



# The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

April 2020 Newsletter



A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents

## Chapter Leader Notes from Toni



### OUR NEW CO-LEADER

I am very pleased to inform you that our chapter has a new co-leader, Susan Banks, Westley's mom. She has graciously agreed to share the leadership role with me. Susan will bring fresh energy and ideas to our group. She is articulate, creative, empathetic, goal-oriented and just a kind, pleasant human being.

Susan is an adaptive physical education teacher for Woodland School, District 50. She lives in Gurnee with her husband, Michael. She has two other children who are in college.

I am especially thankful for Susan and her capabilities at this time. As some of you know, I was recently diagnosed with a chronic health condition that affects my stamina and abilities. I have idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis. It is a disease which scars the lungs. There is no specific cause and there is no cure. There is a new medication; however, that I have started that slows the scarring of the lungs. I am currently on oxygen most of the time but can get out and about with a small portable oxygenator.

When it is deemed safe for all of us to gather again, I hope to be at future meetings and events. Please stay healthy and safe.

Take Care. Be Kind and Gentle with Yourself.

**Toni**

## About Feeling Guilty

Do you blame yourself?  
Are you strangled by the burden of things you did not do and things you should have done, as if these were the things that killed him.



What can you do with this relentless torment?

Dear Griever,

Take time to remember that grief makes all of us look for escape routes where there may be no escape.

Death is not in your hands.

Grief makes you look for reasons, where often there are no reasons.

Blame is not the answer.

Hold to your heart now with the tenderness your love deserves.

~by Sascha from Winters



We need a grieving room for all of us who are mourning, a quiet, safe place of solace where emotion is sacred and the continual falling of tears generates the energy for our healing.

We need a grieving room with thick walls to keep despair outside and hope secure within, and, on the floor, comfortable pillows to remind us to rest.

SAFE PASSAGE: WORDS TO HELP THE GRIEVING HOLD FAST AND LET GO by Molly Fumia, Conari Press, Berkeley, CA 1992

## Meetings

Meetings are cancelled until the Governor lifts the stay-at-home order for Illinois.



### GIFTS OF LOVE

A love gift is a gift of money or of time given to the Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter of the Compassionate Friends. It is usually in memory of a child who has died, but donations can also be from individuals who want to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanksgiving that their own children are alive and well, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help in the work of your chapters. Love gifts are acknowledged each month in the newsletter.

Thanks to Alana Anderson  
For her donation  
in memory of her daughter  
**Amy Fry-Pitzen**  
And her missing grandson  
**Timothy James Pitzen**

"Gifts of Love" in remembering our children and siblings help to pay for Newsletters, Postage, Books for our Lending Libraries and Resources, Memorial Services, Candle Lightings, Telephone and Outreach, and Dues to the National TCF Office. Thank you.

### (Our Children, Grandchildren, and Siblings Loved, Missed and Remembered in April and May)

<b>Colin Henderson</b>	<b>May 6</b>
Son of Lisa Henderson	
<b>Jeff Wagner</b>	<b>May 9</b>
Son of Mary Wagner	
<b>Amanda Lauren Cecchi</b>	<b>May 10</b>
Daughter of Kim & Steve Cecchi	
<b>Alina Mejdouli</b>	<b>May 12</b>
Daughter of Amada Booras	
<b>Timothy James Pitzen</b>	<b>May</b>
13 Missing grandson of Alana Anderson	
<b>Amy Fry-Pitzen</b>	<b>May 15</b>
Daughter of Alana Anderson	
<b>Anthony (Tony) Clemente</b>	<b>May 16</b>
Son of Becky Wolf	

<b>Adam Michael Laufer</b>	<b>May 19</b>
Son of Charles & Diana Laufer	
<b>Roman Gabriel Cano</b>	<b>May 21</b>
Son of Simona & Daniel Rhodes	
<b>Rusty Anderson</b>	<b>May 30</b>
Son of Forest & Christine Anderson	

Please let me know if I have omitted a child, misspelled a name or have published an incorrect date.

I know how important it is to bereaved families to have their children remembered. [vszech@comcast.net](mailto:vszech@comcast.net)

## CHOICES

The issue, finally distilled to its essence, is revealed as not so much who you were as who your example inspired us to be. Because we walked beside you in life, we grew strong enough to handle grief, determined enough to endure emptiness, wise enough to cry when hurting, brave enough to start over every day.

We are different people from the ones who accompanied you on your journey. We don't think the same or look the same and we certainly don't feel the same. Every event plowed and furrowed our souls, shaping us into fields of unconditional love capable of bearing an inexhaustible harvest that will always and forever exceed our need.

Our choices in the new world thrust upon us are whether we shall limit our experience to daily memories of grief, pain and sorrow, or opt for deliberate expansion of heart and mind. Whether we shall define your passing as the ending of all we cherished and sought and dreamed, or lean into the loss to reveal an opening we never thought possible or let ourselves see.

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## OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN APRIL & MAY

Each month 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.

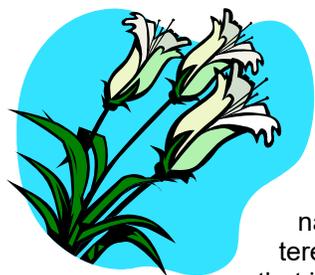
### BIRTHDAYS

<i>Lea Ann (Heise) Knuth</i>	<b>April 2</b>	Daughter of Leslie & Shirley Heise
<i>Michael Sean Gaede</i>	<b>April 8</b>	Son of Maureen Gaede
<i>Mike Reardon</i>	<b>April 10</b>	Son of Sonia & Jim Reardon
<i>Scott Ewing</i>	<b>April 11</b>	Son of Alan & Renee Ewing
<i>Qua'Shawn Wade</i>	<b>April 12</b>	Son of June Andrejewski
<i>Alyssa Carranza</i>	<b>April 15</b>	Daughter of Luz Barrera Granddaughter of Angel & Raquel Gasco
<i>Adrien Gonzales</i>	<b>April 21</b>	Son of Lauren Gonzales
<i>Jammi Hui</i>	<b>April 25</b>	Daughter of William & Joyce Hui
<i>Sean Jones</i>	<b>April 26</b>	Son of Octavine Jones
<i>Timothy Reece</i>	<b>April 27</b>	Son of Joanne Prihoda-Reece
<i>Erin Dinklenburg</i>	<b>May 1</b>	Daughter of Kelli Brooks
<i>Rachel Salomonson</i>	<b>May 2</b>	Daughter of Toni Nesheim & Denny Salomonson
<i>Amy Fry-Pitzen</i>	<b>May 3</b>	Daughter of Alana Anderson
<i>John Francis Thumel</i>	<b>May 6</b>	Son of Laura & Mike Thumel
<i>Rachel Elizabeth Szech</i>	<b>May 9</b>	Daughter of Vicki Szech
<i>Rachel Elaine Robertson</i>	<b>May 21</b>	Daughter of Regan Robertson
<i>Sven Christian Reinhard</i>	<b>May 28</b>	Son of Astrid Reinhard
<i>Tony Trevithick</i>	<b>May 28</b>	Son of Tony Trevithick Jr.
<i>Adam Michael Laufer</i>	<b>May 30</b>	Son of Charles & Diana Laufer

### ANNIVERSARIES

<i>José De Jesús Hernández</i>	<b>April 1</b>	Son of Jesús & Virginia Hernández
<i>Selene Martínez</i>	<b>April 8</b>	Daughter of Manuel & Lidia Martinez
<i>Mathew Tisch</i>	<b>April 10</b>	Son of William & Barbara Tisch
<i>Stephanie Andrea Zamarron</i>	<b>April 11</b>	Daughter of Vicky Zamarron & Juan Mungula Granddaughter of Alejandra Rodriguez & Cédar Rojas
<i>Daniel Wang</i>	<b>April 13</b>	Son of Millie Yu
<i>Shannon McCarty</i>	<b>April 18</b>	Daughter of Kevin McCarty & Pat Hays
<i>Westley Banks</i>	<b>April 19</b>	Son of Susan Banks
<i>David Nesheim</i>	<b>April 24</b>	Brother of Toni Nesheim
<i>Lisa Rosemann</i>	<b>April 25</b>	Daughter of Pat & Craig Rosemann
<i>Griffin Schumow</i>	<b>April 26</b>	Son of Jeff & Krista Schumow
<i>Edward G Davis III</i>	<b>April 28</b>	Son of Edward G Davis Jr.
<i>Andrew Naydihor</i>	<b>April 29</b>	Son of Kelly Kozel
<i>Timothy Reece</i>	<b>April 29</b>	Son of JoAnn Prihoda-Reece
<i>Anne Thomson</i>	<b>April 30</b>	Daughter of Nancy & Tom Thomson
<i>Donette Klawonn</i>	<b>May 1</b>	Daughter of Raymond & Dorothy Klawonn
<i>Josh Summers</i>	<b>May 3</b>	Son of Tina Carlson Grandson of Larry & Cheryl Armstrong

Continued on page 2



## Easter Thoughts

My thoughts are with all of you this weekend. Since Nina died, I have a renewed interest in Easter weekend. Funny that it was during the middle years

of my life, after Nina died, that Easter began to hold extra special meaning, well; the true meaning, anyway. Most of my Easter's previous were just worrying about getting the house in order to cook a ham dinner for 25 people or more, buying things for the Easter baskets for my four children and wondering where to hide them, what to wear to church, etc. Not that those things aren't important, but that was before I lost my innocence.

In the early days of my grief, my anger at God far outweighed thoughts of anything else. Anything that had a God-like meaning connected to it I wanted nothing to do with. For the most part, I was shaking my fist at Him for taking my Nina away from me.

I think that my anger started to thaw somewhat after I read the book *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* by Rabbi Harold Kushner (spelling?). Rabbi Kushner had also lost a child to death. I believed after reading his book that God didn't point the finger at my daughter and say May 11, 1995, "Okay, time is up. You're coming with me!" like I had believed and despised Him for it. But rather that He was there sitting next to me, shedding tears along with me for the pain of my loss. That He was there to be a comfort to me. Anyway, that is what I got out of reading the book and it had so much validity to it coming from not only a Man of the Cloth, but one who also had suffered through the loss of a beloved child.

Almost a year later, the Easter after Nina died, I surprisingly found myself at church. The pastor of that church, Pastor Joel, had been so kind and comforting to our family after Nina died; sort of took our family under his wing after we felt abandoned by our former church. I remember really listening hard to the sermon given that day and found it interesting that at the ripe ol' age of 46 years old I suddenly the true meaning of Easter and what it meant to us came through loud and clear! That Jesus had suffered and died, and risen from the cross that day so that we all might have eternal life. This was the promise given us that we would see our children again someday! This has now become a day of hope where I focus on seeing my Nina again, that we will ALL see our children again.

To those of you new in your grief, this is, for the most part, an impossible thing to think about. I will not say that I still don't have my moments of anger at God;

even if they are misdirected. I think someone told me once that I could give it to God; that He has big shoulders and can take my anger. What else do we have to cling to other than this hope...the hope that someday we will experience joy again, someday we will not feeling the all encompassing sorrow, the kind that takes your breath away, for the rest of our lives. And, ultimately, the hope that we will wrap our children in our arms again and live together for eternity.

"Those who leave us in the springtime of their lives, will greet us again in a land where springtime is eternal."

Peace and Easter blessings to all my compassionate friends,

Cathy Seehuetter, St. Paul, MN  
[peachy3536@comcast.net](mailto:peachy3536@comcast.net)

P.S. I touched on this topic when I wrote earlier today, but this was sent to me from a dear, dear friend during a time when I was in the pits of despair about Nina's death and angry at God. You may have to read it a couple of times, but the message is a good one, especially at Eastertime, and one I try to hold onto to get me over the rough spots from a faith standpoint. It is written by Bishop Edmund Lee Browning from "A Year of Days with the Book of Common Prayer.":

God does not cheapen himself or us by offering us easy answers to the anguished, "Why?" that we who are human cannot help but ask. The mystery of life and death and suffering remains a mystery in all human generations, and it is no less a mystery for us. We don't get a quick fix from our faith.

But we do encounter a God who sits patiently beside us in grief, usually silently, like an orthodox Jew sitting shivah with his bereaved friend, offering no words to explain away a mystery that is beyond words. God sits with us in our sorrow. In the days and weeks after a loss, as we sit together in the silence, something new begins to creep

(Continued on page 5)

**The Roadside Cleanup event will be held as soon as the Lake County Dept of Transportation schedules it for our chapter. This is our chapter's way of giving back to the community. Watch for details!**

(Easter Thoughts continued from page 4)

into our consciousness. The faith that has sustained our whole lives will begin to knot our sorrow over this death together with what we believe about the life to come. Faith and experience will knit together like a broken bone knits together as time passes. We begin to be able to see for ourselves what is already a reality for those who have gone on ahead of us, something the tears of early bereavement make it hard for us to see at first. They begin to appear in our vision of heaven, taking their place in the communion of the saints. We begin to feel their presence, not just their absence. Once again, the resurrection faith to which we cling gently bathes our hearts, and our hearts are healed.

In love and peace, with gentle thoughts,

Cathy Seehuetter, mom to angel Nina  
[peachy3536@comcast.net](mailto:peachy3536@comcast.net)

~reprinted from TCF Atlanta Online 2001

## WHAT TO DO, WHAT TO DO?



Rabbi Earl A. Grollman said, "Time may heal. It may help to dull your pain. But the medicine of time, taken by itself, is not sure. Time is neutral. What helps is what you do with time."

In the early days after the death of a child you may be so numb that it is all you can do to get out of bed in the morning. You toss and turn unable to sleep or you sleep for hours or days.

You can stumble through your days unaware what is happening around you. Eating is not something you can or want to do.

If you have other children it will affect how you function or not, depending on their ages.

Eventually you will begin to want to join the world but may have a hard time in certain situations and you may have to retreat back to the safety of your "cocoon".

Be kind to yourself. Don't let others tell you isn't it time you got over "it" and moved on with life?" You have to take all the time to grieve and begin to heal that is necessary. Each person is different, even spouses grieve differently.

When you begin to get comfortable in your world, your changed world, you can begin to think of how you want people to remember your child.

This may be a time for you to join a support group. Compassionate Friends is where you can talk about your child. You can celebrate their birthday. You can show pictures of your child. It is a place where no one has the answers but they are willing to share what has worked for them and what hasn't. It is a place where we do not judge or tell you that you are wrong in what you are doing. We are there to hold your hand, to offer love and support, to listen to your story. Someone said you have to tell your story at least 100 times. Your family and friends may not be able to listen 100 times but your Compassionate Friends will. Why?

Because we have been there and someone listened to us so it is our turn to give back what has been given to us. This is what we do. This is what we do with time.

Our children, grandchildren and siblings will never be forgotten as long as we share them with others. We can set up scholarships, plant memorial gardens, purchase benches engraved with their names, start a foundation to support a cause or disease connected with their death, volunteer our time with a charity, help other children with one on one mentoring and many more ways.

As we travel this painful road we can reach out to other bereaved people with love and hope that is what to do.

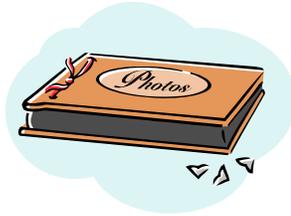
HUGS, Betty Farrel, Sarah Louise's Nana  
[bfcnana@aol.com](mailto:bfcnana@aol.com) Arlington, VA Chapter TCF

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~reprinted from Arlington, DC, Leesburg, Prince William, and Burke-Springfield-Fairfax Virginia Chapters April 2008

## My Photo Album

By Jeanne Losey  
Shelbyville, Indiana



Lovingly Lifted from the  
Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania

Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

The photo album of my mind  
Holds treasured thoughts of you,  
And I can almost see again  
The things we used to do.

I hear your voice; I see your smile;  
I feel you close to me.  
The photo album of my mind  
Shows how we used to be.

Time may have changed us through the years  
But I will always find  
You, re just as I remember in  
The album in my mind.

And, as I turn page after page,  
Such precious scenes I see.  
The photo album of my mind  
Is very dear to me.

It holds the pictures of our past  
Like reels of film unwind.  
I cherish all those photo in  
The album of my mind.

Lovingly lifted from the March 2008 TCF Arlington,  
DC, Leesburg, Prince William, and Burke-  
Springfield-Fairfax Virginia Chapters Newsletter

## Spring's Promise

It looks like Winter is finally over. Most of the world is looking forward to the early signs of spring. But this is not always true for the bereaved parent.

The warmth of the sun brings forth new and brightly colored blooms of bulbs that seem to appear through the thawing ground almost overnight.

We may feel excitement for a moment, but then the pain sets in. A lost, hopeless feeling seems to overwhelm us. Our child is not here to see the beauty of this season.

Many springs have passed since the death of my daughter, Jennifer. It has taken years to put this season of new life into perspective.

Our children were much like the new life of springtime. When they died and we could see them no more, our fear was great that they were gone forever. Then we awake one morning to see the flowers that were buried deep beneath the ground, burst with life to create a new beginning. And so it is with our children.

Although they are gone from our sight, their spirits remain with us. The seeds that were sown during your child's life, that were planted in everyone who knew them, will continue to grow and flourish throughout eternity

Take a moment right now to think of the impact your child's life has had on their family, their friends, and even strangers who never knew them.

This world is a better place because they lived, no matter how short their stay.

Smile when you see the bouquets of springtime flowers.

They are reminders from God that assure us that our children are in His safe keeping, and will be with us forever.

In memory of Jennifer Wildman, 4-23-70 - 11-12-89

Written in love by Linda Wildman, TCF Bloomington, IN



## Mark your calendar:



43<sup>rd</sup> TCF National Conference  
July 24-26, 2020 • Atlanta, GA

<https://www.compassionatefriends.org/event/43rd-tcf-national-conference/>

The Compassionate Friends National Conference is a weekend spent surrounded by other bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. It is a place where hope grows and friendships are made with others who truly understand. With inspirational keynote speakers, abundant workshops for everyone's wants and needs, and a remembrance candle lighting program culminating with the annual Walk to Remember, this time of healing and hope is the gift we give ourselves. Join us as together we remember and share the everlasting love we have for our precious children, siblings and grandchildren.

The 43rd TCF National Conference will be held in Atlanta, GA on July 24-26, 2020. "Sharing Sweet Memories of Love" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great National Conference experience. This year's conference will be held at the [Atlanta Marriott Marquis](#), 265 Peachtree Center Avenue in downtown Atlanta.

**The National conference is still scheduled. Make room reservations if you are planning to attend.**

## Infant Loss

Patricia Karg, Conyers, GA

I would like to talk with you about infant loss in memory of my daughter, Mary Elizabeth Karg. Mary was born on Sept. 3, 1998 and lived for 36 hours. While still in the womb, she was diagnosed with a fatal birth defect, called anencephaly. Anencephaly is a condition in which the brain does not form completely. For those of us who have lost an infant, we are left to wonder what might have been. We are reminded that we will never see that first tooth, see that first step, hear our baby's first word or see our child attend kindergarten for the first time.

I find comfort in writing letters to Mary Elizabeth. As I write, the tears always come and they are somehow healing to my heart. In the letters, I share with her the hopes and dreams that never had the chance to come true.

I started going to a parent grief support group in Conyers even before Mary Elizabeth was born. Knowing that my baby would die, I needed a group of people who would somehow understand how I felt and I found what I needed there. I am very thankful for the friends that I have there who understand better than anyone else. Thank you for letting me share my daughter with you, and may all of our children's lights shine forever.

(Choices continued from page 2)

An opening that beckons and promises  
a transcending, a separation from the grief  
everywhere-present like the fine dust of an  
explosion. A hidden place where tears give  
way to freedom,  
hearts recover and songs begin to play again.  
A shelter where your legacy of victory heals,  
revealing the power of seeking joy in sorrow  
and the bliss of finding peace in what is.

Copyright © Harold G. Hopkins, May 2001. Lawrenceville, GA TCF

In loving memory of Lance Porter Hopkins, July 1975 to November 1999

~reprinted from TCF Atlanta March/April 2002 Newsletter  
<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/MarApr2002.html>

**LOVE GIFTS**

Enclosed in a check in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ to be used as follows (check all that apply):

In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor the newsletter for \_\_\_\_\_ month) (\$25 pays ½ monthly cost)

Pay for a book for the chapter's Lending Library \_\_\_\_\_

Check here to keep receiving the newsletter \_\_\_\_\_

It is important for our children to be remembered. Please understand that in order for your child to be included in the "special days" list each month in the newsletter, you must fill out this form that gives us permission to list this information. If you are making a donation please make the check payable to **The Compassionate Friends. Return to Tammie Barrera, 821 Roberts Road, Winthrop Harbor, IL. 60096** [Julyson2@gmail.com](mailto:Julyson2@gmail.com)

We welcome your comments and/or items submitted for use in the newsletter. Short articles, poems, or book reviews are always appreciated. Please include author of any written works. Send your items for the newsletter to Vicki Szech at [vszech@comcast.net](mailto:vszech@comcast.net) or 31023 Prairie Ridge Road, Libertyville, IL 60048.

The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families. Its' mission is to assist them in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information and education to help others to be supportive  
TCF National Office, P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522 PH 877-969-0010 - Fax: 630-990-0246

The Compassionate Friends home page can be found at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

There are seven TCF Internet chat sessions weekly. To participate, visit the TCF home page and select the "Chat" button.

**CHAPTER CO-LEADERSHIP** Toni Nesheim 847-204-7585 [tnesheim@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tnesheim@sbcglobal.net) Rachel Salomonson Age 19 –

Auto accident, Susan Banks 847-336-8375 [sbanks@dist50.net](mailto:sbanks@dist50.net) Westly Banks Age 21 – Of suicide

**TREASURER/COMMUNITY OUTREACH** Tammie Barrera 847-872-9684 [Julyson2@gmail.com](mailto:Julyson2@gmail.com) Aaron Barrera Age 29 – Auto accident due to Diabetes

**SECRETARY** Bambi Nichols 262-220-9323 [lcbtsec@aol.com](mailto:lcbtsec@aol.com) Levi Nichols Age 19 - Accidental death

**REMEMBRANCE SECRETARY** Thelma Perkins 262-279-6178 Andrew C Perkins Age 17 – Auto Accident

**LIBRARIAN** Kathleen Rettinger 847-922-7456 Alexander Rettinger Age 18 – Of suicide

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR** Vicki Szech 847-573-1055 [vszech@comcast.net](mailto:vszech@comcast.net) Rachel Szech Age 16 – Horseback-riding Accident

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**WOODLAND WALK COORDINATOR** Christine Pado 847-455-6642 [chpado@gmail.com](mailto:chpado@gmail.com) Lindsay Wilcynski Age 29 - PULMONARY EMBOLISM

**STEERING COMMITTEE** Marilyn Grace 847-395-8597 [grace.marilyn@gmail.com](mailto:grace.marilyn@gmail.com) Megan Grace Age 15 – Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

Charon Sloop 847-623-2264 [charronsloop@AOL.com](mailto:charronsloop@AOL.com) David Sloop Age 33 – Motor Cycles accident

Mirtha Vidal 847-293-1658 [mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com](mailto:mirthavidal1213@yahoo.com) & Raphael Vidal [rvidal1027@yahoo.com](mailto:rvidal1027@yahoo.com),

Raphael, age 17, suicide