



# The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

March, 2019 Newsletter



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

## Chapter Leader Notes



### POEM & QUOTE MIX For YOU

One of the things that will be remembered in 21<sup>st</sup> century pop culture and home décor are the signs that say such things as “Live, Love, Laugh”, “Family Rules: etc.”, or the sign that my husband has on the garage refrigerator “FREE BEER!! Tomorrow.” I even have a sign that I put on my desk in the kitchen that says “bless this mess”. These signs are meant to be touching or instructional or funny or inspirational. I think most people find them positive and pleasant words in the stressful world that we live in.

Through the years, I’ve come to realize that bereaved people, such as me and many of our chapter members, don’t always want to hear the platitudes or see all of the positive signs with uplifting sayings about grief and losing a child. Sometimes we just want affirmation for what we know and feel is true. We are not discounting the affirmations; we just may not be able to fully embrace them yet. The following are just a few poems and quotes that I’ve liked because of they expressed how I have felt or how I have observed other people in their grief. I hope you can find some empathy or truth in the poems and quotes as well.

#### Separation by W.S. Merwin

Your absence has gone through me  
Like thread through a needle.  
Everything I do is stitched with its color.

#### The Window by Rumi

Your body is away from me  
But there is a window open  
From my heart to yours,  
From this window, like the moon  
I keep sending news secretly.

#### I WILL - author unknown

As long as I can I will look at this world  
For the both of us.

As long as I can I will sing  
With the birds,  
Will laugh with the flowers,  
I will pray to the stars for both of us.  
• • • •

#### Sacredness in Tears by Washington Irving

There is sacredness in tears.  
They are not the mark of weakness,  
but of power.  
They speak more eloquently  
than 10,000 tongues.  
They are messengers  
of overwhelming grief,  
of deep contrition,  
and of unspeakable love.

#### Courage by Mary Anne Radmacher

Courage does not always roar.  
Sometimes courage is the quiet voice  
at the end of the day saying,  
“I will try again tomorrow.”

#### Absence by Edna St. Vincent Millay

The absence of your presence is everywhere.

#### Quote from Oprah Winfrey

Someone once wrote that tears are a river that can carry you forward.

#### From Thomas Attig, The Heart of Grief: Death and the Search for Lasting Love

The heart of grief, its most difficult challenge, is not 'letting go' of those who have died but instead making the transition from loving in presence to loving in separation.

#### From Elizabeth Kubler Ross

• Denial helps us to pace our feelings of grief. There is a grace in denial. It is

(Continued on page 5)



## Daisies in Huge Handfuls...

by Rich Elder

"Pick more daisies" was the most popular expression in our family. I picked it up from a magazine article about a 94 year old lady in Kentucky who, when asked what she would do differently if she had her life to live over, responded "I would take more chances; I would eat more ice cream and less beans; I would have more real troubles but fewer imaginary ones; I would climb more mountains; I would swim more rivers, and I would pick more daisies."

Our son, Mark, seized the daisy expression as the theme both for his life and his entrance exam essay at UCLA. It helped him live his brief 18 years his essay helped him get an academic scholarship. Daisies became our family flower. They marked our attitude about living. And they marked our son's memorial service. After it was over, his friends and fraternity brothers each threw a daisy into the ocean. Daisies still mark his grave every week. It has taken me almost two years to return to really thinking about daisies and what that quote by a 94-year-old lady really means. During that time I made a pretty big mess of things. I did the best I could, but I was often going through the motions outside, but empty inside.

To me, what this quote means is we really do have to pull ourselves together again and go on. Dr. Charles Heuser, a former pastor at our church, notes "going through the steps of grief is like walking through the valley and shadow of death. Keep walking, but don't camp there."

Our children would not want us to "camp there," but to go pick more daisies-to somehow live an even more meaningful life in their name. As I go on I am truly a different person. I don't suffer fools or superficiality very well any more. As one of my best friends said..."I get tired of beige people." Yet, I will drop everything to help another bereaved parent. I certainly have more "real troubles and fewer imaginary ones." But it's OK-I like myself better that way.

And I am returning to embrace life each day again. But this time I am following my heart instead of my "expected career." I am taking more chances, climbing more unfamiliar mountains, and picking daisies in huge handfuls. Mark would want it so.

## Meetings

**Northern Illinois Chapter TCF**  
**March 21 – 7:30 p.m.**  
 Millburn Congregational Church  
 Grass Lake Road & Rt. 45, Millburn, IL

### Waukegan meeting

**April 4**

**– 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 March & April)

<b>Westley Banks</b>	<b>April 19</b>
Son of Susan Banks	
<b>David Nesheim</b>	<b>April 24</b>
Brother of Toni Nesheim	
<b>Lisa Rosemann</b>	<b>April 25</b>
Daughter of Pat & Craig Rosemann	
<b>Griffin Schumow</b>	<b>April 26</b>
Son of Jeff & Krista Schumow	
<b>Edward G Davis III</b>	<b>April 28</b>
Son of Edward G Davis Jr.	
<b>Andrew Naydihor</b>	<b>April 29</b>
Son of Kelly Kozel	
<b>Timothy Reece</b>	<b>April 29</b>
Son of JoAnn Pihoda-Reece	
<b>Anne Thomson</b>	<b>April 30</b>
Daughter of Nancy & Tom Thomson	

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



**OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN MARCH & APRIL**

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>Camden Frisby</i>	<b>March 1</b>	Son of Dris Frisby
<i>Griffin Schumow</i>	<b>March 2</b>	Son of Jeff & Krista Schumow
<i>Kyle Glueck</i>	<b>March 4</b>	Son of Dolores Krason
<i>Elizabeth Mary Foresta</i>	<b>March 8</b>	Daughter of Al & Mary Foresta
<i>Justin Perez</i>	<b>March 9</b>	Son of Traci & Carlos Perez
		Brother of Samantha (Perez) Przybylski
<i>David Sloop</i>	<b>March 9</b>	Son of Charron Sloop
<i>Rusty Anderson</i>	<b>March 11</b>	Son of Forest & Christine Anderson
<i>David Spannraft</i>	<b>March 18</b>	Son of Elizabeth & Dan Spannraft
<i>Adam Rubin</i>	<b>March 28</b>	Son of Linda Rubin
		Brother of Nicole Rubin
<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

**ANNIVERSARIES**

<i>Edgar Villareal</i>	<b>March 1</b>	Oziel & Guadalupe Villareal
<i>Jeremy Govekar</i>	<b>March 2</b>	Son of Maggie McGaughey
<i>Rasheed Mariano</i>	<b>March 5</b>	Son of Joan Mariano
<i>John "Jake" Mosansky</i>	<b>March 12</b>	Son of Darlene & John Mosansky
		Sister of Veronica Steif
<i>Blake Logan Palmer</i>	<b>March 13</b>	Son of Amber & Brian Palmer
		Grandson of Lois Cooper
		Grandson of Gina Palmer
<i>Taylor Rydahl</i>	<b>March 14</b>	Son of Carol & Keith Rydahl
<i>Roderick Young</i>	<b>March 27</b>	Son of Scarlet Austin
		Grandson of "Charlie" Johnson
<i>Marc Hawkinson</i>	<b>March 28</b>	Son of Mary Kay Clark
<i>José De Jesús Hernández</i>	<b>April 1</b>	Son of Jesús & Virginia Hernández
<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>Jennifer Corbett Dennis</i>	<b>April 12</b>	Daughter of Joan Corbett
<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

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## Trees of the Ice Storm

by Alice Wisler

As a college student, when driving into North Carolina to visit friends and relatives, I had a tinge of envy. This state has multitudes of wooded areas with the tall and slender pines I have admired. Always green, the pines hold an elegance no tree can quite match.

Now a North Carolina resident myself, I've learned something else about the pine - it has a cold and ferocious enemy. Ice.

The sight along Durham Freeway the other morning after the December Ice Storm of 2002 was a sad one. "There's one."

"Look, another."

My husband, children and I exchanged sorrow-filled utterances from the frosty van windows. Snapped at the trunks, dozens of these pines looked like broken pencils. Some had been uprooted and lay spread out over roads.

Other trees hold the same enemy. As we entered our own Durham neighborhood, we saw that the limbs of pear and maple trees had split under the weight of the ice.

Later, I heard the distant sound of a chain saw.

My husband used a saw powered by only his arm. Slowly, painfully, he cropped off the torn limbs of our weeping willow. The ice broke five major limbs. I sat by the computer, grateful for the power that was restored to us two days after the storm, afraid to see what the outcome of that significant tree's surgery would be.

Days ago I stood looking at the tree and accessing the damage. A neighbor was observing, too. "That weeping willow has something to cry about now," he commented. "So sad."

He is a new neighbor, not knowing that the tree was planted in sorrow. It is my son Daniel's tree, bought and planted in his memory, after his death in the winter of 1997. It has flourished from six-feet, into a gracious and sweeping twelve-foot beauty of nature.

"It's my favorite tree in the whole neighborhood," another neighbor told me as I again counted the broken limbs.

Iced over, brought down, its limbs blocked the driveway door, trapping our van inside. Days after the storm, my kids and neighbors lovingly shook off the

tubes of ice surrounding each branch. Lifting the branches closest to the garage door while standing on ladders, they made it possible, my dear neighbors, for me to back the van out of the garage.

I hoped the morning sun of the next day would help the remaining branches lift upwards on their own. But although de-iced, the weeping willow still drooped.

Thinking my husband had finished cutting off the lifeless branches, I swallowed and got up from the computer. Opening the front door I set my eyes on the tree. It had been shorn. Five of those round and healthy branches that used to provide shade in the summer and had once given the tree an aura of majesty were now on the ground. My husband was sawing the branches into firewood.

"It's going to live," my husband told me. My mind re-wound to five years ago when I so desperately wanted someone in the hospital to tell me those words about my son. I had held his bloated body, weak from cancer treatments and an infection, wanting to breathe life into his limbs. If this tree died, this tree planted in my four-year-old's memory, how long would I blame myself?

A week has nearly passed now; only patches of ice and snow remain; yet many of my friends still have no power in their homes. At the vet, at the car repair shop, the conversations hover around the ice storm. A woman from India says she has only been here six months and never seen anything like this.

"I worry about the damage to all the trees," I say. She has heard that as long as tree roots were not destroyed, come spring, the trees will be an array of green leaves.

That afternoon I stand again at my weeping willow, the seared bare branches still making some place in my heart fill with sadness. What can I do for you? I wonder as I press its long tendrils between my cold fingers. I hate to be powerless. I hope the rest of the winter will be kind. For now I can only dream of green and growth in spring.

<http://howtomakeafamily.com/coless/wisler/trees.htm>

# My Hope Chest



Barbara Parson, TCF Atlanta

On November 24, 1991, I became a bereaved parent when my 15-year-old son, Robert, died by suicide.

We had run out of time for prevention and/or intervention. It was now time to begin grieving. Death by suicide (because it is normally seen as a choice thus the stigma attached to it) typically elicits a more significant amount of anger and guilt. This added dimension often takes longer to work through and the "what if" questions are relentless with no answers. I HOPE to give you some insight into the things that helped me and gave me the courage to grieve and gave me Hope for the future. These are things that I put in what I now call my HOPE CHEST.

Hope comes to us in many ways, people, places, things, in looking back and in looking forward. Many of our "hopes" come to us before we even know what they are and how significant they will be down the road.

Hope is in support groups like Survivors of Suicide and TCF. I learned the language of a bereaved parent and received encouragement, unconditional acceptance, and hope. I learned to work toward changing my anger to forgiveness and my guilt to regret. Two of the hardest hurdles were forgiveness of self that came with the "why" questions and letting go of the guilt, real and imagined. How could my strong, yet sensitive child with a belly laugh that is still music to my ears, make this choice? Leaving these behind brought hope.

Hope is passing on knowledge that you have gained thru your journey and/or circumstances or using it for change.

Hope is in time...we need time to heal and that time frame is different for each of us.

Hope is in the grieving process, you heard that right. Grief opens us up and bares all...showing us our strengths and weaknesses. We foster hope within ourselves when we use our strength to bolster our weaknesses and vulnerable areas, gaining confidence with each step.

Hope is in the memories we have of our children. Hope is in Heaven, knowing that we will one day be reunited with them. The candles we light tonight in memory of our children are to celebrate their lives, to show them, the community, and the world how much we love them and miss them. The candles also represent hope for us, they reflect our courage to stand here tonight, even though wounded, to show we have taken up the challenge to grieve with as much courage and grace as possible and make our children proud of us.

*(Chapter Leader Notes continued from page 1)*  
nature's way of letting in only as much as we can handle.

- Anger is a necessary stage of the healing process. Be willing to feel your anger, even though it may seem endless. The more you truly feel it, the more it will begin to dissipate and the more you will heal.
- The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not 'get over' the loss of a loved one; you will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again but, you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same, nor would you want to be.

### From Earl Grollman

Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical, and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve.

I hope that you will find some grain of truth, empathy or comfort in the mixture of poems and quotations. Sometimes it is the small refrain or phrase that you put on your desk at work or stick on your refrigerator that will help you get through that next hour or next day. It is important that you know that you are not alone and that there are others who feel as you do.

*Toni*

## FINDING SPRING AGAIN □



By Cathy Seehuetter, TCF - St.  
Paul, MN

It is the end of February, which means we are nearing the end of what has often been a brutal winter. While gazing at the mountains of snow piled high in my front yard and the foot-long icicles hanging from my roof, it is hard to imagine that spring will ever come. We have endured bitter cold winds that have chilled us to the bone and treacherous roads that we have cautiously traveled. The days have been long and dark and often free of sunlight. No matter how long you have been a native of the Upper Midwest, I know we all will be glad when it comes to an end.

However, as I described these thoughts about winter, I felt as if I was describing the days of my early grief. At that point, I did not believe that a day would ever come when I would thaw from the chill that had overtaken my body and mind. The bleakness of my existence during those early months after Nina died is almost frightening to remember; it is so difficult to even conceive of that much pain. I was anesthetized from some of its cruelty by the protective blanket of numbness that blessedly shielded me from the gale force of such overpowering sorrow. How could I ever feel spring in my heart again?

Spring had always been my favorite season. The air had a certain freshness to it that I would drink in. Simply put, it always made me feel happy and light of heart. Spring was our reward for surviving the freezing winter months that preceded it. It brought a smile to my face and a bounce to my step.

However, it was the spring of the year where my heart was irretrievably broken. It was during this exquisite season of warm, lilac-scented breezes and sun-kissed mornings where my sweet daughter Nina's life would end.

I wondered if my thoughts about spring would never be the same. Rather than anticipate with gladness the coming of spring, I dreaded it with the knowledge that it contained the anniversary of her death. The smell of the air and the look to the sky that I once found exhilarating now brought me back to my darkest day. I know that anyone, who has lost a loved one to death, no matter the season, understands. □

Will spring come again to your life? In the almost six years since Nina died, has it come to mine? Look

ing back at my description of the winter of "my early grief", I know that I have come a long way from that time of desolation. I have found, especially after the first two years, that with each subsequent spring, I have rediscovered some of the pleasure I used to feel. I have learned that just because I have found things to feel joyful about again, it doesn't mean I am dishonoring my daughter's memory. I now take her along with me in my mind and my heart. I try to retrieve memories of the dandelion bouquets she so carefully gathered and presented to me, the rides to the park in the Radio Flyer, our talks while sunning on the deck, and, of course, shopping for spring clothes! Her favorite pastime! I will always feel tenseness, apprehension and sadness as May 11th draws near, but I no longer hold it against spring.

## Reflections

With the death of my sister came some painful realizations -that life isn't fair or predictable; that sometimes even my best isn't good enough, and that from the day of her death, the happy events in my life would always be tinged with sadness.

Despite the pain and loss, death has also left me with some valuable Lessons and Precious Gifts. As a result of my sister's death - I have a greater appreciation of life and a greater Compassion for those who hurt.

I have learned to be a survivor - to have a successful career and productive life in the face of tremendous grief and loss. I have been gifted with good friends and special people to help me through the rough times. But most of all - I have been given the gift of time - time to heal and time to replace Painful memories of death with Priceless memories of my sister's life.~

by Cathy Schanberger - from This Healing Journey - An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings



## Tracks in the Snow

by Juliet Freitag, Crawford, NE

It had been at least three days since the last snowfall, when I realized I had to head into town for groceries, and out to the cemetery for one of my weekly visits. I cursed the snow often for covering up all the life I saw in the summer and spring. Everything was just a frozen blanket of white, a barren ice land, when the snow fell.

The fact that my daughter, Kyla Louise, was buried underneath that thick coating of ice in the cemetery, made me dislike the snow even more.

So on this day, I grumbled as I scraped my van windows in preparation for the long haul into town. My wheels crunched ice and slid as I pulled slowly out of the driveway. I let my mind wander into thoughts of a warm spring on the drive into town. I dreamed of flowers and birds, not frozen ponds and lifeless skies. I wondered if I would even be able to get into the cemetery to visit my darling's grave. Curse this snow!

After grocery shopping I headed out to the cemetery feeling depressed and hopeless. Why had my daughter died at the tender age of four from a brain tumor? Why was I having to visit her grave covered in snow, and out of my warm arms? What was the point of it all? I shivered as I neared the cemetery. It looked like not many people had been out since the last snowfall because the ground was still a flat solid sheet of snow. Or was it?

As I let the van quietly creep into the cemetery, my eyes gazed at the snow, and a small laugh escaped my lips. Across the rows and rows of frozen graves were animal tracks going every which way. Birds, rabbits, deer and who knows what other types of creatures had found a quiet, safe place to play. The tracks told of deer leaping over headstones, romping in the snow. There were tracks of rabbits darting in and out of the bushes between the headstones. Bird tracks gently dotted the snow until they disappeared where a winged one had taken flight.

I parked the van and stepped out into the glistening snow. As I walked towards my daughter's tiny grave,

I saw that a bird had visited her earlier, and that a rabbit had made a resting place under the bushes near her grave. A set of tracks even went back and forth between a pinwheel (Kyle's Grandma had left at the grave) and a bush. What a wondrous sight!

My little angel even had visitors when I could not be there! As I stood quietly pondering this change in my point of view, something caught my eye a few rows up. I looked and there were two small deer running after each other. They stopped and looked at me, and I at them.

Tears sprung to my eyes, and my heart soared. What majesty! They stood there still for a second, and then they bounded off and over the fence.

I pressed my hands into the snow on my sweet Kyla's grave, leaving my handprints. Then I drew a heart with my finger. As I walked away, I looked back and saw my own tracks, proof that I had been there, proof of my love. It was then that I realized what a gift the snow was. It had shown me how full of life the cemetery and the world really are, even though we think it is frozen and desolate.

On my drive back home I looked around at the shimmering white land before me. I saw that the snow protected and preserved the land beneath it like a warm blanket, until the land could once again rise anew.

Juliet Freitag is a freelance writer currently residing in Nebraska. She is the mother of four children: Savannah, Kyla, Bruelyn, and Jack. Her daughter, Kyla, passed away in 1999 due to a brain tumor.

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<http://www.tcfatlanta.org/JanFebMar2003.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 3696 - 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.

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