



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

SOUTH SHORE CHAPTER HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS



August & September 2009

*The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information to help others be supportive*

To all those newly bereaved, who are receiving this newsletter for the first time and to all our Compassionate Friends, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that you and your family have many friends. We, who received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow, now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help. You are not alone in your grief.

### Grief support after the death of a child

The Compassionate Friends is a national nonprofit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievors reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal.

**MEETINGS** at St. Paul's Parish House, 20 Fearing Road, Hingham (across the street from Citizen's Bank) at 7:30 PM on First and Third Mondays of the month.

### CHAPTER PHONE:

(781) 749-3401

### CHAPTER CO-LEADERS:

Rick Mirabile (781) 740-1135

Rmirabile@comcast.net

Martha Berman (781) 337-8649

mmartha1@comcast.net

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Kenneth L. Kaplan (781) 214-9999

73 Manomet Avenue

Hull, MA 02045

kennykap13@yahoo.com

### CHAPTER WEBSITE:

[www.tcf-southshore.org/home.html](http://www.tcf-southshore.org/home.html)

### REGIONAL COORDINATOR:

Rick Mirabile (781) 740-1135

### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

The Compassionate Friends

PO Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522

Toll-free (877) 969-0010

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

email: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)



## Phone Friends

If you are having a difficult day, or need someone to talk with, call a friend below.

Martha Berman (781) 337-8649

Laura Corkery (siblings) (781) 293-3986

LAC65@peoplepc.com

Judy Ferreira (617) 481-0149

Donna Kaplan (781) 214-9999

dlkarn59@yahoo.com

Paula McDonald (781) 447-6811

Rick Mirabile (781) 740-1135

Trudy Cole-Sevier (781) 837-3171

The Compassionate Friends  
2009 National conference  
August 7—9, 2009 ~ Portland Oregon

### FROM THE EDITOR

As summer vacation winds down and the children are heading back to school, families that are grieving may find that the change in season brings new or different stress. The dictionary defines grief as, “intense sorrow; mental anguish; a cause of disappointment or sorrow.” We at The Compassionate Friends meetings associate grieving with the death of a child and our suffering with that loss and we individually have the opportunity to express and grieve within a group and as is unique to us. Along with the change in seasons, most people mark their year with anniversaries, the celebration of birthdays, holidays, and days significant to us for one reason or another. After our loss, those anniversaries can be understandably to us quite painful. I personally have found the days and weeks leading up to each anniversary date to be harder than the actual date itself. I am told this is termed as anticipatory grieving. As you ride the roller coaster of your day in and day out grief, “you need not walk alone”, and you may wish to share during the time in between our chapter meeting dates. Our chapter is full of compassion, support and understanding. In the newsletter, I have provided you with a Phone Friends listing consisting of wonderful volunteers only too anxious to be available to you as you may need. In your times of need, you need not wait for a scheduled meeting. The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

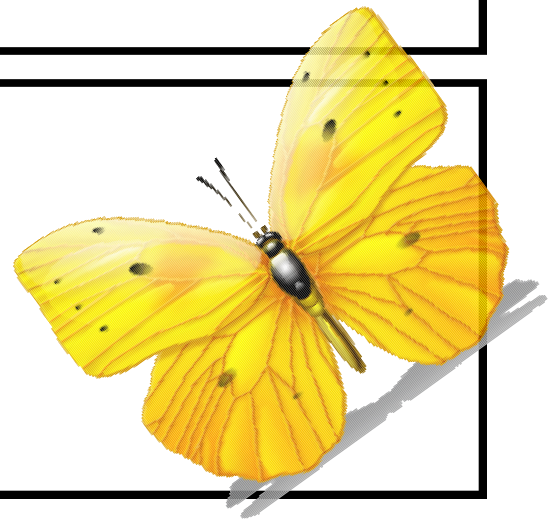
I also now wish, on behalf of our group, to send well wishes to all who have health concerns and hopes for your speedy and full recoveries.

Kenneth L. Kaplan  
Newsletter Editor

### **What I Need**

*By Beth Pinion ~ TCF, Andalusia AL*

A lot of time!  
A little space,  
A kind of quiet  
Resting place,  
Are what I need  
At times like these  
A special spot  
Where I can  
Grieve.



### Editor's Solicitation

I hope you can find meaning in reading this newsletter edition. Even though I am producing, it is your newsletter and it should contain as you so desire. Newsletters are a wonderful way to keep communication within our group and to provide outreach and support to those in need. My objective is to provide knowledge, current information, an opportunity to write about our children/siblings and experiences on how to proceed. Do you have a tip to share? Send your ideas to our newsletter, I would love to include it. I am looking for short, simple submittals everyone can appreciate.

If you would like to submit an article, announcement, poem, short story or any other meaningful to you items for publication in future editions, please send via email. Send your submittals, suggestions and questions to [kennykap13@yahoo.com](mailto:kennykap13@yahoo.com). Planned publication dates are the first day of every other month beginning with February of each year.

Kenneth L. Kaplan  
Newsletter Editor



### NOW I KNOW

I never knew, when you lost your child,  
What you were going through.  
I wasn't there, I strayed away, I just  
deserted you.

I didn't know the words to say,  
I didn't know the things to do.  
I think your pain so frightened me,  
I didn't know how to comfort you.

And then one day my child died,  
You were the first one there.  
You quietly stayed by my side, listened,  
and held me as I cried.

You didn't leave, you didn't go. The lesson  
learned is... Now I know.

Alive Kerr, TCF, Lower Bucks, PA

### SUICIDE

Once you were filled with life, you were self confident and filled with beauty.  
Until a darkness came to seize your mind, a force from out of silence, an ache without a reason, a pain without a name.

What was this darkness that would not be conquered? What force, what reason, what pain without a name would use your hands to take your life away.

Once you were rich with life, your self confident and filled with beauty. Now we are left alone without an answer.

WINTERSUN

We may not be able  
To make the sun shine for you  
But we can  
Hold the umbrella

Ann Swann, TCF, Valley Forge, PA

### WE ARE STILL MOTHERS

We are still mothers  
With empty arms and broken hearts  
We are still mothers  
With beautiful memories and broken dreams  
We are still mothers  
With questions and no answers  
We are still mothers  
Slapped by reality every moment of the day  
We are still mothers  
Who ache for the future of our children although  
they're gone  
We are still mothers  
Outraged that life goes on around us without our  
children  
We are still mothers  
Wondering how the sun shines so brightly, without  
the lights of our children  
We are still mothers  
Searching for purpose in ourselves and finding  
only more questions  
We are still mothers  
Who lost the loves of our lives and yet must still  
go on  
We are still mothers  
With empty arms and broken hearts.

From in loving memory printed in Alive Alone

### A BUTTERFLY LIGHTS

A butterfly lights beside us like a  
sunbeam  
And for a brief moment its glory and  
beauty  
Belong to our world  
And although we wish it could have stayed...  
We feel lucky to have seen it.

Author unknown



## A Bereaved Parent's Wish List

1. I wish my child hadn't died. I wish I had him back.
2. I wish you wouldn't be afraid to speak my child's name. My child lived and was very important to me. I need to hear he was important to you also.
3. If I cry and get emotional when you talk about my child I wish you knew that it isn't because you have hurt me. My child's death is the cause of my tears. You have talked about my child, and you have allowed me to share my grief. I thank you for both.
4. I wish you wouldn't "kill" my child again by removing his pictures, artwork, or" other remembrances from your home.
5. Being a bereaved parent is not contagious, so I wish you wouldn't shy away from me. I need you now more than ever.
6. I need diversions, so I do want to hear about you; but I also want you to hear about me. I might be sad and I might cry, but I wish you would let me talk about my child, my favorite topic of the day.
7. I know that you think of and pray for me often. I also know that my child's death pains you, too. I wish you would let me know those things through a phone call, a card or note, or a real big hug.
8. I wish you wouldn't expect my grief to be over in six months. These first months are traumatic for me, but I wish you could understand that my grief will never be over. I will suffer the death of my child until the day I die.
9. I am working very hard in my recovery, but I wish you could understand that I will never fully recover. I will always miss my child, and I will always grieve that he is dead. I wish you wouldn't expect me "not think about it" or to "be happy." Neither will happen for a very long time, so don't frustrate yourself.
10. I don't want to have a "pity party," but I do wish you would let me grieve. I must hurt before I can heal.
11. I wish you understood how my life has shattered. I know it is miserable for you to be around me when I'm feeling miserable. Please be as patient with me as I am with you.
12. When I say, "I'm doing okay," I wish you could understand that I don't "feel" okay and that I struggle daily.
13. I wish you knew that all of the grief reactions I'm having are very normal. Depression, anger, hopelessness and overwhelming sadness are all to be expected. So please excuse me when I'm quiet and withdrawn or irritable and cranky.
14. Your advise to "take one day at a time" is excellent advice. However, a day is too much and too fast for me right now. I wish you could understand that I'm doing good to handle an hour at a time.
15. Please excuse me if I seem rude, certainly not my intent. Sometimes the world around me goes too fast and I need to get off. When I walk away, I wish you would let me find a quiet place to spend time alone.

Compiled by Diane Collins  
TCF, Bay Area Chapter, Houston

**Grief Materials**--Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you're looking for-or they'll be able to tell you where to find it.

Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at 402-553-1200 or visit their website at [www.centering.org](http://www.centering.org). When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.

## Catching Butterflies



by Dottie Williams ~  
TCF, Pittsburgh PA

It often hurt to come upon reminders of  
my son  
Tho' often since I lost him I would search  
around for one  
Which always brought on sadness and  
the tears that I would shed  
Were caused by names or faces, all  
things that I would dread.  
But then one day I came upon a man  
who'd lost his son  
I found that things I ran from, he  
wouldn't even shun.  
But rather he would treasure and I said  
I wondered why  
He told me that he called them "Catching  
Butterflies."  
This view of his intrigued me; I wanted  
to hear more  
And learned that he took all of them and  
carefully would store  
All of the reminders that I chose to push  
away  
He would tuck deep down inside his  
heart each and every day.  
Now a name or likeness when catching  
me off guard

Does not upset me as it did and I don't  
find it hard  
For now instead I see these times as  
opportunities  
To see my son awakened in these new  
fresh memories.



### "DON'T STEAL MY GRIEF"

Don't try to make me feel better,  
By quipping your cute jokes.  
Don't try to rob me of my pain,  
When I need it as my cloak.  
I know you probably think,  
You're doing me a favor,  
But what you don't understand,  
Is that my sadness is my savior.  
Don't try to steal my right,  
To express my grief in my own way.  
You see, I lost my child,  
And grief is the price that I must pay.  
I need to feel the hurt and pain,  
As it beats inside my chest.  
Don't try to steal my grief,  
When it's the only feeling I have left.

By Faye McCord, Co-Chapter Leader, TCF /  
Jackson, MS  
In loving memory of my son,  
Lane McCord (1/26/65 - 9/13/98)

## Tomorrow Will Be Better

When my son died, I felt like there would be no tomorrow. I didn't want a tomorrow. I wanted yesterday with its promise of joy and perfection. I wanted my son to be alive. But he was gone.

Now, when life gets me down, I remember the joys of yesterday, think of all that I was given, take measure of all that still needs to be done, and I promise myself that tomorrow will be better because I will work very hard to make it better.

My grandmother often told me, "If you think you can, you're right. If you think you can't, you're right. What do you think?" As a child I thought this was strange. As an adult, I know it to be true.

Tomorrow *will* be better. Tomorrow I will, once again, tell my mind to stop the negative thoughts. And my mind will do exactly that, as I command my ship of grief.

Annette Mennen Baldwin  
Forever remembering my son, Todd Mennen  
TCF Katy, TX



## Suicide: How Do We Say It?

From the moment we learned of our daughter's death, I knew that the word "suicide" had the power to erase her life while emblazoning her death in neon letters in the minds of her friends and colleagues. During the unremitting misery of those early days, I even toyed with the idea of telling no one she was gone, willing her to stay alive in the thoughts of those who knew her, forgetting that I'd already notified our family and closest friends. It was a fairy tale wish I contrived as a way of allowing myself a momentary escape from the unthinkable reality of her death. If her death were never acknowledged, would she still be here?

My fantasy vanished in the cold light of the days that followed. I knew that we could never dishonor Rhonda's memory by concealing her suicide. I wrote a letter to friends and relatives informing them of the events leading up to her death. I hoped my letter would quell the inevitable whispers by openly acknowledging her depression and her decision to end her own life. I implored them to speak often and openly about her to us; to do otherwise would deny her existence.

I never intended to embark on a campaign to confront, let alone eradicate, the stigma of suicide. What mattered most was that we who loved Rhonda must not let the circumstances of her death diminish her memory or her accomplishments. I explained that she had "taken her own life" or that "she died of suicide". An expression I refused to use then and refuse to use to this day is the despicable "committed suicide", with its implications of criminality. Historically, that term was an instrument of retaliation against the survivors and it has no place in today's enlightened society.

Many people prefer to say, "completed suicide", but as a parent who witnessed my child's 20-year struggle against the demons of clinical depression, I don't care much for that either. "Died of suicide" or "died by suicide" are accurate, emotionally-neutral ways to explain my child's death.

My first encounter with suicide occurred many years ago when my dentist, a gentle family man in his mid 30's took his own life. Since that time, I have known

neighbors, relatives, fiends and other hard-working, highly respected individuals who died this way. I've facilitated meetings in which grieving parents declined to speak about their children because they couldn't handle the group's reactions to the dreaded "s" word. I've known parents who never returned to a chapter meeting because of negative comments about the way that their child died.

Rhonda was a gifted scholar, writer and archaeologist who, like my mother suffered from adult-onset manic depression (also called bipolar disorder). She made a lasting contribution in her field and a wonderful tribute to her life and her work, that appeared in *American Archaeology* (October, 1994).

Both my daughter and my mother suffered tremendously in their struggles to conquer and conceal their illness. Neither of them won that battle, but my mother responded to medications that minimize the highs and lows, and she died of cancer at 87.

Sadly, doctors never discovered a magic formula that could offer Rhonda the same relief. She ended her own life at age 36, after a year of severe depression that was triggered by life stresses beyond her control. I saw her battle firsthand, and I witnessed her valiant struggle to survive. She wanted desperately to live; she died because she thought she had no alternative.

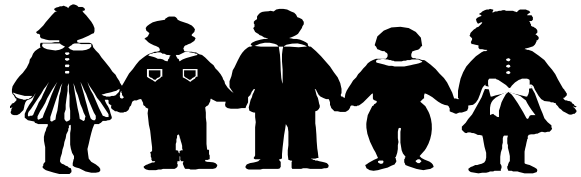
In his revealing book *Telling Secrets*, the great theologian Frederick Buechner describes his father's suicide, which occurred when Buechner was just a boy. The conspiracy of silence that was imposed on Buechner and his brother had a profound effect on their development and their relationships with other family members. "We are as sick as our secrets" he concludes.

We whose children have taken their own lives must do all that we can to help eradicate the secrecy and stigma that surrounded their deaths. If we allow these to persist, we allow their lives to be diminished. We owe our children more than that.

By Joyce Andrews  
TCF, Sugar Land, Texas

Reprint permission given to the Compassionate Friends

# Siblings



## What Siblings Think About

If I could speak for all the bereaved siblings out there, I'd say; I know you're frightened and maybe feel anger and guilt, for those are normal feelings at times like these. I know that it isn't fair, but some of life isn't. It's hard to accept that fact isn't it? I know you may even resent having some special time in your life interfered with by your parents prolonged grieving. Be patient. There will be better days.

I know you may be sorry that you said or did some things that involved your dead sister or brother. Sibling rivalry is a normal and natural thing. All of us do and say things we wish we hadn't. That's a part of being human. Forgive yourself for being human, and try to remember the good times, too.

If you're older, I know you find it difficult to share the pain you're feeling with your parents because you can see they're having a hard time. Your impulse is to protect them, and that includes from your own pain. Sometimes you become the parent and they the child. Do you realize that if you do too good a job of disguising your grief, your parents may misunderstand and think instead that you aren't grieving at all? Share some parts, at least with them if you can. It is better for you and them to release your feelings than to bottle them up and pretend everything is okay.

I know you become discouraged after awhile when you find you aren't able to make your parents "better". It isn't a failure on your part that this is true. Try to accept the fact that it takes much time and grief work before they can be better. They and you have lost something very important, and it isn't possible for them to put it all behind them and go on as though nothing has changed. All of the crying and unhappiness you are seeing is necessary for them to go through before they can reach the other side of the grief process where it is less painful.

I know you begin to wonder if your dead sibling was your parent's favorite child—and if you really matter at all. Oh! You do! Had it been you or any of your brothers or sisters, it would be the same, for this is the way it is when any child dies. It may take some time before your parents can show it in obvious ways, but

you are one of the major reasons they struggle so to regain some equilibrium in their lives. You are important!

I know you wonder, sometimes, if you and your parents are remembering the same person since they only seem to remember him or her as being a perfect angel with no faults. You, on the other hand, may remember some qualities that weren't so saintly. When you are remembering your sibling, bring up some of the irritating things he or she used to do so that everybody can remember him or her, as he or she really was—a human being complete with good and bad. It's hard to live with the memory of a saint, isn't it?

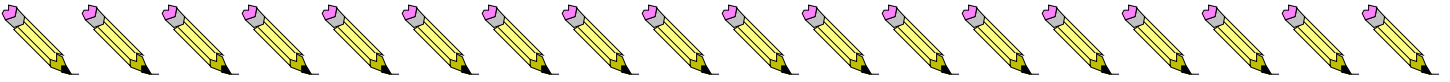
I know it may be bothersome if you find your parents are overly concerned for your safety now. They may tend to overprotect, but you need to understand that they now know that bad things do, indeed, happen to good people, and their security is shattered. Just a simple thoughtful act like calling if you're going to be later than expected can really help them at this time and make them less anxious.

Holidays and birthdays will be more painful than fun in the beginning. Try to understand if old traditions are put aside right now and don't demand everything exactly as it used to be. Given time, you and your family will work out just how you want and need to observe special family occasions, and their will be enjoyable times in your home again. They just may have to be observed in different ways than before.

I know that you need to hear that your family will survive this tragedy. Your parents may need that same assurance. Those of us who have had necessary time for our adjustments do offer you and your family that assurance. It will never be the same, but you will come to value each other in ways not previously thought of. Now is the time for your family to be pulling together—not apart. A loving family will survive. Try to share and communicate your feelings. If you can't talk with your parents, find somebody who cares and who can listen. It can help all of your family recover in an emotionally healthy way.

*Mary Cleckley, TCF/Atlanta, GA*

## CHAPTER SHARING PAGE



This Chapter Sharing Page is for you. If you would like to submit an article, announcement, poem, short story or any other meaningful to you items for publication in future editions, we would love to include it.

### *William H. Smith*

*By Joan M. Smith, TCF South Shore Chapter Hingham, MA*

I remember that each day after I was married I prayed to God every night for a baby. My prayers were answered after 1 year and 1 month, my son Billy was born. I thought I was the only one in the world that ever had a baby. To me, he was the most beautiful baby I'd ever seen. Oh how I loved him. After having 5 more children, I knew I had enough love for all of them and I would thank God for each and every child.



I knew I was truly blessed. I understand that God loans us our children and I would thank him for my blessing and ask please let me have them with me until after I was gone. I am writing this now as I listen to him in pain. Is this the pain the Blessed Mother felt, I asked myself, and pray to her for help. I do not want God to take him home. I know in my heart that he is God's son, but he gave him to me and it is very hard for me to give him back.

I know my son loves me very much; he looked at me from his pain and said he was sorry that I had to go through this and he didn't want me to be worried about him. But my heart is broken. No parent should have to go through this. I know God has a plan and I pray to Him to help me accept it. I know that God loves my Billy and will reward him in Heaven.

Billy has touched so many people and has been loved by all. When he is in Heaven, he will always be watching over Sabrina, who is his heart. He will keep her safe. His memory will never die; it will remain in all of our hearts. I am so proud of him and I don't know what I will do without him. I have been praying for a miracle, maybe the miracle was Billy touching our lives and wanting us to love each other, and be closer to God. Sometimes we take our gifts from God for granted and we don't know when it will be time to give them back.

When Billy was a baby I held him all the time and never would let him cry or put him down. I was told that if I didn't let him cry he wouldn't be able to speak and if I never put him down, he would never walk. I finally did this but I wish right now I could hold him and not let him go. I'm trying to write this through tears, it is so hard, I don't want to let him go, but I don't want him to be in pain.

I am praying that no one has to hear this letter and it will be Billy that tells you all about me someday. We all live busy lives and try to get through each day not realizing we need God in our lives to help us love each other. We should all pay attention to the ones we love. God has a plan for all of us. We all are going to die, when and how, we will never know. I know how it hurts and makes us feel when it is someone so close to us. I know that everyone that Billy has touched and everyone we touch will meet again, and knowing that helps me through this difficult time. Please keep Billy in your prayers and all the loved ones that have gone before us.

*Billy's Mom (He would call me Joan Ma)*



## OUR CHILDREN LOVED AND REMEMBERED

*Each season we remember the children who are sadly missed. Please take a few moments, place them in your thoughts, and remember them on their day together with their parents. None of us ever forget our special days and messages that say "I care" help us to get through them. Our children's lives will go on, as long as we remember them and celebrate their lives.*

### BIRTHDAYS



#### AUGUST

AIMEE LEIGH BULLARD  
ROBERT ANTONIO CASTRO  
ELIZABETH REDDEN DEUTSCHE  
CHRISTINA MARY FEENEY  
JANE LEE FLETT  
PAUL FORTINI  
MICHAEL P. GIORDANO  
GARY JONES  
LAEL T. KING  
TERRANCE LITTLETON  
MARK EDWARD LUCIUS  
JOHN MITCHELL MCKITTRICK  
LIAM O'DONNELLY  
BRIAN PATRICK REGAN JR.  
JOSHUA GABRIEL ROWAN  
MATTHEW JOHN STEUTERMAN  
PETER SULLIVAN  
BRIAN J. SULLIVAN  
JOHN W. TERRIO  
LLOYD YOUNG

#### SEPTEMBER

WILLEM ADAIR BERKELAAR  
MARK T. BURNS  
RONALD A. CATRAMBONE JR.  
JOANNE MYRICK DENTREMONT  
BO CRAIG FALCO  
ALLISON MARIE HAYES  
FRANK L. KUBIK  
DANIEL J. MALONEY  
ALEXANDER ROBERT PASSARETTI  
BABY ANDREW TRENTON

Please let me know if you find an error or an omission and I will correct it.  
kennykap13@yahoo.com

### ANNIVERSARIES



#### AUGUST

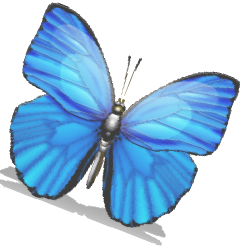
JIMMY CAHILL  
VINCENT J. D'ANDREA JR  
CHRIS DUFFY  
JOY MARIE HANLON  
FRANK L. KUBIK  
DANIEL LEO MARTIN  
CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL MULLIGAN  
VINCENT R. PERUZZI  
ANGEL SPATARO  
.

#### SEPTEMBER

MICHAEL JONATHAN BURAK  
STEVEN DENNIS BURKE JR.  
TED KEANE COCHRAN  
JAMES ANTHONY CONRY  
LORI ANN DRAGONETTI  
PAUL FORTINI  
MAUREEN GALLAGHER  
RICHIE GALLAGHER  
BENJAMIN LOWELL KIMBALL  
JOSHUA BENJAMIN KNOCHIN  
ROBIN M. MANDEVILLE  
NICHOLAS ALEXANDER PRATT  
JONATHAN TAYLOR  
BABY ANDREW TRENTON

### THE BIRTHDAY TABLE

In the month of your loved ones birthday, please feel free to bring in a picture of your child and place it on the birthday table. You may also bring in anything that has special meaning to you that relates to your child.



# Love Gifts

**A LOVE GIFT IS A CONTRIBUTION THAT IS GIVEN TO TCF IN MEMORY OF A CHILD WHO HAS DIED. THE FUNDS ARE USED TO AID THE WORK OF OUR CHAPTER FOR THE NEWSLETTER, POSTAGE, BOOKS, AND OTHER NEEDED MATERIALS. ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. OUR THANKS TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE SUPPORTED US IN THIS WAY.**

In Loving Memory of Michele Braun  
Ruth A. Braun

In Loving Memory of Mike Piccarini  
*Five lonely years without you.  
Love, Mom and Dad.*

In Loving Memory of Tracy Harriette Davidson  
*A year gone by without you so near and yet so far.  
You are always in our hearts.  
Love "Ma" and Andrew*

In Loving Memory of Jordan Dale Cibley  
*We will never forget you, our dear grandson .....  
fly free like a butterfly.*



Grandpa & Gramsley  
Maltzman

In Loving Memory of  
Christopher Michael Mulligan  
*~ Love You ~ Always have ~ Always Will ~  
Love Mom, Dad, Kerry & Katie*

Please send your love gifts by mail to **TCF South Shore Chapter, 147 North Street, Hingham, MA 02043. Love Gifts** can also be given to your meeting leaders at the meetings. Use the form below to assure they are processed exactly as you request. (**NEWSLETTER ITEMS** should not be sent to this address.)

**Please note:**

Love notes must be received by the **1st** of the month before you wish the note to appear in the newsletter.  
Items for the **October** Newsletter must be received by **September, 1st.**

Love Gifts for future dates may be sent at any time. Month to be published: \_\_\_\_\_

LOVE GIFT received from \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

Message \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*A wonderful way to remember your child is to sponsor either the printing or mailing costs of a newsletter. If you are interested please contact the newsletter editor, Kenneth Kaplan.*

**SOUTH SHORE CHAPTER  
THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS  
147 NORTH STREET  
HINGHAM, MA 02043**

*Even if it's been a while since you've been to a meeting, you are always welcome to join us. If your newly bereaved, bring a relative or a friend if you wish. Share your feelings, or say nothing and just listen: but please come.*

***"You need not walk alone"***

***TO OUR NEW MEMBERS***

*Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether it will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief.*



***TO OUR OLD MEMBERS***

*We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting we have new parents. THINK BACK... what it would have been like for you if there had been no "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them that you heard, "your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer".*

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