



# The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

March 2020 Newsletter



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



## Winter's Struggle for Spring

As the winds blow and the snowflakes fall  
I remember my child as her name I call  
She remains forever in the fresh crisp air  
With golden hair and eyes and smile so fair  
She is a treasure no one can compare  
My child for me is far beyond rare!

In the brutality of life's winter storms  
My heart forever will mourn  
The never-ending storms  
Of grief that was born  
From this winter's journey the heart is torn  
With pain and agony of not being  
with my child I will remain forlorn

But for the fresh air of relief of spring  
My heart will be able to sing  
And take new wing as I cling  
To the reassurance of HOPE  
To make me a fresh new cloak  
Of joy seeing the new birth  
Of what God has for us on earth  
Until heaven comes to meet with us  
With them again in paradise and their worth  
Things that were asleep in the earth  
Will wake up and bring great joy and mirth

Our memories will bring us newfound joy  
And bring us hope for the new spring ahead

For all the parents who struggle with winter's harsh-  
ness!! God bless and give you His peace!!

Hugs, Norma Jean mom to Marjorie Mae Bowen

[nkim-  
bel90@cnyti.com](mailto:nkim-bel90@cnyti.com)  
[www.geocities.com/myangelchristophe  
r7/marjorie1.html](http://www.geocities.com/myangelchristophe<br/>r7/marjorie1.html)

## Separated by Suicide

When we are separated by suicide  
From someone very dear,  
The grief that consumes our life  
Is a mixture of sorrow, anger and fear.  
The sadness from so great a loss  
Equals nothing else we've known.  
We strive ourselves to learn to cope  
But, in the end, we must be shown.  
Shown just how common the anger is  
And shown that we must not hide  
From the feelings--no matter how they hurt  
When we are separated by suicide.  
We must also learn to deal with the fear  
Of losing others that we love  
And we must confront what angers us  
Even if it's directed "above."  
It's not uncommon to feel anger with God.  
"Why didn't he just intervene?"  
And stop this terrible loss we've had.  
"Where could our God have been?"  
When we are separated by suicide  
We need support from people who care  
But, most of all, we need to be  
With others who have also "been there".  
To talk and hear from their own lips  
How they might have learned to cope  
Will help to validate our feelings  
And give us a glimmer of hope.  
Hope that one day we will return  
To a life without sorrow and pain.  
Because, when we are separated by suicide  
We have to learn to live again

By Jill Wagner  
In memory of son, Daniel Yorksie,  
10-4-68 - 12-23-94

## Meetings

**Lake Villa Meeting**  
**Northern Illinois Chapter TCF**  
**March 19 - 7:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.**  
 Millburn Congregational Church  
 19073 W Old Grass Lake Rd  
 (Corner of Old Grass Lake Road & Rt. 45  
 Lake Villa, IL 60046

**Holy Family Church**  
**April 2 - 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**  
 450 Keller Street, Waukegan, IL 60085  
 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  
**Open Discussion**

## I Resolve

I resolve to surround myself with beauty, even  
 when beauty becomes blurry and I am filled with  
 tears;

Even when I am brought to my knees in pain and  
 grief and I can't seem to pray; I resolve to look  
 up.

I resolve to wrap myself up and hold me close and  
 to let others, who understand, love me-

If others have a difficult time understanding, I  
 resolve to love them.

I resolve to listen a great deal when I can and  
 talk a great deal when I need to.

I will share myself.

I will not give myself away.

I will let go of anything that hinders joy.

I will be gracious in the knowledge of letting go.

I will sift and sift and sift some more.

I will know, by sifting that I am choosing life over  
 Living death, victimization and unwarranted mar-  
 tyrdom.

I resolve to be fully present to life and To re-  
 member my birthright as A beloved child of God.

I will be thankful for gifts of the heart; They are  
 priceless gifts to The soul.

I resolve to remember my Beloved child with joy  
 and gladness For his life and to Live my life with  
 full knowledge Of Eternity.

---Kerry Marston Lovingly lifted from Tributes Online  
 Newsletter



**(Our Children, Grandchildren,  
 and Siblings Loved, Missed  
 and Remembered in March &  
 April)**

<b>Shannon McCarty</b>	<b>April 18</b>
Daughter of Kevin McCarty & Pat Hays	
<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 Prihoda-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](mailto: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**

<b>Camden Frisby</b>	<b>March 1</b>	Son of Kris Frisby
<b>Griffin Schumow</b>	<b>March 2</b>	Son of Jeff & Krista Schumow
<b>Kyle Glueck</b>	<b>March 4</b>	Son of Dolores Krason
<b>Justin Perez</b>	<b>March 9</b>	Son of Traci & Carlos Perez Brother of Samantha (Perez) Przybylski
<b>David Sloop</b>	<b>March 9</b>	Son of Charron Sloop
<b>Rusty Anderson</b>	<b>March 11</b>	Son of Forest & Christine Anderson
<b>David Spannraft</b>	<b>March 18</b>	Son of Elizabeth & Dan Spannraft
<b>Adam Rubin</b>	<b>March 28</b>	Son of Linda Rubin Brother of Nicole Rubin
<b>Lea Ann (Heise) Knuth</b>	<b>April 2</b>	Daughter of Leslie & Shirley Heise
<b>Michael Sean Gaede</b>	<b>April 8</b>	Son of Maureen Gaede
<b>Mike Reardon</b>	<b>April 10</b>	Son of Sonia & Jim Reardon
<b>Scott Ewing</b>	<b>April 11</b>	Son of Alan & Renee Ewing
<b>Qua' Shawn Wade</b>	<b>April 12</b>	Son of June Andrejewski
<b>Alyssa Carranza</b>	<b>April 15</b>	Daughter of Luz Barrera Granddaughter of Angel & Raquel Gasco
<b>Adrien Gonzales</b>	<b>April 21</b>	Son of Lauren Gonzales
<b>Jammi Hui</b>	<b>April 25</b>	Daughter of William & Joyce Hui
<b>Sean Jones</b>	<b>April 26</b>	Son of Octavine Jones
<b>Timothy Reece</b>	<b>April 27</b>	Son of Joanne Prihoda-Reece

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

<b>Edgar Villareal</b>	<b>March 1</b>	Oziel & Guadalupe Villareal
<b>Jeremy Govekar</b>	<b>March 2</b>	Son of Maggie McGaughey
<b>Rasheed Mariano</b>	<b>March 5</b>	Son of Joan Mariano
<b>John "Jake" Mosansky</b>	<b>March 12</b>	Son of Darlene & John Mosansky Sister of Veronica Steif
<b>Blake Logan Palmer</b>	<b>March 13</b>	Son of Amber & Brian Palmer Grandson of Lois Cooper Grandson of Gina Palmer
<b>Taylor Rydahl</b>	<b>March 14</b>	Son of Carol & Keith Rydahl
<b>Roderick Young</b>	<b>March 27</b>	Son of Scarlet Austin Grandson of "Charlie" Johnson
<b>Marc Hawkinson</b>	<b>March 28</b>	Son of Mary Kay Clark
<b>José De Jesús Hernández</b>	<b>April 1</b>	Son of Jesús & Virginia Hernández
<b>Selene Martínez</b>	<b>April 8</b>	Daughter of Manuel & Lidia Marinez
<b>Mathew Tisch</b>	<b>April 10</b>	Son of William & Barbara Tisch
<b>Stephanie Andrea Zamarron</b>	<b>April 11</b>	Daughter of Vicky Zamarron & Juan Mungula Granddaughter of Alejandra Rodriguez & Cédar Rojas
<b>Daniel Wang</b>	<b>April 13</b>	Son of Millie Yu

Continued on page 2

## Grief and Judgment: A

\* \* \*

### Father's Story

By David Pellegrin

That fall was a good time for my two sons—certainly better than a year earlier when their mother and I had ended our marriage.

But now, George was in great spirits. He had just gotten accepted into the college of his choice, the University of Oregon, where he planned on starting in January. And his younger brother Adam had discovered what became the love of his life: football.

Then everything changed. Sometime in the darkness of the early morning hours of Sunday, November 24, my phone rang with a call from the Queen's Medical Center. Is George Pellegrin my son? Could I please come down to the emergency room? He was in a traffic accident, and his condition is grave.

During the short drive to the hospital, I prayed out loud that he would be all right. I remember rocking almost rhythmically into the steering wheel: "Please, God ... Let him be OK ... Please, God..."

\* \* \*

A female chaplain with a gentle, soothing manner met me at the emergency room entrance. She took me to a small waiting room and told me I would soon be able to see the doctor.

*To this day* I'm dumbfounded that even with a chaplain on the scene, my mind *still* managed to block out any thought that my handsome, laid-back, loving rascal son could possibly be dead.

After a few minutes the chaplain returned and took me into another room, where a doctor was sitting behind a small desk.

I don't remember how I responded when the doctor told me that George had died at the scene of the accident, but I remember clearly what the doctor said next: "If you want to see your son, you need to get control of yourself."

I immediately straightened up and answered with a forced calmness that I was OK, that I wanted to see him.

He took me to still another room, where George was on a table. It's all a blur now, but I know I kissed him, and I tried to hold him. Then the chaplain reappeared to lead me back to the waiting room, ready to offer her expert comfort.

Only much later did I realize that during those minutes I had been with George, the doctor had stood by and said ... *nothing*.

Of course, none of that even registered in the numbness of the weeks and months that followed. But sometime later I did begin to wonder, how would it have felt if the doctor had said something like, "I'm sorry" ... or had touched me on the arm or shoulder ... or had said George's name? As trivial as all this seemed, I was pretty sure of one thing: It would have helped.

I thought it was nice that hospitals have chaplains standing by to offer comfort. But I also thought that empathy and caring and compassion are not things that doctors should think they could delegate—to chaplains or nurses or anyone else.

I even wrote a letter to the University of Hawaii Medical School citing my experience and suggesting more training in this area for future doctors. My letter probably didn't make the slightest bit of difference, but it made *me* feel better at the time, thinking I might be *fixing* something.

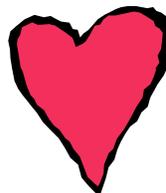
When I got back to the waiting room, Adam and his mother had finally arrived. My look must have said it all because she immediately started screaming hysterically, out of control.

Then Adam found the absolutely perfect words: He put his arms around her tightly and he said softly, "Talk to George, Mom. He can hear you."

It was still dark when I drove them home, with Adam sitting in the back seat. For the entire 30-minute drive, he leaned forward and kept a hand on each of his parent shoulders. He was only 14, but he had switched roles and become the parent. He was trying to give comfort to his mother and father.

Now, some of you with other children have been there, and you just know what happened after that.

(Continued on page 5)



(Grief and Judgment: A Father's Story continued from page 4)

When the deceased child's brother or sister starts taking care of you, you've pretty much lost control. I didn't know it yet, but, boy, had I ever lost control. For the next three years—for the rest of his time in high school—he didn't care what I had to say. There were no more true gestures of affection. Virtually no communication at all. He might not have thought that he had all the answers, but he knew that I didn't have *any*. It felt like I was losing my second son as well.

\* \* \*

I hadn't even heard of The Compassionate Friends yet. Despite a newspaper article about George's death—he was riding a friend's motorcycle and skidded off the road less than a mile from the house—despite that article, no one from the Honolulu chapter ever contacted me.

(I want to point out in passing that our chapter has since worked on improving its outreach, just as I hope all chapters have, too.)

So, before my involvement with TCF, I didn't know that Adam's behavior, as a surviving sibling, was not all that uncommon. Eventually, understanding that behavior was one of the things that TCF would help me with the most.

Still in my pre-TCF days, I coped as best I could. I went to see two different psychologists. I went to each one only once. It wasn't their fault. I was looking for tips. Surely these professionals had some “tricks of the trade” to pass on that would help me get back to the business of life. When tips were not forthcoming, when I saw that I couldn't *fix* my grief, I became impatient. This was something I would work out on my own.

\* \* \*

My wife Kathleen had known George, but not well. He'd been living on the Mainland when we got together. Much later, she told me about the isolation she'd been feeling when George died. This was something I learned was not unusual when the biological parents are brought together by the death of a child.

During the next few years there were times Kathleen would feel excluded “shut out,” as she put it—when I'd withdraw, unable to talk to her. Ultimately it was her incredible patience and her tolerance that served our relationship so well.

\* \* \*

When I finally did hear about The Compassionate Friends, through an acquaintance about six months later, I thought, “Why not? The two psychologists sure hadn't worked out.”

But one thing held me back: The meetings were held at a church.

My prayers during that drive to the emergency room had been to no avail. Was it because I didn't go to church? Was it because my prayers were essentially selfish ones, and after the fact? Had I somehow fallen short in the spiritual department?

All I *did* know was that I was *just not up* to being judged by a roomful of religious people.

It was a phone conversation with the chapter leader that finally got me to a meeting. She reassured me with what I later learned was one of the Seven Principles of TCF, Principal Number III. It says that, quote: “TCF reaches out to all bereaved parents across artificial barriers of religion, race, economic class or ethnic group.”

She said that the meetings were actually held in a schoolroom, not the church proper, and that the Honolulu Chapter included Buddhists, Jews, atheists and agnostics as well as Christians. She said that TCF did not take a position either for or against religion. And she said that I would not be judged.

\* \* \*

In the years since my TCF involvement began, I've come to see these Seven Principles as something like our nation's Bill of Rights—something that protects the individual against the steamrolling force of the majority.

The late Art Peterson was a leading influence on could it possibly come with any differences? Would you grieve differently for a son than for a daughter? For an adolescent than for an infant? Surely, grief was absolute for both mothers and fathers.

But over time I came to see the differences that the well-meaning mother had in mind.

**First**, neither I nor the other men who occasionally attended the chapter meetings talked much, if at all. The women talked freely, and sometimes it seemed, endlessly.

- (Continued on page 6)

(Grief and Judgment: A Father's  
Story continued from page 5)

**Second**, I recognized that I was better than the mothers at compartmentalizing my grief. I knew that I was better at keeping a lid on it—socially and at work.



**Third**, my male friends seemed less comfortable talking about George, bringing up his name or even looking at his picture than female friends. (Isn't that one positive thing something all could learn? How easy it is to give a bereaved parent a good feeling by *really looking* at the child's photo? If only I could have learned this another way.)

**Finally**, the fourth way in which my grieving seemed to be different from the mothers was reflected in the words I used to describe it. I came to see how intensely I had *judged* myself. I was a *failure* as my son's *protector*, the father's primary role.

\*\*\*

The first TCF national conference that I thought about attending was in Chicago. Then a very strange thing happened. While I was considering whether or not to go, I had a vivid dream one night that I was actually there at the conference hotel, getting on an elevator filled with other bereaved parents.

They were all dressed in black, all looking very serious. As I entered the elevator I only came up to about their waists. They looked down at me with what could only be called contempt.

They had judged me, and I had literally shrunk, in my own eyes and in theirs.

I didn't go to Chicago that year.

\*\*\*

Music can be a powerful force in grief. In my case, the one song that got to me more than any other is not a sad song at all. It's a happy song, written by John Lennon to his infant son, Sean, called "Beautiful Boy."

"Close your eyes, have no fear...

"The monster's gone, he's on the run...

"And your Daddy's here." Well, I *wasn't* there. In the only thing that really mattered in life, I just wasn't there. So much for happy songs.

\*\*\*

Over the last several years the pain has been softened by the passage of time. And I have managed to get outside of myself with activities aimed at helping others.

For me it was increased involvement in The Compassionate Friends, an organization to which I owed so much. Once I started being a helper, that's when my healing started. There would be no more dreams about being judged.

But it surely doesn't matter *what* the activity is. It could be coaching Little League ... or volunteering time for a charity.

And doing something—*anything*—to help others in the name of our child means our child made a difference and did not die in vain.

George stays with me in the way he continues to influence the choices I make, in how I try to live my life. He stays with me in the many memories. Most of them are happy ones, but a lot of them are not.

What's different now is that the memories come when I sort of invite them, when I'm ready for them—very few sneak attacks anymore. I've accepted what happened. I didn't "get over it," but I did get used to it. I suppose you could call it a positive resolution.

It does not mean the grief is gone, and it does *not* mean closure. George's is a *living* presence, with all the good and bad that that implies, and I want it to last forever. *I have two sons.*

Adam's high school years felt like one long emotional dry spell. He was uncommunicative, withdrawn, quick to become impatient.

Adam had been hit at the age of 13 by the breakup of his parents' marriage and then at 14 by the death of his older brother. It made for pain and anger I couldn't begin to understand.

- (Continued on page 7)

(Grief and Judgment: A Father's Story continued from page 6)

He had teachers and coaches he could open up to in a way he could not with me. For them I was deeply grateful—but I still wished that one day Adam and I would achieve that openness between ourselves.

\* \* \*

During George's senior year, I had become aware of the huge significance of the high school yearbook. It's become a far bigger deal than it was during my high school days.

Now, graduating seniors got their own space in the yearbook to pay tribute to their parents and teachers and friends, and to reflect on happy high-school memories.

As a graduating senior himself, what could Adam possibly write that would not be a downer? So, when his senior-class yearbook came out, and he left it lying on a living-room table, I opened it with trepidation.

To his brother, he wrote, "George: Leading me to the meaning of life alive and in death."

To his mother, "Mom: My pillar of strength."

And to me, he wrote, "Dad: Many good times to come."

Whether he meant in my relationship with him, or in my life in general, he turned out to be so right. Once again, he had found the perfect words.

And I can't think of a better message to leave you with than this:

There *are* ... many good times to come.

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Thanks for this sharing line and God bless everyone. This time of year is so hard on all of us with winter still being pretty brutal, until you look out and see the beauty of the trees decorated with white snow frosting and the crystal snowflakes shining and sparkling in the sun. This is what grief is like with the brutal pain of grief's waves and storm crashing down on us and then the reprieve of rest after the storm. May this represent the progress we go through to the next level of releasing our pain to see that there is some joy left here to see and feel.

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 43<sup>rd</sup> 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.

**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.

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

**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

**NEWSLETTER PRINTING & MAILING** Toni Nesheim 847-204-7585 [tnesheim@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tnesheim@sbcglobal.net) & Denny Salomonson, 847-223-7353 [drdeno@sbcglobal.net](mailto:drdeno@sbcglobal.net) - daughter, Rachel Salomonson, 19, auto accident

**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