee is to assist our chapter in working more effectively and efficiently. We encourage your input on changes, improvements, or enhancements to our chapter. We welcome you to attend our meetings on the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Hospice of the Bluegrass. If you are unable to attend, feel free to contact a member of the committee about your questions, suggestions, or concerns. The committee members are: Jim Sims, Stephanie Mayberry, David and Janie Fields, Bruce and Brandi Koenig, Karla Scott, Mary Camp, and Rita Sommer.

*Stephanie Mayberry*

## WE WELCOME YOU WITH COMPASSION, LOVE, & HOPE

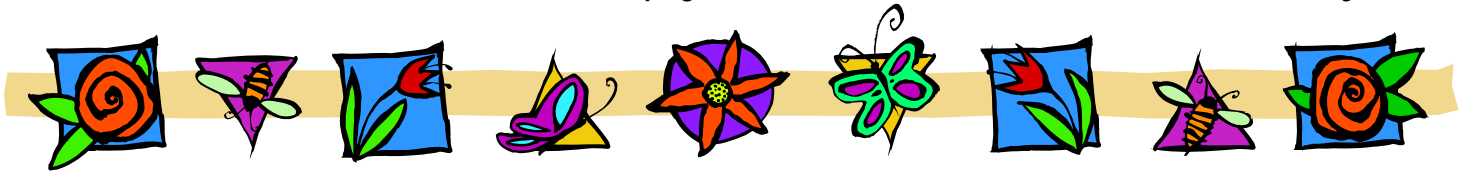
It is always difficult to say "welcome" to people coming to our meetings for the first time because we are so very sorry for the reason they came. For some, the first meeting or two can be rather overwhelming, especially if they are newly bereaved. We hope that anyone feeling that way will return to at least a couple more of our meetings. Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings, regardless of the age at which their child died or the length of time that has passed since that day.

Lesley Cissell, whose daughter, **Nadia**, died on August 10, 2006

Amanda Bishop, whose nephew, **Daniel Graham**, died on July 16, 2006

Amanda Bishop, whose niece, **Valen Graham**, died on September 14, 1989

Jerome Higginbotham and Rebecca Woloch, whose son, **Jesse Caldwell Higginbotham**, died on April 19, 2007



## NATIONAL NEWS AND NOTES

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE**—Registration is now open for The Compassionate Friends **30th National Conference** in Oklahoma City July 20-22. The theme of this year's conference is **Trails of Tears to Healing Hearts**.

To learn more about plans for this special event and to register online for the conference, the pre-conference **Professional Outreach Day**, and/or the **Walk to Remember**, visit [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) and click on "National Conference Information." You can also call toll-free **877-969-0010** to receive a copy of the registration brochure. Those wishing to reserve hotel accommodations online can do so via a link from the conference information page.

**DISCOVERY CHANNEL NEEDS YOUR VIDEOTAPE**—Did your child die from a long-term illness? In this situation, many families make a video record of the last few months, weeks, and days as a way of creating lasting memories of the child with the family.

The Discovery Channel will be hosting a new series, as yet unnamed, that allows people to honor a loved one through video footage they have shot. One episode of this new show will focus on **grief and grief support**. According to co-producer **Blake Levin**, "We are looking for people that kept **video journals, diaries, or even videotaped** a loved one leading up to their passing. We are hoping that there are people . . . that used the medium of video to help deal with their own grief. The goal of this new series is to honor a loved one."

As a **public awareness initiative**, The Compassionate Friends is assisting Mr. Levin in his search for families that have journaled through videotape the time leading up to death of a child within their family. In return for the successful help of TCF in this endeavor, the organization will be recognized during and at the end of the program.

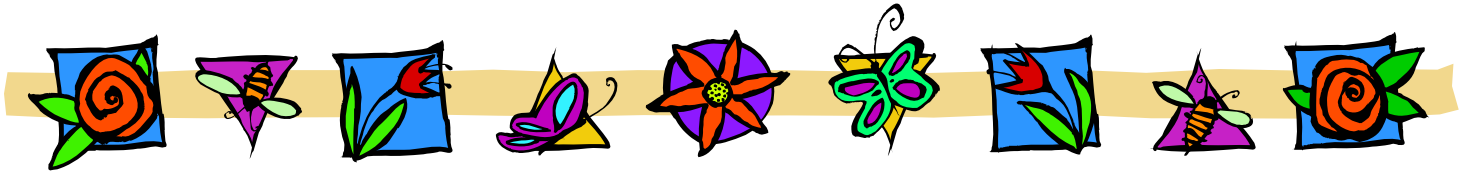
If you feel that you have videotape that could be used on this program, please e-mail Mr. Levin with your name, where you are located, and a description of the footage. Please write him at [YourDocs2007@arp.tv](mailto:YourDocs2007@arp.tv) and cc **Wayne Loder**, TCF's public awareness coordinator at [wayne@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:wayne@compassionatefriends.org).

**AMAZON.COM**—When making a purchase from **Amazon.com**, enter through the link on the home page of The Compassionate Friends national Web site, and a **portion (5%) of the purchase price** will be donated to further the mission of TCF. This donation applies to **all purchases**, not just books, made from the Amazon.com site. The TCF national Web site address is [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org).

## LOVE GIFTS



**LOVE GIFTS**—There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Some parents remember a birthday or anniversary date of their child, or a holiday with a love gift. The "Love Gifts" help with the mailing of the newsletter, maintaining and updating our library and meeting costs. The following love gifts have been donated to our chapter in memory of the following children:



## LOVE GIFTS (continued)

Given in loving memory of **John Blair Potter** by his mother and father, **James and Suzanne Potter.**

Given in loving memory of **Melody Cay Guffey** by her father, **George Foley.**

Given in loving memory of **Weston Ashe Marlowe** by his mother, **Brandi Koenig.**

Please send **love gifts** to **David Fields, 207 Riney B Way, Nicholasville, KY 40356.** Please remember, if given in memory of your child, to include his/her full name. If the love gift is in memory of a special date, take into consideration that this is a quarterly newsletter, so send it early. If, for some reason, your love gift has not been listed, call Brandi Koenig at (859) 229-8297.



A very special **Thank You** to those that contribute love gifts to the basket during our monthly meetings. We greatly appreciate your support.

## LOCAL NEWS AND NOTES



**FAMILY PICNIC AND MEMORIAL BALLOON RELEASE**—On Saturday, June 30 beginning at 5:30 p.m., we will be hosting a picnic for everyone! It will be held, rain or shine, at South Elkhorn Christian Church, 4343 Harrodsburg Road. It's about 1/2 mile past (west) Man-O-War, then turn right @ 1st stoplight. The picnic is a potluck, so bring your or your child's favorite dish. Meat and drinks will be provided. Families and children are welcome. There is a small playground outside.

**LIBRARY BOOKS**—Please remember to return all borrowed books. Many books were donated in memory of a child. We are doing an inventory and setting up new sign out procedures. You can check the book out again immediately. If you can't come to the meetings to return the books, please call or email Jim or Mary at (859) 858-8288, (859) 797-2168, or [TheCamps@adelphia.net](mailto:TheCamps@adelphia.net). Put **Library Books** in the subject line, and include the book name and author, your name and phone number. Thank you.

## JUNE BIRTH DATES

6/1/73	<b>Mark Davis</b>	(Died) 7/9/91	Son of Harold and Jeannie Davis
6/1/77	<b>DeAnna Marie Friend</b>	(Died) 10/10/02	Daughter of Barbara Friend
6/2/85	<b>Robby Matthew Oesch</b>	(Died) 6/8/04	Son of Candy Oesch
6/3/74	<b>Victor M. Martina</b>	(Died) 3/30/99	Son of Don and Judy Martina
6/4/95	<b>Chasity Marie Green Leach</b>	(Died) 8/11/95	Daughter of Larry Leach
6/7/82	<b>Nicholas Alan Norris</b>	(Died) 8/3/02	Son of Greg and Joanne Norris
6/8/06	<b>Rylee Jorja McFarland</b>	(Born & Died) 6/8/06	Daughter of Joy and Chris McFarland
6/9/90	<b>Brenda Nicole Smith</b>	(Died) 6/9/90	Daughter of Carla and Kenneth Smith
6/10/69	<b>Tressa Parsons Adams</b>	(Died) 2/4/00	Daughter of Linda and Bobby Parsons
6/11/93	<b>Donald Ray Bingham</b>	(Died) 3/1/94	Daughter of Barbara Bingham
6/12/80	<b>Cynthia "Cyndi" Ellen Crim</b>	(Died) 8/15/06	Daughter of Becky & Keith LaVey and Howard Crim
6/12/83	<b>Gary James Travis Burke</b>	(Died) 10/30/02	Son of Bonnie Burke
6/12/83	<b>Gary James Travis Burke</b>	(Died) 10/30/02	Nephew of Addie Waugh
6/13/86	<b>Thomas Allan Woodrum "Tommy"</b>	(Died) 8/5/04	Son of Mimi & Thomas Woodrum
6/14/68	<b>Becky Fister</b>	(Died) 11/12/99	Daughter of David and Mariam Fister
6/14/79	<b>Erin Renee Glass</b>	(Died) 5/26/92	Daughter of Martha and Wesley Glass
6/14/65	<b>Tim Sizemore</b>		Son of T. C. Sizemore
6/14/03	<b>Jonathan Walker Mayberry</b>	(Died) 11/16/04	Son of Jonathan & Stephanie Mayberry
6/16/61	<b>Steve Elliot</b>	(Died) 6/30/88	Son of Nancy and Carroll Elliot
6/20/68	<b>John Martin Laswell</b>	(Died) 12/2/04	Son of Frances Shaver
6/21/90	<b>Juan Pirir Cux</b>	(Died) 7/13/91	Son of Donna and Dave Uckotter
6/22/70	<b>Timothy Ray Elkin</b>	(Died) 5/28/04	Son of Betty and the late Billy Elkin
6/24/70	<b>Thomas E. Masters II</b>	(Died) 9/14/95	Son of Bess Masters
6/25/49	<b>Sharon Davidson</b>	(Died) 9/19/78	Daughter of Melvin and Sonia Davidson
6/25/89	<b>Jacob Daniel Akin</b>	(Died) 12/6/94	Son of Becky Akin
6/26/68	<b>Julie Dawn Hall</b>	(Died) 12/29/97	Daughter of Sharon and Don Hall
6/28/80	<b>Darius Xavier Jerome Young</b>	(Died) 3/17/99	Son of Deborah Young
6/29/62	<b>Phillip Old</b>	(Died) 7/13/93	Son of Priscilla Old

## JUNE ANGEL DATES



6/4/98	<b>Missy Ann Tomblin</b>	(Born) 11/6/71	Daughter of Gail Tomblin
6/7/94	<b>Kimberly Sue Toye</b>	(Born) 2/28/69	Daughter of Gail Toye
6/7/00	<b>Colin Spencer</b>	(Born) 4/15/00	Son of Stephanie Spencer
6/7/96	<b>Carrie Elizabeth Griffin</b>	(Born) 7/1/75	Daughter of David and Debbie Griffin
6/8/04	<b>Robby Matthew Oesch</b>	(Born) 6/2/85	Son of Candy Oesch
6/8/06	<b>Rylee Jorja McFarland</b>	(Born & Died) 6/8/06	Daughter of Joy and Chris McFarland
6/9/78	<b>Jonathan Hepburn</b>	(Born) 7/31/63	Son of Jo Hepburn
6/9/99	<b>Jan Cecile Richardson</b>	(Born) 10/6/53	Daughter of Jim and Jean Richardson
6/14/01	<b>Dawn Chrystine Beckett</b>	(Born) 2/16/76	Daughter of Mike and Lynn Lindsey
6/16/96	<b>Gary Ryan Delanhoussaye</b>	(Born) 10/26/77	Son of Glynn and Catherine Delanhoussaye
6/17/93	<b>Brandon Holbrook</b>	(Born) 10/7/76	Son of Linda M. Holbrook
6/18/99	<b>Richard (Rick) Allen</b>	(Born) 7/15/68	Son of Richard and Linda Allen
6/19/87	<b>Paul R. Criswell, Jr.</b>	(Born) 11/10/61	Son of Georgia and Paul Criswell
6/20/90	<b>Mark Grimes</b>	(Born) 9/21/71	Son of Betty and Steve Grimes
6/22/00	<b>Jacob Issac Gibson</b>	(Born) 2/7/99	Son of Veronica and Darrell Gibson
6/22/96	<b>Spencer David Turner</b>	(Born) 8/18/87	Son of Kathy and Danny Turner
6/27/96	<b>Edward Charles Cambell</b>	(Born) 3/16/69	Son of Martha E. Stone
6/28/01	<b>Davey Allison Dunavant</b>	(Born) 3/31/92	Son of Anita and J. C. Harris

## JULY BIRTH DATES

7/1/75	<b>Carrie Elizabeth Griffin</b>	(Died) 6/7/96	Daughter of David and Debbie Griffin
7/3/78	<b>Scott Carter Jeffers</b>	(Died) 3/23/02	Son of Susan Jeffers
7/4/64	<b>John Harold Putman</b>	(Died) 5/10/91	Son of John and Harriet Putman
7/5/70	<b>Taran Ray Thomas</b>	(Died) 10/1/88	Son of John and Keila Thomas
7/7/59	<b>Scherrie Lyn Rutherford</b>	(Died) 10/20/91	Daughter of Dee and Jim Whitis
7/8/68	<b>Timothy Richard Woodworth</b>	(Died) 12/12/04	Son of Richard and Sharon Woodworth
7/10/60	<b>Mark Overstreet</b>	(Died) 7/30/78	Son of Kay Overstreet
7/12/70	<b>Heidi Allen Hunt</b>	(Died) 5/18/92	Daughter of Judy B. Horn
7/15/68	<b>Richard (Rick) Allen</b>	(Died) 6/18/99	Son of Richard and Linda Allen
7/15/70	<b>Brandon Todd Wilson</b>	(Died) 2/6/99	Son of Bob and Starr Wilson
7/18/75	<b>Larry "Boo" Crawford, Jr.</b>	(Died) 10/7/95	Son of Evelyn Dee Crawford
7/18/93	<b>James William Hooper, Jr.</b>	(Died) 6/22/01	Son of Michelle Hooper
7/19/83	<b>Annie Burke Courtney</b>	(Died) 1/15/01	Daughter of Paul and Anne Courtney
7/20/75	<b>Christy Weldon</b>	(Died) 11/2/93	Daughter of Connie Weldon
7/21/87	<b>Kyle Moore</b>	(Died) 7/2/06	Son of Georgia and Doug Moore
7/22/69	<b>Bill Mahan III</b>	(Died) 5/11/91	Son of Bill and the late Susie Mahan
7/22/82	<b>Nathan Winston Crim</b>	(Died) 1/20/07	Son of Becky & Keith LaVey and Howard B. Crim
7/23/85	<b>Jonathan Brewer</b>	(Died) 5/29/06	Son of Teresa and Don Bush
7/25/82	<b>Charles Hayden "Chip" Lampe</b>	(Died) 3/13/05	Son of Betsy Lampe
7/25/76	<b>Ryan Gregory Yeiser</b>	(Died) 1/29/85	Son of George Gregory and Rita Yeiser
7/30/81	<b>Hillary Paige Troidl</b>	(Died) 2/22/90	Daughter of Jim and Barb Troidl
7/31/63	<b>Jonathan Hepburn</b>	(Died) 6/9/78	Son of Jo Hepburn



## JULY ANGEL DATES

7/2/83	<b>Glen D. Lay</b>	(Born) 9/30/58	Son of Erwin and Fay Lay
7/2/06	<b>Kyle Moore</b>	(Born) 7/21/87	Son of Georgia and Doug Moore
7/3/89	<b>Barclay "Bart" J. Knafl</b>	(Born) 3/4/68	Son of Karen and John Knafl
7/3/91	<b>Doug Steinkuhl</b>	(Born) 3/19/72	Son of Gary and Barb Steinkuhl
7/6/79	<b>Andy McLaughlin</b>	(Born) 3/29/60	Son of Iris McLaughlin
7/6/03	<b>Ruth Ann Proutey</b>	(Born) 11/20/63	Daughter of Sarah and George Hudgins
7/9/91	<b>Mark Davis</b>	(Born) 6/1/73	Son of Harold and Jeannie Davis
7/9/92	<b>Joseph Lewellyn Powell</b>	(Born) 1/4/91	Son of Celia and David Powell
7/11/93	<b>Leslie Vasser</b>	(Born) 11/21/73	Daughter of Ed and Libby Vasser
7/11/95	<b>James Richard Dunn</b>	(Born) 8/6/53	Son of Juanita Allen
7/12/90	<b>John Blair Potter</b>	(Born) 10/14/75	Son of Susan and James Potter
7/13/91	<b>Juan Pirir Cux</b>	(Born) 6/21/90	Son of Donna and Dave Uckotter
7/13/93	<b>Phillip Old</b>	(Born) 6/29/62	Son of Priscilla Old
7/14/91	<b>Michael Bransford Burns</b>	(Born) 5/14/71	Son of Emily and Mike Burns
7/15/02	<b>Evan Charles Thomas</b>	(Born) 12/7/85	Son of John and Keila Thomas
7/15/88	<b>Kelly Renee Powell</b>	(Born) 4/5/75	Daughter of Cecil and Barbara Powell
7/17/98	<b>Matthew Charles Estes</b>	(Born) 3/16/76	Son of Barry and Cheri Catron
7/17/85	<b>Scarlett Lynn Miller</b>	(Born) 5/31/65	Daughter of Ronald and Ruby Miller
7/17/01	<b>Joe Frank Banks</b>	(Born) 10/30/77	Son of Barbara Kinne
7/17/04	<b>Isaiah Thomas Stewart</b>	(Born) 11/22/84	Son of Connie Stewart
7/19/95	<b>Bradley Johnson</b>	(Born) 9/17/77	Son of Don and Sharon Johnson
7/20/89	<b>Michael Rhodes Burton</b>	(Born) 12/11/64	Son of Harold and Pat Burton
7/23/01	<b>Eugene Swisher, Jr.</b>	(Born) 9/29/53	Son of Nancy and Eugene Swisher





## JULY ANGEL DATES (continued)

7/27/82	<i>Terry Hayes</i>	(Born) 5/19/62	Son of Patricia Morgan
7/28/00	<i>Jonathan M. Bates</i>	(Born) 9/23/81	Son of Jeane Bates
7/29/04	<i>Margaret Angela Hunt</i>	(Born) 5/12/73	Daughter of Linda & James Litzinger
7/29/00	<i>Kevin Patrick Hogge</i>	(Born) 11/1/72	Son of Burl and Linda Hogge
7/30/80	<i>Jackie Peel</i>	(Born) 3/21/72	Son of Carl and Pansy Peel
7/30/78	<i>Mark Overstreet</i>	(Born) 7/10/60	Son of Kay Overstreet
7/31/95	<i>Ryan Jason Ross</i>	(Born) 3/1/71	Son of Mitzi and Rick Holbrook

We mourn the loss of our children, but rejoice in their lives.



To love is to receive a glimpse of heaven. — Karen Sunde



If there was mistake on your child's anniversary date, please contact Brandi at [brandikoenig@gmail.com](mailto:brandikoenig@gmail.com) or (859) 229-8297.

### Men do Cry

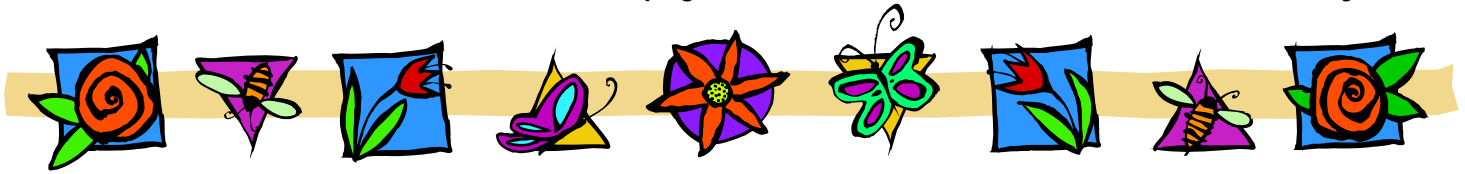
I heard quite often "men don't cry"  
 Though no one ever told me why  
 So when I fell and skinned a knee  
 No one came to comfort me.  
 And when some bully boy at school  
 Would pull a prank so mean or cruel  
 I'd quickly learn to turn and quip  
 "It doesn't hurt" and bite my lip.  
 So as I grew to reasoned years  
 I learned to stifle any tears.  
 Though "Be a big boy" it began  
 Quite soon I learned to "Be a man."  
 And I could play that stoic role  
 While storm and tempest wracked my soul.  
 No pain nor setback could there be  
 Could wrest one single tear from me.  
 Then one long night I stood nearby

And helplessly watched my son die  
 And quickly found to my surprise  
 That all that tearless talk was lies.  
 And still I cry and have no shame  
 I cannot play that "big boy" game.  
 And openly without remorse  
 I let my sorrow take its course.  
 So those of you who can't abide  
 A man you've seen who's often cried  
 Reach out to him with all your heart  
 As one whose life's been torn apart.  
 For men do cry when they can see  
 Their loss of immortality.  
 And tears will come in endless streams  
 When mindless fate destroys their dreams.

Ken Falk  
 TCF, NW Connecticut Chapter

### A STEPPARENT'S THOUGHTS

I am a bereaved stepparent – *Stepfather* to be exact. Robin Ann Craney, my stepdaughter, was killed at the hands of a drunk driver on June 8, 2001. She was 17 years old.



### A STEPPARENT'S THOUGHTS (continued)

I have a son named Greg. His Mom remarried so I saw him on weekends, did the trips, and long summer visits as many divorced parents do. I did not get the chance to be a part of his life and see him every day. I got to hear about his activities and accomplishments *all* after the fact. When you marry someone with kids, you get another chance.

After several months of dating my (now) wife Cindy, I finally met her kids, Chris and Robin. Robin was almost 7 years old at the time. I remember that first meeting clearly because she wasn't feeling so good. She ended up getting sick and had to go home. What a first meeting that was!

After that, I became totally involved in the lives and activities of both of the children. I remember one of those nights well! Cindy and I attended parent-teacher conferences for both kids, a Cub Scout Pack Meeting and a Girl Scout Brownie Meeting...not bad for a single guy, who had been unmarried for 13 years!

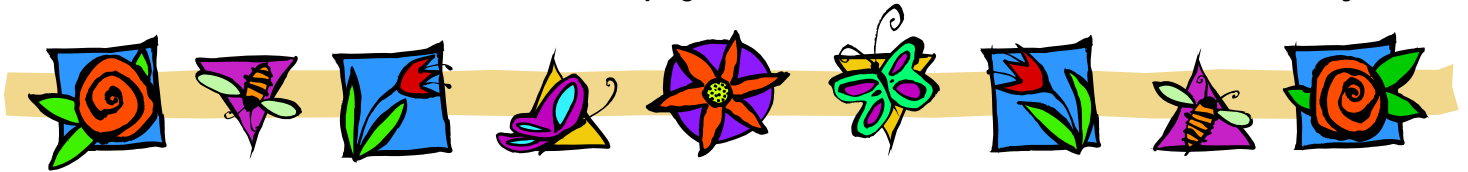
Over the years, I got to know Robin's likes, dislikes, and all of her friends – *and she had a lot of friends!* I attended and participated in all of Robin's activities, supporting her in her many endeavors – including gymnastics (her favorite). I was there when she had migraine headaches, running her to the doctor when her Mother couldn't, encouraging her, supporting her – all the things Dads do for their kids. I want to tell you in no uncertain terms, being a stepparent is so much harder. You get the responsibility and, often times it seems, none of the respect. "Mom said I could so I don't have to listen to you" or "You can't tell me what to do, you are not my dad" and so forth. I tolerated and dealt with her emotional outbursts when she became incensed at anything (sometimes it seemed everything) during the teen years. All *Dads* know how trying those times can be!

Now I am a bereaved stepparent...the one in a kind of "no man's land." I am not biologically connected to Robin; I sometimes feel like an outsider around people who were *once* a family - Mother, Father, Son, and Daughter. Many of our friends have worried about Cindy and Chris. They often ask me "How is Cindy doing?" or "Is Chris OK?" Although I knew and lived with Robin for 10 years, very few ask, "How are *you* doing?" I am only the *stepparent*. The idea that this tragedy cannot be as devastating to me as it is to Robin's "real family" is incomprehensible.

One definition for the word father is "father figure: one often of particular power or influence who serves as an emotional substitute for a father." This is what I was for Robin. She loved to push my buttons – but that was part of our relationship – as frustrating as it could be. Robin is the only daughter I will ever have. I was every bit a *father* to her. I love her and I miss her.

We, the stepparents of children who have died, grieve for our children too. *Only* society puts the "Step" in the name. *Parent* is still the biggest part of who we are. We hurt because they were our children too - often without the support and understanding that is demonstrated towards the biologically connected parents. These beautiful children with whom we developed emotional bonds are now gone out of our lives; and we, too, endure the same feelings of loss and sadness.





### A Little Piece of us in Heaven

There is a little piece of us in Heaven,  
 Part of us has already made it there.  
 Daddy's nose, Daddy's cheeks, Daddy's feet,  
 My hands. Does he have curly hair?

Our best parts are already in Heaven,  
 For he was beautiful.  
 You see, it is our son who is in Heaven.

He had a short but special, life here on earth,  
 But God chose to have a little piece of us  
 Up in Heaven with Him.  
 "Please take care of him, God."

We know you will do all the things that his parents cannot do.  
 We know you are holding him.  
 "God, please hold us, too!"

By Pam Bortner -- Thomasville, Pennsylvania  
 Reprinted from *Bereavement Magazine*, November/December 2001  
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 Colorado Springs, Colorado 89018  
 888.604.4673 (HOPE)



Danny, our only child, passed away at the age of twelve. His death was unexpected, and the pain almost unbearable. Our pastor told us that yellow is the color of life. What then could be more fitting than yellow roses? To ensure these symbols of life for years to come, I bought a rose bush for my wife. After all, she was still Danny's mom and needed more than ever to be reminded of that. I planted the bush on Mother's Day. On the day before Father's Day, the roses bloomed - three of them, to be exact. They were arranged in size order, just as our family had been in life. When I bought the bush, there was no way to know that there were to be only three roses. I have no doubt this was a sign from Danny. He wanted us to know that he still lives, and that there are still three roses.

John W. Carlsen  
 Reprinted from *Bereavement Magazine*,  
 5125 N. Union Blvd., Ste. 4  
 Colorado Springs, Colorado 89018  
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## Wish You Were Here

By Steve Tutt ~ TCF, Tyler, TX

You'd be nineteen if you were here  
 But why you're gone still isn't clear.  
 Your things are still all in your room  
 As if you'd be returning soon.  
 Sponge bob waits there by the door.  
 Your shoes are still there on the floor.  
 Your friends are all young women now.  
 They're working jobs or college bound.  
 Sometimes we see them and they say  
 We miss her so, wish she had stayed.  
 Your boyfriend's in the Army too  
 And by the way, he still loves you.  
 You thought his love was not so true  
 And that some other girl he'd choose.  
 But near two years have passed on by  
 Still to your grave he goes to cry.  
 Your niece and nephews miss you too,



And talk of the things you used to do.  
 Your Mother's going to be alright  
 And doesn't cry so much at night.  
 She puts the flowers on your grave,  
 And scrapbook pictures tries to save.  
 And me, I'm still the same old Dad,  
 The same old routine like I had.  
 I work real hard to make a way  
 To pay some bills and pass the day.  
 I'm not as funny as before  
 My world's not happy anymore.  
 I don't let on the pain I feel  
 But deep inside the hurt is real.  
 Time passes by year after year,  
 Life goes on with seldom a tear.  
 One wish I have, a wish so clear  
 My wish most of all, I wish you were here.

~Dad

## July's Child

Fireworks race toward heaven  
 Brilliant colors in the sky.  
 Their splendor ends in seconds  
 On this evening in July.  
 "Her birthday is this Saturday,"  
 I whisper with a sigh.  
 She was born this month,  
 She loved this month  
 And she chose this month to die.  
 Like the bright and beautiful fireworks  
 Glowing briefly in the dark  
 They are gone too soon, and so was she  
 Having been, and left her mark.  
 A glorious incandescent life,



A catalyst, a spark...  
 Her being gently lit my path  
 And softened all things stark.  
 The July birth, the July death of  
 my happy summer child  
 Marked a life too brief that ended  
 Without rancor, without guile.  
 Like the fireworks that leave images  
 On unprotected eyes...  
 Her lustrous life engraved my heart...  
 With love that never dies.

—Sally Migliaccio, *TCF Babylon*,  
 Long Island, NY

I don't know why.  
 I'll never know why.  
 I don't have to know why.  
 I don't like it.  
 I don't have to like it.  
 What I have to do is make a choice about my living.  
 What I do want to do is accept it and go on living.  
 The choice is mine.  
 I can go on living, valuing every moment  
 in a way I never did before,  
 or I can be destroyed by it and,  
 in turn, destroy others.

I thought I was immortal.  
 That my family and my children were also.  
 That tragedy happened only to others.  
 But I know now that life is tenuous  
 and valuable.  
 So I am choosing to go on living,  
 making the most of the time I have,  
 valuing my family and friends  
 in a way never possible before.  
 .... from the book, *My Son, My Son*, by Iris Bolton, whose  
 son Mitch died by suicide.



## IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

### Mail List Update

We are delighted to send you a newsletter, but only if it continues to bring you peace and comfort. With rising postal cost we need your help updating our mailing list. **If you would like to continue receiving the newsletter, please contact Janie Fields.** If you know of someone that may also benefit from our newsletter, please send their name and address to us and we will be happy to send them a copy.

You can also let us know if you want to receive our newsletter by email. Our newsletter may also be located on our chapter website: **<http://www.geocities.com/tcfbluegrass/>**.

If you haven't been to a meeting in a while, please join us soon and share your journey. Unfortunately, each month we have more parents and siblings that are early in their grief and would benefit from others that have been traveling this path for a long while. The newcomers need to hear from parents and siblings that there is hope for all of us.

If you would like to make a donation to the chapter to help cover our cost of the newsletter please send it to Compassionate Friends (in care of David or Janie Fields) to the Fields address below.

Sincerely,  
The Compassionate Friends  
Bluegrass Chapter  
Lexington, KY

**PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONTINUE TO  
RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER**

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