



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

North Oklahoma City Chapter

September 2019

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NORTH OKC CHAPTER:

P.O. Box 12249
OKC, OK 73157-2249
Telephone (405) 693-3955
New Phone Number

CHAPTER LEADER:

Sharon Ellington
(405)-721-6939
Email: bunji625@gmail.com

REGIONAL COORDINATOR:

Richard Szczepaniak
(580)-747-0686
E-mail: rbszczepaniak@yahoo.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Interim News Letter Editor
Telephone: (405) 691-7144
Email: gary.clark@cox.net
Please send your newsletter items to:

TCF
P.O. BOX 12249
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73157-2249
Web: www.NOKCTCF.COM

Newsletter items can also be e-mailed to:

NOKCTCF@AOL.COM
The cut-off date for the next newsletter is the 15th of the prior month

TCF NATIONAL OFFICE:

P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
Toll-Free (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

JOIN OUR CHAPTER'S MONTHLY MEETING

THURSDAY: **September 12th, 2019**

Location: Mayflower Congregational Church 3901
N.W. 63rd Street

(Between NW Expressway and Portland)

Parking is in the back of the church We meet on the
second Thursday of every month.

Sign In: 7:00 p.m. **Program Starts: 7:30 p.m.** FOOD
AND FELLOWSHIP FOLLOW THE MEETING

Upcoming Events

September 12th, 2019 7:30pm

Mayflower Congregational Church 3901 N.W.
63rd Street , Oklahoma City

Walk to Remember on Sept 14th, 2019
Bluff Creek Park, Oklahoma City
10:00 am

Regular meeting October 10th, 2019
Regular meeting November 14th, 2019

We are still looking for volunteer(s) to help with
the Chapter Newsletter.

Please contact gary.clark@cox.net

"Whoever among us has through personal experience learned what pain and anxiety really are... belongs no more to himself alone; he is the brother of all who suffer."

Albert Schweitzer

Sibling Corner... Dedicated to our Brothers and Sisters



NAMASTE -

The Light in Me Salutes the Light in You

I believe that we are here on this planet to experience what it means to be a Spirit in a physical body. The greater the experience, the deeper it touches our soul. This includes pleasure and pain, happiness and sadness, hope and despair, lightness and darkness. For we cannot know one without the other. This is a time to experience our grief. I pray that we all give ourselves that right and honor our grieving process. Through grief we heal. These are the things that I grieve for:

- I grieve for the loss of my only brother.
- I grieve that I will never come home to see him sitting in the living room to say hello.
- I grieve that we will never laugh together again, that I will never again experience that rich and unique humor that only he and I shared.
- I grieve that this world will no longer get to enjoy his humanness and his many gifts.
- I grieve that I will never see my brother in love, that I will never see him as a father or with a family of his own.
- I grieve that we will no longer share and inspire each other with the music that we love.
- I grieve that we will never get to work on a creative multi-media project together. This was a vision I held for the future.
- I grieve that I didn't share enough of my life experiences with my brother, and that I could have opened my heart even more.

• I grieve for all the people that Jason touched and the feelings of pain and loss that they are experiencing.

This is what I grieve for. Through death new life is birthed and though we cannot see it now, from Jason's death we will all experience new life. If we allow ourselves to grieve fully, this new life will become apparent. I love the spirit who gave me the privilege and pleasure of being my brother and I am grateful to experience 24 years of his beauty on this planet. -

Jeff Curnutt

Grief is OK Grief is normal; grief is OK. Grief is the way your body has to say that you love the son, daughter, brother, sister, even a friend that died; But sometimes it makes you cry.

Steve Hom, Age 10 TCF/Hinsdale, IL

Promise

“I'll cry with you”, she whispered, “until we run out of tears.”

“Even if it's forever.

We'll do it together. “

There it was a simple promise of connection. The loving alliance of grief and hope that blesses both our breaking apart and our coming together again.

Molly Furnia

Sean in the Parking Lot

an experience that happened just before his 7th year away from me ...

Yesterday, I had to stop by the store to pick up a few items. I drove into the side parking lot when around the corner came a teenage boy walking with a girl. It was my son Sean, or so it seemed at just that moment. My immediate reaction was, Sean! There you are! with the feeling of wanting to leap out of the car and run to him. But simultaneously, I saw it was not him of course, noticing that the boy was about the same age, 19, as when Sean died almost 7 years ago.

He had the same lankiness about him, the dark hair and eyes. It caught me by surprise. I was able to park at the end of the lot and sat there as the feelings welled up and spilled out, once again having to face the reality that my son was indeed gone. I sat there and cried, amazed that I could still be caught off guard, momentarily thinking he was alive. The rest of my day I felt energy less.

There are many days I cannot believe I won't see Sean again. After all this time, it simply does not compute. Many things have changed for me over the years. "Going down the rabbit hole", that feeling that takes over your world at any time, at any place during the first few years, hardly happens now. Except for yesterday.

My survival skills over the years have gotten better. I regained my balance within 5 or 10 minutes, brushed off my face, breathed in, breathed out and slowly stepped back into the world like stepping up onto an escalator. But there remains inside of me a dark hole, one which cannot be filled, and I know things can never be the same again.

Karen Hazelwood

Bent But Not Broken

The beautiful flowering tree planted in Nina's memory on Memorial Day a year short of a decade ago (by her favorite cousins) looked so regal and smelled so delicious yesterday. I like to think it flowers this time of year as a special birthday message from my "baby girl". However, with the vicious storm we had last evening I watched the soft white petals drift and swirl to the ground, as if a deluge of tears from a breaking heart. Today, it sits almost bare - a few petals still hanging on for dear life, unable to let go, desperate to regain its former beauty.

I can't help but see a symbolism in that tree that I can associate with. It is as if it stands as a monument to my grief, the ebb and flow of emotions that I have felt for the past nine years since Nina no longer walks this earth. When the tree is in full flower it seems much like family life "before". Of course there were short-term crises that now seem insignificant in comparison and life's speed bumps along the way, but all in all, pretty good. I mean, at least our family was intact. When the leaves were suddenly stripped of their branches and thrown to the ground in the furious hail-storm, it was like our lives after Nina's sudden death; thrown suddenly into a world of intense pain and sorrow, trying desperately to survive the unthinkable.

But, yet this morning, the tree stands, more barren and most definitely battered, but still hanging in there. Nine years later, those who love her, have weathered the tornado-like force of grief and loss. And nine years later, much like Nina's tree, though the storm has taken its toll, we will still manage to be upright; definitely bent, but still standing. And somehow, life roars on...

With gentle thoughts, Cathy L. Seehuetter TCF St. Paul, MN

in Memory of my daughter, Nina



A MOTHER'S HOPE By Betty Lineberger,

BP/USA of Marion County FL

When our son died, I hoped it was a mistake. It was not. I hoped it was a dream. It was not. Before my son died, I hoped for enough time in that day to clean my house, provide my family with clean laundry, taxi service and healthy meals. I loved dinner time with my family. After my son died, I did not know what day it was, cleaning our home or doing laundry were things I no longer thought of. I did not cook, I did not shop for food, I did not eat. I hoped he would come back. He did not. I hoped I would gain understanding. I did not. I could not understand how I could wake up on a perfectly normal morning and my son was gone from his room, gone from our home and gone from our lives. I hoped for acceptance. I found none. I hoped those around me would understand me. They did not. How could my beautiful, vibrant, healthy son be gone?

I hoped for peace. I had none. I hoped for sleep. I had none. I hoped for courage to resume my daily life. My life was out of my control. The only thing I was sure of in the early days of my grief was that I knew our life would never be the same again. I hoped this empty feeling would go away. It did not. I hoped that some day my family would be normal again. We were not. I hoped I could stop looking for our son in every young man I saw that was tall, slim and had sandy colored curly hair. I could not. I hoped I could become the parent to my surviving children that I knew they deserved. I could not. I knew how much they were hurting but I could not help myself and I could not help my children. My younger son needed my comfort. My daughter, expecting her own child needed my comfort. I was their mother but there was no comfort in me to give. I hoped I could be a wife to my husband. I could not.

I never hoped for laughter. How could I laugh when my son was dead. I hoped the feelings that consumed my every waking moment would somehow change so I did not feel as though I could never again be in a public place without crying. At 6 months after my son died, I hoped for a reprieve. I no longer could stand the pain and I saw my doctor. I knew he must have an answer to my question, —How long will I feel like this?— He did not.

I had begun attending Bereaved Parents meetings and hardly spoke a word at the first meeting. I could not stop talking at my second meeting. I had found the glimmer of hope that I had been searching for. I hoped this all consuming grief would never again happen to my family. But it did! When my daughter in law was 6 months pregnant, my son told me their baby had died. How I grieved for my son. I knew what he was feeling. I hoped to be able to help him and his wife. I could not.

I then realized that all of the things I had hoped for had begun to come about but had taken a lot of time. I hoped my son and his wife could hold on long enough for time to help and heal. They have. When my son died, I never hoped for joy. I could not imagine joy as part of our lives ever again. But there is joy. When my son was a baby, a toddler, a young child, a teenager and young man, I watched over him. I thought I would watch over him for my entire life. But I was wrong. I hope with all my heart that he is watching over me.

I now have the understanding I hoped for. I have peace. I finally sleep. I find joy every time I see a tall, slim young man with sandy colored curly hair. I do not cry as often. So there is hope. We all have a future; we have memories. No matter how long our children were part of our lives, we have memories. The first time I realized that joy would one day be part of my life was the day I remembered a trick my son played on his little brother. He gave him a glass of buttermilk instead of regular milk and pretended it was a mistake. We have laughed so many times about this little story. I can still see the twinkle in his eye. I can hear my son and daughter as he made up names for her to tease her. Oh, how he loved to laugh. I remember the look on his face when I discovered the snake he put in my garden terrarium.

I know the joy I feel every time I think of my son, share a memory with someone or look at pictures of him will never change. My hope as a Mother is that we all will find peace and cherish the joy our children have brought to our lives.

OUR CHILDREN *Loved...*

Missed... Remembered...

Birth Days

1	KOLBY DALE LANKFORD
1	LUKE WILLIAMS
2	HANNAH MOCK (MILLER)
2	JEFF JEHLIK
2	MASON PIERSOL
3	AUSTIN TAYLOR BAILEY (MYERS)
6	DAJUANA COLLINS (CAMPBELL)
6	PHILIP HAGAN WICKETT
9	PAUL EARNEST COLBERT BROWN
11	KYLE DEWAYNE BELT (VAN WINKLE)
12	ARLO PERRY GLIDEWELL
14	BROOK NICOLE HENSLEY
14	CALEB POSS
14	MACKENZIE RAPPE
16	LORWIN MANTOOTH
18	ZACHARIAH ROBERT LEWIS
19	CHUCK (BORING)
20	AMANDA FULTZ
21	MADISON RACHEL
21	CHARLES BARRACLOUGH
22	DYLLAN ROSS SANDERS
22	RYAN S DALLAM
25	SOPHIA CLAIRE CRAIN
26	KIPP GRIFFIN

"To Remember is Painful

To Forget Is Impossible."

Maureen Connelly

Angelverseries

1	JACKSON CLAY HENSLEY
1	LUKE WILLIAMS
2	CADENCE MARIE GORDON (BAUTISTA)
3	WILLIAM PALMER
4	JULIE GRANT
6	AMY HELMS (WITMER)
6	KARMEN JILL DAVIS
7	DEAN SHORT
8	CHARLES BARRACLOUGH
10	KEITH DAVIS
12	JENNA LOREE RUSSELL (BECKER)
12	KAREN ELAINE SHEFFIELD
13	LANE MCCORD
13	SETH RYAN HUNTER
14	DAVID K DEATHERAGE JR
14	DONNA BURRELL
14	ZCAURICE ZEUS MOORE (BURRELL)
18	HUNTER "COLE"MAN JACKSON
19	DUSTIN LYLES
20	ZACHARY RYAN MULANAX
21	LEE BRUNER
21	MARY FANNING TAYLOR (SIB)
22	RYAN MILLS
23	KADYNCE HOLLARS
26	BRAD KETTNER (MOORE)
26	TRACEY HUMPHREY
29	JARED EWY (NELSON)
29	JONATHAN HOWEL (WILLIAMS)
29	JOSH HARLIN (CLOPTON)
30	ROBERT KENNETH KOTT



Love Gifts...A thoughtful way to remember our pre-

cius children.

A *Love Gift* is given to The Compassionate Friends in honor of someone who has died...or a memorial to a relative or friend...or simply from those who wish to help.

Because TCF is a non-profit organization, *Love Gifts* are an important means of financial support, which enable us to continue to reach out and support bereaved families. **We are so very grateful for the *Love Gifts* listed below. Thank you for caring**



When someone you love becomes a memory ,the memory becomes a treasure.

Kathy Perkins " in memory of James Wiedeman

Bailey Medical Billing (Kimberly Myers) "In honor of Austin Bailey "

Mr & Mrs. David Harris

"In lieu of participating in the walk as a memorial to our son Noel Dean Harris"

"To my Beloved smiley son..I Love You! I carry you dear to my heart. I have the most amazing son and I want you to know, I Love You!"

Love,Moma (Elizabeth Cunningham)

**On Seeing Many Orange-Colored Butterflies in September
By Sascha Wagner**

Time between summer and winter,
Time under changing skies –
muted and heavy with foresight,
or endless blue, smiling at butterflies.

Time between summer and winter,
Time between laughter and tear –
harvest of beauty remembered
and voices (where are you?) to hear.

Time between summer and winter,
Thoughtful and painful and wise – muted
and heavy with losing, but also –
smiling at butterflies.



**Please join us for our annual
Walk to Remember on Sept 14th, 2019
Bluff Creek Park, Oklahoma City
10:00 am**

Eventually the pain does abate. Almost against our will, we begin to enjoy bits and pieces of life again. and like Wordsworth,, whose four-year-old daughter Catharine died in 1812, we feel guilty...

Sometimes when grief overwhelms us it is comforting to know that someone who cares is just a phone call away. A Loving Listener is someone who is willing to talk on the phone with another bereaved Parent, Sibling or Grandparent. A Loving Listener's phone number will be published in the newsletter as another resource to our bereavement community. Names will be listed along with special circumstances, such as auto accident, illness, suicide or homicide.

If you are willing to be a Loving Listener please let me know and I will add you to the newsletter. Contact Gary Clark at gary.clark@cox.net.

Loving Listeners

Gary Clark: Skiing Accident 405-691-7144

Melinda Heidling: Infant Death 405-885-2739

Sharon Ellington: Drunk Driver 405-721-6939

Robi Long: Unknown 405-408-2102



***** PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING *****

We all want to help when we can. It is a BIG part of our healing process. Being helpful, productive people is key. Our chapter very much needs to strengthen our steering committee. The Steering committee meets once every other month, and perhaps once or twice a year for special projects, such as the Walk to Remember and the December Candle Lighting.

WE NEED YOUR IDEAS, YOUR CREATIVITY, YOUR NETWORKING SKILLS.

WE NEED YOUR INDIVIDUAL TALENTS.

Our chapter has been operating with just a few volunteers for sometime now and we have not been able to do the Outreach to the community and Public Awareness that was once our strength. We know there are so many hurting families in our community who have not heard of us.

We can all probably help a little, which will help our chapter a lot. If you can help please contact Sharon Ellington at 405-721-6939 , or Gary Clark at 405-691-7144, or come to our next meeting and talk to us. We will be very happy to have your help.



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

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73157-2249

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NORTH OKLAHOMA CITY CHAPTER

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

2019

September

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TCF "Online Support Community" Offers Opportunity for Grief Sharing
The Compassionate Friends national website offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. These include "Pregnancy and Infant Loss," "Bereaved 2 Years and Under," "Bereaved 2 Years and Over," "Men Only Sharing Session," "No Surviving Children," "Survivors of Suicide." There are also sessions for surviving siblings. The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit www.compassionatefriends.org and click "Online Support" in the "Resources" column.