Dear Compassionate Friends,

The 50th anniversary of The Compassionate Friends was January 28, 2019!

In early 1968, Reverend Simon Stephens was the young assistant chaplain at the Coventry & Warwickshire Hospital in Coventry, England. On May 23, 1968, 11-year-old Kenneth, the son of Joe and Iris Lawley, died following severe head injuries when he was struck by a car while riding his bicycle. In the same hospital, Billy, the son of Bill and Joan Henderson, died a few days later from cancer. When the Lawleys heard of Billy’s death, they sent flowers to the Hendersons. Joe Lawley stated, “We did not then know the significance of that act, but, looking back, it might be said that The Compassionate Friends started there.”

The Hendersons were so touched by the Lawley’s kind gesture, the two grieving couples met for a cup of tea. Through this, they found a place where they could speak openly about their sons and their lives, and their own shattered hopes for the future. They found, in each other, someone who truly did understand their devastating losses. Their shared experiences brought them a measure of comfort that they could not get from anyone or anywhere else. Upon watching how much their friendship and sharing helped them on their grief journeys, Reverend Stephens suggested that what they were doing together was far more beneficial than anything he could help them with. He wondered if this might also help other parents suffering the loss of a child.

Therefore, in January of 1969, six people came together, including Simon Stephens, where they talked about developing an organization that would help bereaved parents. And thus began “The Society of The Compassionate Friends,” eventually shortened to “The Compassionate Friends”! From a handful of people meeting around a kitchen table to what the organization is today – a lifesaver for those whose precious daughters, sons, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren died much too soon. A place where bereaved families can find understanding listeners and sharers, friendships with others walking on a similar journey of grief as they learn to cope together, and, in time, find hope for renewed meaning in life again.

Continued on Page 2
50th Anniversary, Continued from Page 1

In 1972, Arnold and Paula Shamres lost their 10-year-old daughter, Gabrielle, in a tragic car-train accident. Two years later, they learned of the British Society of The Compassionate Friends from a Time magazine article. Recognizing the tremendous value such an organization would have in the U.S., they contacted Simon Stephens. Gratefully, he came from Great Britain to Florida, and following that, TCF came to the USA!
(Excerpted from the TCF Facebook page.)

In 1987, following the death of her son, Kent, Kay McDaniel, Port Byron, Illinois, expressed to her pastor, Jeff Linman, her desire to connect with other grieving parents. Together with the help of Leon Gibson, a local funeral director, they contacted families in upper Rock Island County who had experienced the loss of a child in the past couple of years. Jerry and I were one of those families. Later that year the group chose to affiliate with Compassionate Friends and in September 1988 after the we attended a National Conference in Columbus Ohio, the Quad City TCF Chapter newsletter published its first issue. In the 32 years since Kay took the courageous step of inviting other families to grieve and grow with her, many families have attended Compassionate Friends meetings and many more have received the newsletter. Many individuals have served as Chapter Leaders, Treasurer, or helped in a myriad of other ways like printing the newsletter and preparing it for mailing, planning special programs, or making a love gift. Together we have reached out to grieving parents with love, understanding and hope. As our credo says, we share the pain as well as the joy, the anger as well as the peace, the faith as well as the doubts, and we help each other to grieve as well as to grow. We Need Not Walk Alone.

Sincerely,
Jerry & Carol Webb

Had I Known

Had I known that I would hold you for only one brief moment, would I have held you closer, or pushed you from me – so as to lessen the hurt of your leaving?
Had I known you’d leave so soon – would I have paced my life so as to fill it with more of you, or would I have visited only occasionally – to help soften the eventual absence of you in my life?
Had I known we would have to say goodbye – would I have let you leave my sight for even one precious moment – or would I rather we’d never met at all?
I think not – for the sometimes overwhelming pain of losing you, has been far worth the joy of knowing you!

jackie deems
Grief, Life, and Taxes

The new year has begun, and if you are in your first year of bereavement the months seem to stretch out almost endlessly. Perhaps enough time has passed since the death of your child that you are beginning to experience some good days – or at least some that are not as bad as the others.

You may have learned that on a day when things seem to be going reasonably well, given the circumstances, some event or sight or smell can trigger a wave of emotion that may seem overwhelming and take you back to almost “square one.” Those things seem to come at us unexpectedly – over the shoulder, so to speak.

This is the time of year when you are probably gathering information to prepare your tax returns. It could be a process that could turn out to be one of those “over the shoulder” experiences and perhaps if you are aware of that, it will not be such a surprise when the grief seems to overwhelm you again.

Was your child a young adult and will this be the year you will be filing his or her final tax return? Was your child a teenager with a part time job and that inevitable W-2 has arrived and needs to be dealt with? You list your dependents, and are faced with the realization that this will be the final return on which your child’s name appears. Did your child die as an infant and lived ever so briefly? You are still entitled to take that child as a dependent, and that can be very painful when your tax preparer asks for the name and social security number.

My work with a certified public accounting firm involves the preparation of those tax returns. We have often commented about how a person’s tax return can reveal a lot about life. For the newlyweds this will be the first jointly filed tax return. Has there been a divorce that requires a new filing status? Are there unusually high medical expenses that indicate some serious health problems? Is there the good fortune of a better paying job or other increases in taxable income? Does the deduction for charitable contributions indicate a generosity of spirit? And the saddest, the year that a loved one’s name appears on a final tax return.

We have learned, dear friends, that there is only one way through this valley of grief and that is to face it head on and even to lean into it. One of those obstacles to be faced and overcome could involve your tax returns. Being aware of that could allow you to prepare for the wave of emotions and to let them come. I wish for you whatever peace you can find in this process.

Donnafred Hinman
The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Founded in England in 1969, the first U.S. chapter was organized in 1972. Since then, 635 chapters have been established. The current Quad City Chapter was formed in 1987.

TCF National Office
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696
Toll Free (877)969-0010
TCF National Web site — www.compassionatefriends.org
http://www.quadcitytcf.org

Mission Statement
The mission of The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter is when a child dies at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

Vision Statement
The vision statement of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us, and everyone who finds us will be helped.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Printed Resources for Grieving Parents &amp; Siblings</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TCF Online Support Community</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>TCF’s national website offers &quot;virtual chapters&quot; through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.compassionatefriends.org">www.compassionatefriends.org</a> and click &quot;Online Support&quot; in the &quot;Resources&quot; column.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TCF’s Grief Related Webinars</strong></td>
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<td>Held monthly, the webinars are on various grief topics with well-known experts in the field. To reserve a seat for the next webinar (or to view the previous month’s webinar), go to <a href="http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Special-Events/Webinars.aspx">http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Special-Events/Webinars.aspx</a>. Webinars are being archived in TCF’s Webinar Library, accessible from the webinar page.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TCF National Magazine</strong></td>
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<td><em>We Need Not Walk Alone</em> is available to read online without charge. Go to <a href="http://www.compassionatefriends.org">www.compassionatefriends.org</a> and review the options at the top of the page. <em>TCF e-Newsletter</em> is also available from the National Office — to subscribe to the e-Newsletter, visit the TCF National Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter link.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grief Materials</strong></td>
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<td>Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than the Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief-related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you're looking for — or they'll be able to tell you where to find it. Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at 402.553.1200 or visit their website at <a href="http://www.centering.org">www.centering.org</a>. When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.</td>
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<td><strong>Amazon.com</strong></td>
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<td>When making a purchase from Amazon.com, enter through the link on the home page of TCF national website and a portion of the purchase price is donated to further the mission of TCF. This donation applies to all purchases made at Amazon.com.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Previous Newsletter Editions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Looking for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to <a href="http://www.bethany-qc.org">www.bethany-qc.org</a> for copies of the last several years of The Quad City Chapter of TCF-QC Chapter Newsletter in Adobe Acrobat format.</td>
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<td><strong>Alive Alone</strong></td>
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<td>A newsletter for bereaved parents whose only or all children are deceased. A self-help network and publication to promote healing and communication can be reached at <a href="http://www.alivealone.org">www.alivealone.org</a> or <a href="mailto:alivealone@bright.net">alivealone@bright.net</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bereaved Parents’ Magazine</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Online articles and poems. Reminder emails are sent notifying readers when new issues are available. <a href="https://bereavedparentsusa.org">https://bereavedparentsusa.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Our Newsletter</strong></td>
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<td>Published one to three times per year, when there is content to make a balanced issue. It usually contains 30 pages of personal stories and updates, poetry, subsequent birth announcements, and any new topical articles and information. Currently it is being distributed electronically (PDF), but a printout is available to anyone without email access. To request a sample copy, please email Jean Kollantai. Include your full name, your location, and your reason for interest.</td>
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The Difference Between “Letting Go” and “Forgetting”

When my brother passed away, I had a difficult time distinguishing between “letting go” and “forgetting.” I felt that to “let go” of T.C. would mean to start forgetting him. Needless to say, I was unwilling to do this. Eventually I learned I could let go without forgetting my brother. Learning to “let go” was and is a day-to-day process. The memory of my brother is stronger and clearer today because it is not as clouded by pain. With each day there is more acceptance. The reason I’m sharing this with you is because I used to be very concerned that T.C.’s friends would forget him. It hurt to think of all of them going on with their lives without T.C. My family received visits, cards, and letters when T.C. passed away. Slowly, however, the contact became less and less.

I met a woman the other day who recognized my name. We talked for a while, and I learned that her daughter was very close to my brother. I also learned that her daughter continues to visit the accident site and remembers T.C. and their friendship.

This made me understand that the power of love is stronger than I ever imagined. Not only have my memories of my brother remained clear, but he is remembered by his friends. I’m sure some of you can understand these feelings, and I wanted to share this with you. Maybe it will help you to understand that you can “let go” without forgetting. Maybe it will remind you that a person lives on in the hearts of many.

Judy Cloer – TCF/Tampa, Florida

In Memoriam
A Tribute to Lost Children

No parent should ever lose a child. We all know the natural order of the life cycle: we are prepared for (though certainly not untouched by) the deaths of our grandparents, then parents, followed possibly by our spouse. But never in our wildest imagination can we envision the death of our precious children. The pain is inexplicable and unfathomable.

One common need among many parents who have lost a child is a veritable obsession to do something to ensure that their child will not be forgotten. We will always honor the memory of our lost children and want the rest of the world to remember that these children existed in life, still live in our hearts, and that their life had meaning. Though a life be short, it need never be unimportant. Scholarship funds, charitable support, both financial and time oriented, working to enact new preventive laws, and volunteer service with non-profit agencies (often geared to the prevention of further deaths from the cause of the child’s death) – all these and more are outlets for parents who seek to create something positive from a tragic, unacceptable event.

Continued, Page 7
How do we reinvest our lives, rethink a future very different from the one we had hoped? This is not something that happens quickly. It is a long journey with many peaks and valleys — that roller coaster ride of emotions that we so often talk about. Sometimes we wonder if we are making any progress at all. Others may see it, but we feel we are only moving forward at a snail’s pace, if at all. My friends helped by accentuating the positive steps that I had made, ones that I could not recognize. As the saying goes, we can’t see the forest from the trees; in our case, because we are so consumed by our own sadness, it is hard not to be blinded by it. They pointed out how I was making progress by getting through an entire day without crying; when my first thought in the morning was not that Nina was dead; when I could go down the macaroni and cheese aisle at the grocery store without having to flee, and many more. All may seem insignificant to those who have not “been there,” but to us who have, are very significant indeed. Every one step forward, two steps back, we are still gaining, even if just a little. After the reality hits that we cannot control what happened, we can then decide what we are going to do with this new life we have been handed. We aren’t the people that we used to be, nor will we ever be the same. We are changed in ways we would have never imagined. We have learned where our priorities should be. We sweat the small stuff less, put less importance on materialistic things, and value each other’s uniqueness. We prize our family and close friends. We are more compassionate and less impatient. We know how precious and, too often, how fleeting life is. As one of the members of our group said, “I had to decide whether I was going to be bitter or better, and I chose better.” What better way to honor our children than to be a better friend, a better family member, a better citizen; to reach out our hand or give a shoulder to cry on to a newly bereaved parent, in a way that only we as bereaved parents can do? I truly believe that these things make our children very proud of us.

Cathy L. Seehuetter TCF/St. Paul, Minnesota

In Memoriam, Continued from Page 6

The greatest wish of bereaved parents is that another mother or father never endures this terrible experience. The death of children will never cease. Accidents, fatal illness, and suicides occur every hour of every day. These beautiful, bright, loving young people who we pictured as having limitless futures had, in fact, no future at all. They deserved better. We can do nothing about their deaths after the fact; but we can, and do, remember them with love and with acts of beneficence.

Carole Babush, TCF/Atlanta
Support Groups for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Compassionate Friends, Quad City Chapter

The next regular monthly meeting is
Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 6:30 pm at
Bethany for Children & Families,
1830 6th Avenue, Moline, Illinois 61265
Please call (309.736.6601) for information and directions.
Next months meeting is on March 28, 2019 at 6:30 pm

| The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine | Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the George M. Wittich-Lewis Funeral Home, 2907 Mulberry, Muscatine, Iowa. Chapter Leaders are Linda and Bill McCracken. You can call them at 563.260.3626 for directions or information, or contact them at linmac67@machlink.com. |
| Rick's House of Hope | Rick’s House of Hope serves children, ages 3-18, and family members from the Quad Cities and nearby counties. We serve those with grief, loss, or trauma issues. Death of a loved one and divorce are common; however, any sort of traumatic event or family change would fit our criteria, such as: bullying, teen dating victimization/harassment, crime victims, and other needs. At this time, Rick’s has a Holiday Healing group for children experiencing loss on Tuesday nights 5:30-7:00 until the Christmas holiday. The continuous groups are Family Together for all members of the family on Wednesday nights 5:00-7:00 pm and a Teen Night on Thursdays 5:00-7:30 pm. All meetings are held at 5022 Northwest Boulevard, Davenport, Iowa 52806 and are free. Rick’s House of Hope also does individual counseling/therapy. For more information, contact Lynne Miller, Program Manager, at millerl@verafrenchmhc.org or go to www.rhoh.org. |
| SHARE | A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, stillbirth, or early infant death. SHARE meets the third Thursday at 6:30 pm in the Adler Room #1 in the lower level of Genesis Heart Institute, 1236 East Rusholme Street, Davenport, Iowa. Questions? Contact Chalyn Fornero-Green at 309.373.2568, or chalyn@shareqc.com or www.shareqc.com. |
| Loving Listeners | If you need someone who understands and will listen, feel free to call or email (if address is given): ♥ Doug Scott 563.370.1041 doug.scott@mchsi.com ♥ Rosemary Shoemaker 309.945.6738 shoarttb3@mchsi.com ♥ Judy Delvechio 563.349.8895 delvecchiojudy@hotamil.com Doug, Rosemary, and Judy are willing to take calls from bereaved parents, grandparents, or siblings who want to talk to someone who cares that they don’t feel alone. |
Love Gifts

As parents and other family members find healing and hope within the group or from this newsletter, they often wish to make a Love Gift to help with the work of our chapter. This is a way to remember a beloved child, and to help other parents who mourn the loss of their child.

Thanks to:
Laurie Boyce-Steinhauser and Bill Steinhauser, in memory of their daughter, Maggie, on the 14th anniversary of her passing.

Donations are used to provide postage for the newsletter and mailings to newly bereaved families. Some of the love gifts are used for materials to share with first time attendees at our meetings or to purchase books for our library. Our thanks to the many families who provide love gifts so that the work of reaching out to bereaved parents and families can continue.

If you would like to send a donation or love gift, please send it or to our chapter Treasurer, Doug Scott, 6550 Madison Street, Davenport, Iowa, 52806. Checks should be made out to The Compassionate Friends. Your gifts are tax deductible.

Contact the Editors

If you read or write an article or poem which might be helpful to other bereaved parents and would like to share it.

If you move and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, please send us your new address. Because we send the newsletter bulk rate, the post office will not forward it.

If you know someone you think would benefit from receiving the newsletter, send his/her/their name and address.

Please contact:
Jerry and Carol Webb
390 Arbor Ridge, Benton Harbor, Michigan, 49022
CarolynPwebb@gmail.com
The Compassionate Friends 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 42nd TCF National Conference will be held in Philadelphia on July 19-21, 2019. “Hope Rings in Philadelphia” is the theme of this year’s event, which promises more of last year’s great National Conference experience. We’ll keep you updated with details here, on the national website, as well as on our TCF/USA Facebook Page and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

Sorrow

Master teacher, etching on the soul profoundest truth; increasing love, compassion, care; throwing light on what endures and what does not; on what is worthy of our time, and what is not. Let me learn my lesson well so that the sorrow, in the end, be not in vain.

Joan Splettstoesser
TCF/Kansas City, Missouri

We cannot, after all, judge a biography by its length, by the number of pages in it; we must judge by the richness of the contents. Sometimes the “unfinished” are among the most beautiful symphonies.

Viktor Frankl
from The Doctor and the Soul

When tragedy strikes, we feel victimized and helpless. We lose all sense of control of life as we are forced to face the fact that we do not control life—or death. As much as we might wish to, we cannot revise the past. Our choice is limited to how we deal with the present and future and how we can achieve the point described by Trevanian: “These things have been well-grieved...let them go.”

Dayton Robinson, TCF/Tuscaloosa, Alabama
I have learned that with grief you have to take it one day at a time and learn how to find the happiness amid the heartbreak.

Adrienne C. Moore

Grief is never something you get over. You don’t wake up one morning and say, “I’ve conquered that; now I’m moving on.” It’s something that walks beside you every day. And if you can learn how to manage it and honor the person that you miss, you can take something that is incredibly sad and have some form of positivity.

Terri Irwin

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.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and David Kessler

It takes strength to make your way through grief, to grab hold of life and let it pull you forward.

Patti Davis

www.whatseyourgrief.com

All these years later I STILL hear your gentle laughter. STILL feel your love. STILL see your light.

Helen Marm
To those who are receiving our newsletter for the first time, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that your family and you have many friends. We who have received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help.

You are not alone in your grief.