



# The COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

## Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter

### October, 2018 Newsletter



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



## Holidaze

I was getting ready to go to the store to purchase candy for the “great pumpkin day” which brought my attention to the holidays of preceding years: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chanukah and New Years – those days that threaten us so much.

This is the fifth holiday season since my son Douglas’s death, yet I still have a fleeting desire to run and hide. Although last season was not as terrible as the one before, I know this year there will be tears shed and some lonely times. Such times are very private moments of grief for me now.

If you are bereaved, I hope that you will take some time for yourself during the holidays. Take the time to cry and take time to be alone. Try not to take on assignments from other family members who cannot know the exhaustion you experience. Ask for the things you think you need. Others cannot read your mind, yet it is so difficult to tell someone that you are hurting and need something from him or her. There is no requirement to pretend you are okay when, in fact, you are not.

Healing is a slow process requiring a lot of work. I always know when others have never experienced a great loss, for they will say time will heal all wounds. What they do not know and cannot know is that healing a great grief requires hard work which time only permits.

Time itself cannot heal anything. It is not the passage of time in itself, but the pain and suffering endured and the struggle to reclaim one’s life which through time earns a new life. Others see only the end result without realizing the work that went into the healing; therefore, others can only allude to superficial and trite remarks.

Take the time you need to complete your work, to heal your spirit, your mind, and your body and your will to live again. Be good to yourself. Remember that healing is possible through your own effort and determination, and not simply by the

passage of time.

By Shirley Corrigan, Bereaved Parents USA of Northern

Texas, from “Where Are All the Butterflies”  
[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)



## Corner

By Margaret Gerner  
St. Louis, MO BP/USA Chapter

Peanuts, the cartoon character, is walking blissfully along when, all of a sudden he takes a somersault. In the next box of the strip he says, “...and suddenly, you’re reminded of a lost love.” It is like that for many of us. I was having my hair cut at the beauty shop one morning when I heard a little boy behind me telling a tall tale about fighting Indians. Suddenly, I was jolted with the memory of how my six year-old son, Arthur, used to tell about the Indians he killed in the back yard.

Twenty-six years have passed since Arthur was killed, but that memory was like a knife through my heart. Every time I hear the song “Betty Davis Eyes” the same thing happens. My granddaughter, Emily, has been dead for 15 years but, when I hear it, in my mind’s eye I can see her dancing to that song. It hurts. I call these experiences “potholes of grief.” We can be years beyond our painful grief when, suddenly, something will remind us of him or her. A song on the radio, a place we hadn’t been in years or something someone says will bring our loved one back so vividly to us. Occasionally, there are pleasant memories that bring us a feeling of warmth, but many times they hurt.

Fortunately the pain doesn’t last long, although, for a time, it can seem like we’re back to square one in our grief. The best way I’ve found to deal with pot

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## 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.

### Loving Gifts for the October Newsletter

Thanks to Barb Fleming  
For her donation  
In memory of her daughter  
Karrin Lee Fleming

"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 to all who contribute.

## Meetings

**Northern Illinois Chapter TCF  
October 18**  
Millburn Congregational Church  
Grass Lake Road & Rt. 45, Millburn, IL

**Waukegan meeting  
November 1  
– 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 continued from page 3))**

**Alexandria (Alex) Scarbro**  
**November 24**  
Daughter of David Scarbro

**Mark Yates**  
**November 24**  
Son of Richard & Linda Hegg

**Elizabeth Mary Foresta**  
**November 28** Daughter of Al & Mary Foresta

**Zack Maslanich**  
**November 30**  
Son of Karen Zimmerman

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) - 847-573-1055

### Erica's Poem

I remember  
Running down the hill  
Dipping my feet into the sand  
In a big t-shirt that  
My grandpa got for free  
In South Padre Island, Texas  
Where he would escape winters  
With my grandma  
My brother would chase after me  
Fishing from the dock  
Jumping from my grandpa's legs  
Into the water  
It was simple back then  
My grandma was carefree  
And free of the terrible disease  
That takes over her brain  
Dementia  
And I still had my brother  
Who would eat chocolate chip ice cream  
And stay up late with me  
Playing card games



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## OUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, AND SIBLINGS LOVED, MISSED AND REMEMBERED IN OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

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>Levi Nichols</b>	<b>October 4</b>	Son of Bambi Nichols
<b>Mark Sailors</b>	<b>October 9</b>	Son of Michelle Sailors
<b>Marleea Gerfen</b>	<b>October 12</b>	Daughter of Marsha & Lee Bell
<b>Alexandria (Alex) Scarbro</b>	<b>October 15</b>	Daughter of David Scarbro
<b>Brian Keough</b>	<b>October 20</b>	Son of Kathleen Keough
<b>Kelly Klawonn</b>	<b>October 23</b>	Son of Raymond & Dorothy Klawonn
<b>Alyssa Burnstine</b>	<b>October 23</b>	Granddaughter of Judi & Stan Veouka
<b>Aaron R Moore</b>	<b>October 24</b>	Son of Rob & Sherry Moore
<b>Colin Henderson</b>	<b>October 27</b>	Son of Lisa Henderson
<b>John "Jake" Mosansky</b>	<b>October 31</b>	Son of Darlene & John Mosansky Sister of Veronica Steif
<b>Heidi Anne Hermann</b>	<b>November 2</b>	Daughter of Bonnie Brackus
<b>Nick Battis</b>	<b>November 3</b>	Son of Susan Battis
<b>Jeremy M Govekar</b>	<b>November 12</b>	Son of Maggie McGaughey
<b>Lisa Rosemann</b>	<b>November 16</b>	Daughter of Pat & Craig Rosemann
<b>Stephanie Andrea Zamarron</b>	<b>November 16</b>	Daughter of Vicky Zamarron & Juan Mungula Granddaughter of Alejandra Rodriguez & César Rojas
<b>Nathan Clyde</b>	<b>November 17</b>	Son of Valerie Clyde
<b>Douglas Ramsay</b>	<b>November 17</b>	Son of Carlene Ramsay
<b>Marcia Castillo</b>	<b>November 19</b>	Daughter of Sissy & Arthur Castillo
<b>Amy Jo Baldwin</b>	<b>November 21</b>	Daughter of Mike & Sheila Baldwin
<b>Amanda Lauren Cecchi</b>	<b>November 22</b>	Daughter of Kim & Steve Cecchi
<b>Mitchell Rodefer</b>	<b>November 24</b>	Son of Dennis & Susan Rodefer
<b>Zachary Taylor</b>	<b>November 30</b>	Son of Mike Taylor & Karen Adams-Taylor

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

<b>Sharon Beth Gray</b>	<b>October 4</b>	Daughter of Pam Gray
<b>Mark Sailors</b>	<b>October 10</b>	Son of Michelle Sailors
<b>Kerrin Fleming</b>	<b>October 21</b>	Daughter of Barbara Fleming
<b>Lila Ruffolo</b>	<b>November 1</b>	Daughter of Jenny & Rick Selle
<b>Andrew C Perkins</b>	<b>November 3</b>	Son of Richard & Thelma Perkin
<b>Rachel Salomonson</b>	<b>November 15</b>	Daughter of Toni Nesheim & Denny Salomonson
<b>Erin Dinklenburg</b>	<b>November 16</b>	Daughter of Kelli Brooks
<b>Kyle Glueck</b>	<b>November 17</b>	Dolores Krason
<b>Aaron Barrera</b>	<b>November 18</b>	Son of Tammie & Ernie Barrera
<b>Megan Candice Grace</b>	<b>November 18</b>	Daughter of Tim & Marilyn Grace
<b>Nicole Parfitt</b>	<b>November 19</b>	Daughter of Robin Parfitt
<b>Sven Christian Reinhard</b>	<b>November 22</b>	Son of Astrid Reinhard
<b>Keegan Cray</b>	<b>November 22</b>	Son of Kristin & Ken Willis
<b>Camden Frisby</b>	<b>November 23</b>	Son of Kris Frisby

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**(Erica's Poem continued from page 2)**

That my grandma let us win  
 Then one day  
 My grandpa sold the perfect house  
 On the lake that kept us  
 Busy in the summers  
 Maybe he knew life was too good  
 In that house  
 He didn't want something bad  
 To happen  
 That would make us resent  
 The house on Liberty St  
 And he was right  
 But not about the house  
 About something more than that  
 He didn't know that tragedy would hit  
 And I didn't either  
 But I was left with a text  
 Years later  
 Calling for me to go check  
 On my brother  
 The brother I grew up with  
 The brother I was afraid to lose  
 The brother that now  
 Watches over me  
 And in the hospital  
 At 3 o'clock in the morning  
 Staring at my brother  
 Whose skin was cold and pale  
 I realized that  
 I was going to remember  
 My brother the way  
 I remember my grandparent's house  
 I don't resent my grandpa for  
 Taking that house from me  
 Like I don't resent my brother  
 For leaving me  
 I keep happy memories in  
 My head of times where  
 I would sit in the grass  
 Listening to the Cubs game  
 On a radio with my grandma  
 Or when I would  
 Make up games with my brother  
 In our house that remains  
 In one piece  
 Even though my heart broke  
 Into so many

And the only thing that puts  
 Them back together is  
 All of the good times  
 I will never forget  
 That were spent at  
 My grandparent's house  
 But more importantly  
 The ones that were spent with  
 My brother in the short amount  
 Of time I had with him.  
 So when you lose someone  
 Who is important to you  
 Don't dwell on why or how  
 They left but rather  
 Focus on who they were  
 When they still walked this  
 Beautiful but dangerous world

Submitted by Kris Frisby

Northern Lake County Illinois Chapter



## **22ND ANNUAL** **WORLDWIDE** **CANDLE LIGHTING**

### **DECEMBER 9**

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00 pm local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 22nd annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. TCF's WCL started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.



## Autumn



As autumn approaches, I begin to feel invigorated and alive. I suppose that it's the crisp, cool air that makes me realize that there is some small thing inside of me that is not dead. I've always

loved autumn...the smell of burning leaves and the chirping of the locusts; bring a flood of childhood memories. Memories of a simpler, more innocent time. I long to be back there, where my biggest worry was my spelling test every Friday. Where there were no bills to pay, no car notes, no mortgage, and no broken hearts...just friends, school, and play.

Whenever I think of autumns past, the smell of my Mother's homemade soup fills my senses. I can still see myself sitting at the 1950's yellow and chrome kitchen table, doing my homework while my Mother prepared supper. Maybe part of the reason that I looked forward to autumn then was because it meant that my birthday was just around the corner...October 4. Needless to say, I no longer await birthdays with the same anticipation that I did then. But there was always something special about autumn and for me, there still is. I still look forward to the first day that I can turn my air conditioner off and open all of the windows and let the fresh, cool air inside but for some parents this isn't the case. They find this time of year very difficult because of the memories triggered by the beginning of a new school year. For them, autumn is a painful reminder of what might have been.

Autumn doesn't depress me...not at all! It's what follows autumn that I do not look forward to...the holidays...Thanksgiving and Christmas and the entire holiday shopping season, which begins earlier and earlier each year.

That's the part of the year that I dread ...the toy ads, the TV commercials filled with smil

ing, happy faces of children ...children like mine, children like yours ...children who should be here but aren't. I loath it...all of it. There are so many reminders and no way to avoid them...one less gift to buy, one less stocking to fill, one less place to set at the table. No one else on earth knows this kind of pain except those of us who have been through it. When all the world is supposed to be happy and filled with joy, we are at our lowest...out emptiest. The winter is within our hearts...cold, bleak, and long. I used to love Christmas and everything that accompanied it. Now I long for a place to hide until it is all over...until the last Christmas tree is taken down, the last decoration put away, and the last twinkling light extinguished.

Autumn is beautiful, with its vibrant colors and wind swept leaves. I revel in the patchwork quilt that nature creates every autumn. No, it's not September's Indian Summer or October's crispness but November with it's Thanksgiving Day parades and turkey and December with it's nights filled with flickering lights and plastic Santas...these are the things that bring an ache to my heart and tears to my eyes. It is this time, when the nights are lit so brightly, that are my darkest days!

Jacquelyn M. Comeaux  
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## Life Has A Different Meaning Now

"Life has a different meaning now" is how Cindy Bullens starts off her song *Scarlett Wings*. Never been truer words written. Melinda Simpson, a counselor with Hospice coined the phrase for us, "bereaved parents look at things through the lens of grief." Those words have been repeated by the families that sat in the small back room of an old house that hospice uses for their office. I remember the first time I walked into the old house with wooden floors. The floors creaked and reminded me of an old store in the town I grew up in. Funny, how sounds and sights can take you back in time to another place and bring out emotions. The old store I'm speaking of was in Enid, Oklahoma. It was an upscale clothing store called "Newman's". It always felt awkward going in this upscale store since our family couldn't really afford to shop there. We weren't really poor, if we were, us kids never knew it. We would visit this store only when there was a particular sale on something mother needed. Mom did a lot of sewing back in those days but she must have liked to "look". It always made me feel a little awkward when we would go in this store, the wooden floors creaked and we didn't usually buy anything, we just looked around.

So here I am entering an old house occupied by Hospice in March of 2003 and the floors are creaking and I am feeling quite awkward. Life is awkward, our 16-year-old son has died and we don't know what to do with ourselves. We don't know if we are doing this grieving "right". Grief was not even a word used in our vocabulary up until Jacob's death. I do know I felt very alone in a busy world that continued to speed along. I felt like I was on one of those merry go-rounds and the world was continuing to spin, I'm trying to hold on and not fall off but feeling sick too.

I enter the old house and am directed towards this back room with tables and comfy chairs. I am relieved I have a table in front of me to hide my awkward hands under. If I could have crawled under it I would have felt better. Everything is awkward. How do you sit when you just lost your son? I don't even want to hold my head up, let alone speak to people. Here I am in a room that is filling with strangers. They all have that same look on their faces. The counselor introduces herself and tries to make us feel comfortable. We are encouraged to go around the table and introduce ourselves and why we are there. I don't know why I am here. I don't know why I thought this would help? Why did I drive myself there not knowing anybody? I guess my inner most self is moving me on autopilot. Maybe my innermost

self is directing my body to do what it needs to do and I am not in control. I listened to a mother describe how her daughter died alone in her apartment. The torture of making life and death decisions about organ donating at a hospital in Cincinnati. I couldn't fathom having to make such decisions. The tears came for me with the first introduction and didn't stop as each parent told their horrid story of losing their child.

We received a phone call from our panicked daughter who had police knocking on our door at 9:30pm at night looking for us. We didn't make life and death decisions. There is another family whose son was killed in a single car accident less than a mile from their home. The father got to the accident sight just moments after it happened only to find their son dead. He had just left the house? How could it be? Jacob had just left home hours before? How could it be we were all going about everyday activities and then bam our world is changed in a matter of seconds. Our precious children are dead. I want off the merry ground, I am getting sick.

It's my turn, lump in my throat, tears in my eyes, my hands are wringing in my lap and I barely utter my name. I have practiced what I'm going to say but the words don't come out easily. I have to start and stop, I can't breathe, I am here around this table in this old house where the floors creak and all these people are telling how their child died. I don't want to be here, I don't want my son to be dead. I am so scared to utter the words my "son died". If I say it, then it will be true. I hear myself say those words, it must have been my inner most self because I don't want to say it. I am not in control. There I did it, I uttered the words my son was accidentally shot. I didn't want others to get a visual of a gangster type teen boy. Jake was so far from it. Jacob wanted to be liked and tended to be more of a follower than a leader. He followed into the path with some other boys that were troubled and not happy at home. Jake was happy at home. We had the

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(Life Has A Different Meaning Now continued from page 6)

best evening before he left the night he died, laughing and joking. I wanted others to know how loving and kind he is. He was always for the underdog. None of those things came out of my mouth. I look at the person beside me, I can't talk anymore. I just want off the merry go round, I am getting sick.

Two hours passed of more stories of parents whose children died, some in car accidents, all were sudden deaths. No time to say good-bye. Just going about daily life and tragic accidents happened. I learned something at that first meeting that was powerful and would help me down the road. It didn't matter how careful you were and how much you tried to protect your child, the awful enemy death snuck in when you weren't looking and robbed our child of their life. We had all done what we thought was right. Didn't we teach them to be safe drivers, seatbelts save lives don't they? We taught them to handle firearms safely. Two hunter safety courses and many trips to a gun range. We taught them healthy lifestyles and the importance of taking care of themselves. But those things didn't matter. Time and unforeseen occurrence befell them all. I was Jake's protector, his mother. For God's sake, I gave birth to this child, he was in my care and keeping and I had failed. That is how I felt. Somewhere along the line I failed. He shouldn't have been the one to die. None of these children should have. We are supposed to go first. Here it was 20 minutes until eight o'clock. This meeting was supposed to be over with 10 minutes ago. None of us wanted to be there two hours ago but now none of us wanted to leave. We keep talking. We keep crying. We leave on shaky legs and return the next week.

We do it all again, and again, and again. Every time, we are dreading the introduction. It makes it real, our child has died. Others join us as time goes on. They meander in through the creaking floors to join us in the back room. We however are feeling like the merry go round is slowing down, we are gaining some balance. These new parents are spinning, they are getting sick and want off. Over time we are able to put our legs down on the ground and start digging our heels in the dirt. We are getting some control of the merry go round.

I returned a week ago to the old building with creaking floors, it didn't feel awkward any more. The room wasn't even in the back now. The room has changed. I have changed, the counselor has changed and no one else showed up. I noticed children's art supplies in a cart behind me. Signs of life are in this room. It doesn't squeeze the breath from you anymore. You can hear the street and life passing by outside. Car doors are shutting and people riding bicycles outside. Not spinning anymore. There were books on a bookshelf that

give life to those that read. Helpful books I noticed. Helpful people. The counselor looked at me and said "I don't think anyone else is coming". We decided to go home. I was okay with that. 6 □ years later I was okay with that. I occasionally still feel sick and feel that the room is spinning but I can balance now and put my feet down and slow things down and still hold on. These parents I met in the back room with creaky floors are still holding on. We hold each other's hands and hearts.

We look for others now that are spinning and on the merry go round. Amazing isn't it? Your child dies and you keep on living. It is extremely difficult for me to understand how we survive but we do and are better people.

Karen Cantrell, TCF Frankfort, KY  
[karen821285@yahoo.com](mailto:karen821285@yahoo.com)

(Corner continued from page 1)

holes of grief is just to let them happen and try not to fight them. They are a sign that your loved one is still in your heart and, no matter how much time passes, you will always miss him or her. Potholes are bumpy but shallow places in a normally smooth road. So it is with potholes of grief. They are bumpy painful places in our lives that come after we're resolved our grief.

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**When darkness seems  
 overwhelming,  
 light a candle in someone's life  
 and see how it makes  
 the darkness in your own  
 and the other person's life flee.**

**Rabbi Harold S. Kujshner, "When  
 Bad Things Happen to Good People"**



**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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