



The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter
July, 2018 Newsletter



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

The Garden of Grief



Sandy Goodman

About a year after Jason died, I decided to approach our local city council and ask their permission to develop a piece of city land along our recreational path. Plan in hand, I explained to our town leaders why I wanted to create "Jason's Park"

and begged their approval. I expected a lot of questions and at best a "MAYBE" at that first meeting. But as the now popular song goes, I know what I was feeling, but what WAS I THINKING???

Here I was, a bereaved mother, asking permission to develop and take over the upkeep of a 200 foot strip of land that was nothing but weeds and rocks. Grass was afraid to grow there. Water had never touched it. And not only was I wanting to do the work, I was willing to PAY FOR IT. They said "Yes. Yes, you may do that Mrs. Goodman . . ." and Jason's Park was born.

It is now six years later, and the park looks better than it ever has. In the beginning, nothing good grew there. Strewn with rocks and litter, only weeds thrived in the dry cracked ground. There was nothing visible that suggested a positive outcome. The first two or three years, improvement was slow. As soon as one weed patch was taken care of, another one would overwhelm me. When one flower grew and flourished, three shriveled and died. The sudden appearance of wind and torrential rains often destroyed all progress.

Years passed, things began to change. Barren ground began accepting new growth, new attachments. Trees became stronger, flowers brighter, and life came back to visit. The need to be sole owner of Jason's Park began to wane. Soon, there were other lives being remembered there. A wall

was built, not as a barrier, but as a celebration of lives that mattered.

As I stood in the middle of the wild flowers this morning, I realized that the transformation of this piece of land has mirrored my own grief. In the beginning nothing good grew in my heart. Filled with despair, the only thing that flourished in my soul was pain. There was no semblance of hope, or signs of improvement on the horizon. I would just make it over one hurdle in time to see three more pop up in front of me. The sudden appearance of reality destroyed any progress I had pretended to make.

But as years passed, things began to change. An empty heart began accepting new thoughts, new relationships, new priorities. Love became stronger, days brighter, and life came back to visit. The need to be only "Jason's Mom" began to wane, and others regained their importance in my life. Gifts appeared, not as replacements, but as reminders that love never dies.

I began the journey of grief, just like Jason's Park, with nothing. Time alone would not have produced the change I needed to make. I have to work hard, plant new things, get rid of the old stuff, nurture what I plant, and pour out enough love to grow a garden. I have to accept that the task at hand, be it grief work or building a park, will never be over. I must find joy in the "now" of it. And most importantly, I must ask for help. No one should walk the journey of grief alone, and well . . . while they are walking, they might as well be pulling weeds.

Lovingly borrowed from

**Love Never Dies, A Newsletter about the Journey
from Loss to Love**

August, 2003

Issue #8

Sandy Goodman, Editor



Meetings

Northern Illinois Chapter TCF July 19th

Millburn Congregational Church
Grass Lake Road & Rt. 45, Millburn, IL
This will be a "Show & Tell" meeting.

Waukegan meeting August 2nd

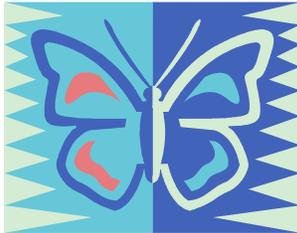
- 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Holy Family Church
450 Keller Street, Waukegan, IL
Meeting in Room 4

Open discussion

Enter by church office then down the hall to
Room 4 on right.

"Tenemos un cuarto nuevo para las reuniones- Salon 4. Entre por la oficina de la iglesia y sigue en el pasillo al Salon



(OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND
SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN
JULY & AUGUST continued from page 3)

Nathan Clyde

August 17

Son of Valerie Clyde

Raphael E Vidal

August 20

Son of Raphael & Mirtha Vidal

Kevin Pomianek

August 21

Son of Brenda & Eugene Pomianek

David Sloop

August 21

Son of Charron Sloop

Ryan James Nichols

August 22

Son of Jackie & Jim Nichols

James (Jim) Grazier

August 24

Son of Mary Ann & Robert Grazier

Michael Lee Brandon Hamilton Frederick

August 25

Son of Jan Frederick

Grandson of Sharon Frederick

Justin Cody Ortega

August 31

Son of Susie Meggs

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 - 847-573-1055

The Death of the Young



People ask: "Why do children or young people die, when they have lived so little?" How do you know that they have lived so little? This crude measure of yours is time, but life is not measured in time. This is just the same as to say, "Why is this saying, this poem, this picture, this piece of music so short, who was it broken off and not drawn out to the size of the longest speech or piece of music, the largest picture?" As the measure of length is inapplicable to the meaning (or greatness) of productions of wisdom or poetry, so - even more evidently - it is inapplicable to life. How do you know what inner growth this soul accomplished in its short span, and what influence it had on others?

~from Spiritual Life Cannot be Measured by
Tolstoy

OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN JULY & AUGUST

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>Michael Stice</i>	July 4	Son of Dora & Gary Stice
<i>Renee' Rochelle Powell</i>	July 7	Daughter of Terry & Jeanette Powell
<i>Joshua William Bowman</i>	July 18	Son of Robin Bray Nephew of Kimberlee Christensen
<i>Brian Scott Ludlow</i>	July 19	Son of Ronald & Karen Zaylik
<i>Robert William Corbett</i>	July 20	Son of Mary Ellen & Robert Corbett
<i>Elizabeth (Liz) Willding</i>	July 27	Daughter of Gigi Willding
<i>Darien Wilson</i>	July 27	Son of Tammy and Tim Olvera
<i>Lindsay Wilczynski</i>	August 3	Daughter of Christine Prado
<i>Andrew Perkins</i>	August 12	Son of Richard & Thelma Perkins
<i>Andrew Muno</i>	August 18	Son of Darlene & Bart Muno
<i>Blake Logan Palmer</i>	August 21	Son of Amber & Brian Palmer Grandson of Lois Cooper Grandson of Gina Palmer
<i>Ashley Seay</i>	August 25	Daughter of Mike and Shannon Seay Granddaughter of Dennis & Georgene Manley
<i>Josh Summers</i>	August 27	Son of Tina Carlson Grandson of Larry & Cheryl Armstrong
<i>Roman Gabriel Cano</i>	August 28	Son of Simona & Daniel Rhodes
<i>Nicole Parfitt</i>	August 30	Daughter of Robin Parfitt

ANNIVERSARIES

<i>Justin Perez</i>	July 4	Son of Traci & Carlos Perez Brother of Samantha (Perez) Przybylski
<i>Anna Smith Miller</i>	July 6	Daughter of Carol Smith
<i>Elizabeth (Liz) Willding</i>	July 14	Daughter of Gigi Willding
<i>Amy Jo Baldwin</i>	July 17	Daughter of Mike & Sheila Baldwin
<i>Eduardo Chavez-Nuño</i>	July 23	Son of Maria Del Carmen Nuño
<i>Qua'Shawn Wade</i>	July 24	Son of June Andrejewski
<i>John Thumel</i>	July 26	Son of Laura & Mike Thumel
<i>Lindsay Wilczynski</i>	August 1	Daughter of Christine Prado
<i>Adam Rubin</i>	August 1	Son of Linda Rubin Brother of Nicole Rubin
<i>Tony Trejo</i>	August 1	Son of Marina Williamson Brother of Victor Trejo
<i>Brian Keough</i>	August 2	Son of Kathleen Keough
<i>Jammi Shonlei Hui</i>	August 5	Daughter of William & Joyce Hui
<i>Pressley Suzanne McHugh</i>	August 5	Daughter of Shawn & Kari McHugh
<i>Sandra Elena Varela</i>	August 5	Daughter of Sandra Prez
<i>David Spannraft</i>	August 12	Son of Elizabeth & Dan Spannraft
<i>Barry J Grazier</i>	August 13	Son of Robert & Mary Ann Grazier

(Continued on page 2)



“MEMORIES OF OUR CHILDREN”

The memories of our children are something beautiful that will endure in our minds, thoughts and hearts forever, beyond us --- into eternity. For, it is in eternity that our memories will re-join and re-unite into the reality of their presence with us. But here, on earth their memories are all we have left of them and as we remember them, we “feed” on their memories. Sometimes we may experience a “famine” where their memories may become vague and illusive as we try to recapture them before they disappear altogether. Other times, we may experience a “feast”, where we can find nourishment for our souls, enrichment for our minds, and inspiration to continue our journey.

~ Their memories are the fountain in which we refresh ourselves, creating within us a restfulness of their presence that is constant, always with us.

So, in a dry and thirsty land when my soul seems parched and longs for my child, I wish for the fountain of memories to flow once again into my mind.

~ Their memories are the fire with which we warm ourselves, the blanket with which we wrap ourselves in the comfort of their warmth.

When I feel alone, cut-off, and cold from the bitter harshness of separation from my child, I wish for the fire of his memories to warm my soul and the blanket of his memories to comfort my cold, lonely heart.

~ Their memories are the mountains, looming large and immovable, in which we find strength and security.

When I feel weak and feeble from the heavy load of my grief that I have carried for so long, I wish for the mountain of his memories to strengthen and help me to continue on.

~ Their memories are the great giant trees with which we find the coolness and the comfort that sometimes only their memories can bring.

When the pain of missing my child overwhelms me once again, I seek the cool shelter from our “family tree” of his memories to give me a respite from the burning heat of my grief.

~ Their memories are the portrait with which we paint their lives and ours, past, present, and future.

When I feel like life no longer has any meaning or purpose since my child died, I wish for the portrait of his memories to give me vision and to inspire me to mix the colors of my pain and grief that will include the legacy of my child's life and also help to bring vision and purpose to others.

~ Their memories are the mirrors with which we see and re-visit our pain and grief over and over again.

When I feel like it has been so long since I heard my child's voice, or felt his touch, or sensed his presence, I long for the mirror of his memories in order to see myself and realize that I am only human; that I lost the best part of myself when my child died. I need the mirror of his memories to realize there are times in which I will re-visit the pain and grief and that is okay, and that I may need to give myself permission to continue to grieve.

It is in grief that the memory of my child is my companion. I can find comfort in the “companionship” of the memories of my child.

Yes, the memories of our children are something beautiful and will last forever.

~ By Faye McCord in memory of my son, Lane McCord (1/26/65 - 9/13/98) ~ and in dedication and honor of all bereaved parents (Written 6/16/08)

HOW MANY CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE?

By Mary Cleckley
BP/USA

Worth repeating even if familiar

Shortly after my son died, I realized this question was going to be bothersome. Each time someone asked me about the number of children, I struggled with the answer. I soon decided I was not going to let this become a problem. I thought

(Continued on page 5)

(How Many Children do you Have? continued from page 4)

about how I felt about my choices of answers and chose the one that met my needs in the beginning. I had a surviving daughter, but I knew for me to answer “One” would seem a denial of my part that my son had lived and that wasn’t right for me.

In the beginning when I still needed to tell people that my son had died, I would tell in detail about his accident when the question came my way. As the months passed and I had told the story enough times, I found that it wasn’t necessary for me to go into detail any more. My needs had changed and I rethought my answer.

Now, when I am asked about how many children I have, I answer, “I had two children.” The criteria I use in determining if I go any further is whether the person asking is going to be a continuing part of my life. If so, they need to know about my son and I tell them. Otherwise, we would be constantly dancing around that fact. Better, I think, to have it out in the open. It then loses its ability to interfere with the relationship.

If, on the other hand, the person asking is simply passing through my life, then I feel no need to go any further than “I had two children.” Seldom does anyone catch *had* instead of *have* and pursue it. If they do, or if they ask follow-up questions about ages or professions, I tell them that my 26 year old was killed in an accident. Then I tell them about my daughter, who is alive and well. This gives them a choice.

They can either acknowledge my son’s death and ask questions, or they can ignore that and ask about my daughter. I am comfortable either way. If they are embarrassed, I see this as their problem. Just to show you how different we all are, however, my husband felt comfortable answering, “We have one child.” This is what was right for him and is what he should have said.

You decide what is right for you—then say it! That way you defuse that powerful question and it loses its ability to traumatize. Don’t let it be a problem.

SUMMERTIME

By Sascha Wagner

It sounds so easy. A soft, warm word—time to run barefoot, time to leave windows open all night. Summertime.



Somehow it seems, doesn’t it, that it’s especially meant for children. Children on beaches, children on swings, children in large pools, children in tiny tubs.

We who do not have all of our children with us may feel the summer time in two ways. One is to remember shared events and adventures—there were so many. Long rides in a hot car, a nap in the back seat. The famous question, “Are we there yet?” Everything from a heat rash to ice cream cones and sand castles.

For us, another way to feel summertime is the special emptiness brought about by children who are no longer on this earth. They used to trot along on hikes in the hills; they used to gather wood for an evening fire. Now summer brings us again the melancholy awareness of their absence. Have you ever walked on some unfamiliar path, surprised about not having been there with the children? Even when there’s nothing to remember, we are reminded of the children’s absence.

We have been diminished by death. Some of us may still have living children. Other parents have no children left. They have lost an only child, perhaps. Or all of their children died. And here we are, grateful for the warmth of summer mornings, aware of the ripe beauty of nature, trying to deal with our children’s absence with all the grace of which we are capable. Often we do not want to burden others with our grief. Or we may be convinced that others don’t want to share our distress. We have learned, after all, that the world around us is not always able to understand how we feel.

Besides, we were taught to be brave. Many of us will do everything we can to appear “normal” after our loss. But we were also taught to be honest. And when you feel the hurt, when you seem almost to be lost in the shadows of this golden summertime, don’t hide your sorrow. The grief of your spirit can perhaps be kept a secret on the outside. Yet, your deepest feelings, unexpressed, can burn into your existence with harmful force.

You can be both brave and honest. You know that it’s brave to share grief, be it old grief or new grief. You know that it’s brave to share grief, be it old grief or a new grief. And revealing that sorrow is also honest. Of course, nothing can wipe away much of your pain, but sharing grief is helpful. You will know that, after you have expressed the painful sorrow you once kept hidden and find yourself, finally, smiling at the memories and the blessings of past summer times.

VACATION

In the Summer Sun

By Susan Pressler
Western NY BP/USA
Chapter



How many of us remember this early '60's song by Connie Francis? Thinking of summer, this song just popped into my head. Some of us are now enjoying vacations in the summer sun—we have lived in the past and sadness a very long time and have come to realize that life does go on. We understand that our child would want nothing other than our continued happiness and appreciation of every new day.

Thinking of vacations early after the death of our child is, we believe almost blasphemous. How can we possibly even think about seeking fun in the sun? We feel we are destined forever to stay home, mired in the muck of our grief and despondency.

Perhaps early on in your grief, forgetting the vacation may not be such a bad idea. There is a lot involved in vacation—from packing (we can't even decide what to wear today—how can we manage to pack for a week?) to the tiniest details. Our minds truly may not be capable of handling any or all of the plans. We are distracted and driving in unfamiliar towns could be unsafe. Traveling in perfect sanity is difficult. Let's not fool ourselves. It requires concentration of the kind we lack in our early grief. It may be better and safer for us to travel to our neighbors' houses and forget about going any further than a mile or two in our own neighborhoods.

Try going to a local park. Bring a comfy lounge chair, sunglasses, a book or music, something cool to drink and some fruit. Go alone—try to get someone to watch your children, if necessary. Kick off your shoes and let the grass wiggle up between your toes (remember what that feels like?) Let yourself relax and drift off into your own reveries.

If we must vacation, it does not mean that we love our children any less. We will not betray our love for them by enjoying a few days away from home. Expect to be sad occasionally—it goes with us, wherever we travel but so does the love.

You need not feel guilty (although you probably will) that you are having fun when your child is not with you. Try to welcome the distractions of being away from home. Try to see everything through your

child's eyes—with excitement and anticipation. Try to have the fun they would have, even for a short time. And remember, your child lives in glory. Let him/her share their glory with you in the form of peaceful moments, happy memories and delightful days in the summer sun.

Borrowed from Bereaved Parents of the USA

The Boys and Girls of Summer

The boys and girls of summer,
No longer in our sight -
Those sun-kissed happy faces
Now fill our dreams at night.

Long years ago they played and swam,
Their laughter echoed along the lake.
Fishing, camping and firelight talks,
Youthful dreams of the life they'd make.

Those boys and girls of summer,
Now swim on a distant shore.
The memory of their faces,
Bring summer's joy to the fore.

Boys and girls of another time,
Now crowd the sands at the lake.
Laughing, splashing, in sun and spray,
Unaware of hearts that watch and ache.

~Arleen Simmonds
TCF/Kamloops, British Columbia
In memory of Arleen & Roy's son, Kenneth Simmonds
October 30, 1964 - August 11, 1988

Lovingly lifted from Bereaved Parents/USA -
Anne Arundel County chapter,
Maryland June 2003 newsletter at:
<http://www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org/>

Do It Your Way

I think it's only fair to tell you. There is no bereaved parent of the month award nor an award for the one with stiffest upper lip, in fact, what you will find if you try to be the most stoic, brave and strong, the one doing too well, is instead of reward, you suffer the consequences.

It is not possible to lose someone as vital as one's child and not have the pain of deep grief. You will find a great many non-bereaved people will encourage you to play the old, "if-you'll-pretend you are-okay-and-it's-not-really-so-bad-we'll-let-you-come-play-with-us—but-if-you're-going-to-cry-and-talk-about-your-dead-child--then-you-can't-play" game.

This is one time in your life you don't have to meet anybody else's standards. There is nothing more unique about you than the way you express your grief and you have that right, however it is manifested. A great deal of how you go about it is determined by how you have handled previous problems.

So if someone tries to influence you to play the old game by rewarding you with attention because you're doing so well. Tell them you're not doing well, that your child has died and you're hurting.

Let them know it doesn't help you for them

to pretend everything is okay. Do whatever it is you need to do to survive this trauma and don't worry about whether it pleases or

displeases other people.....DO IT YOUR WAY!!

Mary Clerckley
TCF Atlanta, GA

LESSON,

Sandy Goodman

In times of confusion
I look for you
Seeking your knowledge
Wanting the solace of your words
Somehow our roles have switched
It is now I who reach to you for wisdom
Like a child approaching a parent
Rather than you the son
depending on your mom
But perhaps your lessons
Were always there
and I was unaware
of what you had taught me
until my need for your teachings
became greater than my desire to teach.

LOVE NEVER DIES EZINE
A Newsletter about the Journey from
Loss to Love

August, 2002
Issue #4

Because

Because you can't feel me,
Doesn't mean I don't speak.
Because you can't see me,
Doesn't mean I'm gone.

Beth Oldani, bereaved sibling
TCF, Arlington Heights, IL

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

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 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 3696 - PH 877-969-0010 - Fax: 630-990-0246

The Compassionate Friends home page can be found at www.compassionatefriends.org
There are seven TCF Internet chat sessions weekly. To participate, visit the TCF home page and select the "Chat" button.

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