



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA CHAPTER

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OCTOBER / NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2011

FOR THAT, I AM THANKFUL

It doesn't seem to get any better,
but it doesn't get any worse either.
For that, I am thankful.

There are no more pictures to be taken,
but there are memories to be cherished,
For that I am thankful.

There is a missing chair at the table,
but the circle of family gathers close.
For that, I am thankful.

The turkey is smaller,
but there is still stuffing.
For that, I am thankful.

The days are shorter,
but the nights are softer.
For that, I am thankful.

The pain is still there,
but it lasts only moments.
For that, I am thankful.

The calendar still turns,
the holidays still appear and they still cost too much.
And I am still here.
For that, I am thankful.

The room is still empty,
the soul still aches,
but the heart remembers.
For that, I am thankful.

The guests still come,
the dishes pile up,
but the dishwasher works.
For that, I am thankful.

The name is still missing,
the words still unspoken,

but the silence is shared.
For that, I am thankful.

The snow still falls,
the sled still waits,
and the spirit still wants to.
For that, I am thankful.

The stillness remains,
but the sadness is smaller.
For that I am thankful.

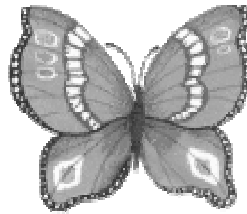
The moment is gone,
but the love is forever.
For that, I am blessed.
For that, I am grateful...

Love was once (and still is) a part of my
being...
For that I am living.
I am living... For that, I am thankful.

May your holidays be filled with reasons to be
thankful. Having loved and having been loved is
perhaps the most wondrous reason of all.

From the book "Holiday Help ~ A Guide for Hope
and Healing"

By Darcie D. Sims and Sherry L. Williams



Monthly Meetings

Thursday, October 6

Thursday, November 3

**Due to the Candle Lighting Ceremony to be held
Sunday, December 11 we will not have our regular
monthly meeting in December.**

6:30 PM
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
1901 Lexington Ave.
Enter through the back parking lot off Milton St.

For Siblings

An outlet for siblings is the TCF Sibling Forum. It is available online and is a place where siblings from all over can share and help each other cope with the unique grief of losing a brother or sister. Siblings are able to ask questions, make a comment or leave a thought for others to respond.

Visit the Sibling Resources Page at www.compassionatefriends.org
Email tcsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org for the password

A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS GIFT A MEMORY BOOK

After hearing several surviving siblings discuss the idea in the TCF sibling group, I created a Memory Book for my parents for Christmas last year. Of course I missed Christmas by a few months and gave it to them in early spring, but hey, they loved it anyway. It was a big job, but it was very rewarding, and I'm glad I did it. If you're interested, here's what it took to make it happen.

I made a list of friends and relatives who might want to say something about my brother, Chris, in writing for the Memory Book. I added a few of his co-workers and started tracking down addresses. I sent them all a note explaining the concept and asking if they would be willing to help me put it together by donating a memory. I asked them what they remembered about Chris, if they had any stories, photos, or even random observations that they could contribute, and I told them that it would help my family to know that we weren't the only people thinking of him.

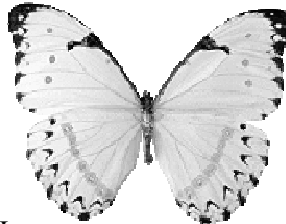
Most people were enthusiastic about it and said they would definitely send me something. Some people didn't return my call. And a few promised to deliver multiple times but didn't follow through. It was a positive project, so I did not pester people about it. I worked with what I got. Old friends called and said they struggled with their emotions and couldn't find the right words to say what they wanted to say. I assured them that anything would be great.

When I received the poems, photos, and memories I put them in Pagemaker on the computer by scanning the photos and cutting and pasting the written memories. You can also do this in Publisher in Microsoft Office 2000. Make it look like a magazine

or a brochure or whatever you have in mind. I used the color laser printer at work and paid them for each page. I stuffed the pages in clear page-protectors and put the pages in a binder and sent each contributor a copy. The total cost was around \$60. It took some time, but the articles touched my heart, and the photos made me remember things I had forgotten. My parents and I agreed that it confirmed our best feelings about Chris. When other people consistently say what you've been thinking, you know that your memory is true.

If you're up to the task I highly encourage it.

Scott Mastley
TCF Atlanta, GA



MERRY CHRISTMAS, ASHLEY

If I could make a Christmas wish
And know it would come true
I'd wish to have one more Christmas
Just to spend with you.

You were here in times of trouble
To help make me strong
You were here to share Christmas joy
And sing with us a song.

I was given the finest gift
To have a sister like you
For you were one true blessing
A gift my whole life through.

Lisa Sockwell Meredith
Sister of Ashley
TCF Atlanta, GA

HOLIDAYS IN HEAVEN

The Holiday Season is just not the same,
A smile is missing when saying one name.

For parents who've lost a daughter or son,
Nothing can bring back the delightful fun,
Of watching them talk, laugh, or just run.

The memories are all that we do have now,
We do go on.....only God knows how.

A New Year comes as midnight arrives,
Our Angels still a big part of our lives.

If only we could trade the presents we receive,
For one more day with those whom we grieve!

But nothing can bring back our beloved child,
The one that laughed, cried, and often smiled.

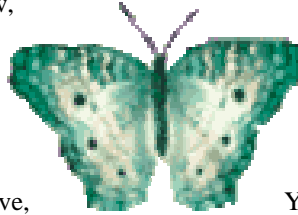
They are together in a much better place,
Watching us cry.....touching our face!

Although we miss them on Holidays to share,
Be assured their loving presence fills the air,
At home, in church, at New York's Times Square!

So celebrating the Holidays are now hard to do,
But always remember they are thinking of you too,

Wishing you happiness and showing their love,
Not on this Earth, but from Heaven above!

Dan Bryl
TCF Lawrenceville, GA
In Memory of his daughter, Jessica



DEAR BRAD

I miss you son, since you've been gone.
One whole year I've been all alone.

I miss your smile. I miss your voice
I will get through, for I have no choice.

I'll never see you graduate, or join the Marines.
Your life wasted, or so it seems.

I'll never see you marry. I'll never see
your child.
You were condemned, without even a trial.

You were only sixteen when you were taken
away.

It was one year ago, on this very day.

My life has changed since you've been gone.
It will never be the same, but I must live on.

I love you Brad and I'm so proud of you.
You gave life to others, as you chose to do.

Your heart beats on; it's just not the same.
The gift of life; but not your name.

As I remember your face on this summer afternoon,
Without a doubt I know; I will see you soon

I send you my love, Brad, on this anniversary date,
I'll meet you in Heaven; make no mistake.

Joyce Brooks, Conyers, Ga
In Memory of Brad
9-19-82 - 8-2-99

AUTUMN

In the fall
When amber leaves are shed,
Softly —silently
Like tears that wait to flow,
I watch and grieve.
My heart beats sadly in the fall;
'Tis then I miss you most of all .

Lily de Lauder
TCF Van Nuys, CA

<p>Chapter co-leaders Marilyn & French Smith</p> <p>Steering Committee Henry Cole, Facilitator Johnny James, Treasurer Dianne & Frank Bruscato, Library Frances & Jim Gregory, Outreach John Dobbs, Outreach Anna Ruth Hill, Outreach Betty Jean James, Outreach & Hospitality Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter Betty Jean & Johnny James, Memorial Park</p>

Dear Santa,

You may not remember me, but I was the one in the mall last week with the red coat on. I asked you to bring me a Barbie car and plane for Christmas.

Well, I am not writing for me, but for my Mom-Mom. Mommy always tells me that when you cry a lot, Santa won't come visit. But I wanted to ask you to make an exception to your rules for my Mom-Mom this year. You see, she lost her youngest son in the summer time and I can tell she cries when we are not with her. She misses my Uncle Marshal very very much.

When people ask her what she wants for Christmas, all she says is she wants Marshal back. Santa, I'm not sure if heaven is on your way to my house, but if it is, can you stop and pick him up? I know this is late, but I didn't think you would mind. You can leave him at my house and we will take him to Mom-Mom's since she doesn't have a chimney. You might need to drop off some of the other gifts first because Marshal is real tall. If you want to, you can leave my presents at the North Pole, I will be happy just to see my Mom-Mom's face when she sees Marshal.

Santa, we eat dinner at 3 o'clock, so if you have time you can eat with us.

Love Briana, Marshal's niece

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northeast Louisiana Chapter

CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

*Join with us as we honor the
memories of our children.*

In loving memory of our children who are no longer with us, The Compassionate Friends of Northeast Louisiana extends an invitation for you, your family, and friends to join us for our annual Candle Lighting Ceremony.



**When: Sunday, December 11, 2011
at 6:30 pm**

**Location: Grace Episcopal Church
1400 North 4th St. at the corner of
Glenmore Ave.**

*We do this . . . that their light may
always shine!*



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting® is held every year on the second Sunday in December at 7pm for one hour local time in each time zone around the globe – a 24-hour wave of light in memory of all children who have died.

Our Children Always Loved and Remembered



A special table is set up at our meetings to honor children whose special days are in that month. We invite you to bring a picture or memento of your child to share during that significant month.

OUR CHILDREN'S OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Martha Mikel	10/05/53	Ruth Mikel
Martha Husmann	10/09/52	Betty & Harry Stone
Lance Thomas	10/13/87	Connie & Danny Thomas
Jeremy Barnhill	10/15/84	Kathi & Terry Barnhill
John Dobbs	10/23/89	Maggy & John Dobbs
Kenneth Wall	10/26/59	Beverly & Charles Wall

OUR CHILDREN'S OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Travis Lowery	10/03/94	Joyce & Dale Lowery
John Bruscato	10/05/96	Dianne & Frank Bruscato
Jake Raborn	10/05/06	Staci & Don Raborn
Jon Bowman	10/09/06	Jill Puckett
Corey Washington	10/18/07	Gracie Washington
Wendy Williams	10/19/99	Nell Williams
Stephen Dupuy	10/22/05	Polly & Butch Dupuy
Aimee McIlveene	10/26/01	Rhea & Danny McIlveene

OUR CHILDREN'S NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Joe Block Barham	11/06/78	Janie & Andy Barham
Dawn Rose	11/13/79	Debbie & Danny Upshaw
Teresa Gentry	11/18/55	Lynn & Jim Walters
Steven Wisdom	11/20/48	Dee Wisdom
Justin Walker	11/22/85	Beverly Walker
Dustin Allbritton	11/22/78	Linda & Ronnie Allbritton
Corey Hayman	11/23/77	Linda & William Hayman
Brandon Dempsey	11/25/76	Belinda Enterkin
Clifton Scarborough	11/30/87	Tina Scarborough

OUR CHILDREN'S NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Dylan Smith	11/05/05	Joan Taylor
Stephen Smith	11/07/99	Marilyn & French Smith
Jason Farrell	11/08/02	Sandra Garrett
Bo Best	11/09/07	Charlene & Steve Best
Daniel Wilkerson	11/12/09	Dale Wilkerson
Joe Block Barham	11/19/03	Janie & Andy Barham
Sean Hanemann	11/28/06	Susan Tingle

OUR CHILDREN'S DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Mica Lightsey	12/02/84	Karen & Larry McAdams
Stuart Morse	12/07/79	Tammy & James Morse
Wendy Williams	12/12/57	Nell Williams
Brandon McGehee	12/16/77	Teddi & James McGehee
Carl Alexander	12/18/63	Valerie & Billy Matejowsky
Joyce Ann Powell	12/22/85	Cynde Dubois
Brian Perry	12/25/72	Clara & Don Perry
Beth Ann Smith	12/26/86	Judy & Randy Smith
Krista Corrent	12/28/64	Anna Ruth Hill
Cedrick Hotard	12/31/74	Sharon & Steven Hotard
Jake Raborn	12/31/01	Staci & Don Raborn

OUR CHILDREN'S DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

<u>Child</u>		<u>Parent(s)</u>
Josh Sumrall	12/02/08	Chasity Sumrall
Mica Lightsey	12/09/06	Karen & Larry McAdams
Justin Walker	12/09/08	Beverly Walker
Kelly Chapman	12/12/03	Judy & Bennie Chapman
Norman Craig	12/28/02	Pat Craig
Seth Lowery	12/31/05	Joyce & Dale Lowery
Emilie Posey	12/31/00	Kathy & Mark Posey

TO OUR LONG TIME 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 when new parents arrive with a fresh hurt and frightened eyes, I remember how we felt at our first meeting. Think back ... what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer." They were the ones who wanted to really listen when you talked about your child. Can you be an "oldie" for someone else? By helping someone else, you help yourself and share your child with someone who never got to know them. Come out and share with newly bereaved parents to help them heal. Our own healing happens when we are reaching out to others.

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE;
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone.
We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope.
Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for our children 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 and creeds.
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 we feel helpless and see no hope.
Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength;
some of us are struggling to find answers.
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression;
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 our children.
We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together
as we reach out to each other in love
and 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.

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