



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Sioux Falls Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

October 2015

Upcoming Meeting: October 6, 2015

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:15 with the exception of December.

Westminster Presbyterian Church

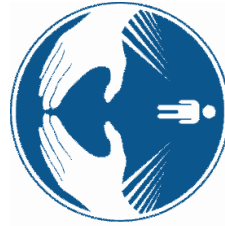
3801 E. 26th Street

Sioux Falls, SD

There is no religious affiliation.

www.compassionatefriendsofsiouxfalls.com

The Compassionate Friends is a support group for those who have experienced the death of a child at any age, for any reason.



**The
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Friends**
Sioux Falls Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

*If you are no longer interested in receiving this newsletter,
please contact us at:
rstoecker53@gmail.com*

The Compassionate Friends
Sioux Falls SD Area Chapter
2804 South Kingswood Way
Sioux Falls, SD 57106

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Please Read

Most of you who have been around our Compassionate Friends group for any length of time know that Ruth Stoecker is the backbone and lifeblood of our organization and has been since she took over leadership in 2006. Unfortunately for us, Ruth and her husband are moving to their dream home in northcentral South Dakota where they can also be nearer to family. We are so happy for Ruth to have this opportunity, but we are sad to lose her leadership, vision, and compassion.

This leaves us at a pivotal place as an organization. Ruth has done the bulk of the work to keep the group going, and we do not at this time have someone who is able to take over all that she does. Those of us who remain in leadership hope that this can be a point where we can increase ownership of our group. In fact, in order for the group to continue to exist, it is NECESSARY that we have more people step forward and contribute. Without this additional help, we are at risk of not being able to continue which is something that we know no one who has been touched by the work of Ruth and the Compassionate Friends of Sioux Falls wants to see happen.

We want to emphasize that expressing willingness to help does not mean that you have to lead meetings. In fact, this is probably what we need the least right now. We need people to be at meetings early to set up, make coffee, and greet people. We need people to stay late with people who need to talk. We need people willing to maintain databases, follow-up with new members, and be the face of our organization to the community. Basically, if you are willing to help, we have a job for you! Our vision is the old cliché, "Many hands make light work."

We believe that we are needed in the community, and we want to continue to be here to come alongside grieving people who need us. Please consider committing to the group and to the people who continue to need us each day!

If you are willing to help, please email me at kristin.tcf@gmail.com. Our first task right now is the December Candlelighting service. We will meet on October 13 to plan this (see the announcement later in the newsletter for details). Then we will probably meet after the new year to determine how the group can best divide tasks and continue to serve the community. We also hope to have a going away party early in 2016 to thank Ruth for all she has meant to us.

As part of remembering our children, we will have a table set up for you to bring pictures and anything you wish to share about your child during the month of your child's birthday.

TCF Leaders for Sioux Falls:

Ruth Stoecker 605-201-1426

rstoecker53@gmail.com

Peggy Mastel 605-351-8823

mpastel@sio.midco.net

Kristin Seruyange 605-610-9432

kristin.tcf@gmail.com

The Compassionate Friends

National Office: 877-969-0010

www.compassionatefriends.org



The Gift of Love



Please send in love gifts by the 5th of the month so that they may be included in the following month's newsletter.

Your donation is greatly appreciated.

In Memory of: _____

Love Gift Amount: _____

Submitted by: _____

Address: _____

Send your love gift to:

Tami Meeker

48424 Beaver Valley Rd

Valley Springs, SD 57068

The September meeting was attended by more than 25 members. We broke into three groups and had a helpful discussion on guilt. Members shared their own guilt and also how they have dealt with it. We also celebrated two special children with birthdays in the month of September: Zev Leal and Andrew Nester.

The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow. We Need Not Walk Alone. We Are The Compassionate Friends.

Make Plans for December Candlelighting

Please make plans to attend the December Candlelighting service which will take place on Sunday, December 13 at 6:15 PM. We look forward to gathering together and remembering our loved ones in the holiday season.

PLEASE NOTE: We will be having a special brainstorming session to plan the candlelighting program on OCTOBER 13 at 7:00PM at Westminster Presbyterian. Please make plans to come as we would love to have your input regarding the program.

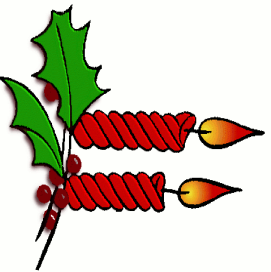


To have your child included in this year's Candlelighting Ceremony slideshow on December 13, 2015, please send us a photo of your child along with his or her name.

Email to: kristin.tcf@gmail.com

(Please use .jpg format and put "2015 Slideshow" in the subject line.)

***If your child has been included in previous slideshows, he or she will automatically be included this year.



HONORARY ASSOCIATES OF COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Sponsors are considered Honorary Associates of our organization and are recognized at the level of their donation. We would like to offer our sincere and grateful appreciation to the following supporters:

DIAMOND (\$500)	GOLD (\$150)	SILVER (\$100)	BRONZE (\$50)
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Sisson Printing		Hartquist Funeral Home	
		Caroline Christopher	
		Dr. Richard Howard	

Special thanks to:

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH—hosting our monthly meetings

MILLER FUNERAL HOME—providing cookies for our meetings

AVERA—donating the printing of our newsletters

October Love Gifts

From Jeralyn Haffer



In loving memory of

Jessica Haffer

From Jamie Lambertz



In loving memory of

D'Artagnan James

From Jack & Karen Huber



In loving memory of

Nicholas Huber

From David & Kristin Seruyange



In loving memory of

Lael Seruyange

Halloween Memories

Most children enjoy Halloween, the costumes, the candy, the parties, trick or treat, the decorations and so much more. My son looked forward to Halloween with great anticipation. Until he reached the fourth grade, Todd was happy to pick out a costume at the discount store... usually the current movie or television monster.

He came home from school in fourth grade and told me that there was going to be a costume contest and he really wanted to have a unique costume. I asked him what he wanted to be, and I will never forget his response: "I want to be a vampire, Mom. A really cool vampire." So, I talked to a friend of mine who was into stage production, and we went to her house the night before the contest.

She had a vampire cape, a vampire body suit, a vampire collar and great makeup. Todd loved it. My friend stopped at the house early the next morning and applied the makeup and did the finishing touches on Todd's costume. He looked just like the vampires in the movies, He was so pleased. He really wanted to win first place in his class. I dropped him at school and told him to have a wonderful time. He was elated.

As the day progressed, I wondered how he was doing. He had never wanted to win a prize before; what if he didn't get first place in his class? I worried about him, knowing that his feelings were easily hurt by cruel children and sometimes by cruel teachers. He called me at 3:30 to let me know he was home. I could hear excitement in his voice, and I asked him how he did.

"Mom, you won't believe this", he said in a serious, low toned voice. "What happened?", I asked, now wondering about the day's events. "I won first place, Mom. First place in the whole school. I can't wait for Halloween. Wait till Grandpa sees me. He won't even recognize me. I even got a certificate for first place...I'm putting it up in my room." I was so happy that tears welled in my eyes. My son had tried his best, and he had won. He had put himself out there and he wasn't disappointed, disillusioned or discouraged.

That was the first of many accomplishments in my son's life. He went on to win in track in high school, restore a 1965 GTO from the ground up and receive numerous trophies and awards. He attained his BS and MBA and was successful and respected in business. He was a great father to his children, and his love for them was very deep. He never hesitated to tell them he loved them and how proud he was of them. He was a wonderful parent. He was always an amazing son. His death left a scar on my soul and a hole in my heart.

But his first success is forever in my mind. The little certificate which he brought home and hung on his bedroom wall is a treasure of his wonderful childhood. Halloween is still a happy holiday, and it is one of the few which I enjoy. I thank my son for that and for all the joy he gave me in his short 35 years of life.

*Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
TCF, Katy, TX*

Mystery

I bought toys for my baby after she died

And I opened the cedar chest and put them inside

And nobody ever knew but me

The meaning of the mystery

Of brand new toys hidden here and there

And not one baby anywhere.

*Andy Cipriano
TCF Tallahassee, FL*

A Dream Deferred

Christine died on November 6, 1992. She was six years old and in kindergarten, but at 35 pounds and in size four clothes, she looked much younger. Brain-damaged before birth by hydrocephalus, she needed hours of occupational and physical therapy to learn to crawl, brush her teeth, ride her tricycle, zip her coat. I massaged her, coaxed her, pleaded with her, praised her—and watched her grow.

I never knew what skill might confuse Christine. She walked at thirteen months but did not crawl until fifteen months. She fed herself at eighteen months but could not hug herself until she was four. When she was two and a half, she was given a complete battery of tests. Her motor skills ranged from less than one year to average.

But Christine passed the speech test at a six-year-old level. At four she composed music and created lyrics to go with her melodies. She was a natural in math and, in true brat fashion, lorded it over her older brother who was not. “It’s OK that you’re not good in math,” she would tell Bobby. “Boys can’t do math.” Or she would walk up to him as he struggled over multiplication, point at a problem with her tiny hand, say, “That’s wrong. You’ll just have to do it again,” and run before he gave her a well-deserved slap.

Christine had so much potential. Her therapists, her teachers, her pediatrician, her neurosurgeon marveled at what she could do. She was humming nursery rhymes at thirteen months, humming Tchaikovsky at three. There were days when I had visions of Christine as an adult, leading an orchestra as they played her Seventh Symphony or on stage singing her latest Country and Western hit.

And then at six it was all over. Her music—her songs—turned off. My dreams muted.

And I found myself asking a question another poet in very different circumstances asked himself. What happens to a dream deferred? Does it merely fester? Or does it explode? (Langston Hughes, “Harlem,” 1953.)

Two seasons later I have a partial and paradoxical answer. It does both. It does neither. These have been moments of intense anguish, when I marveled that my body could hold my mood and live. There have been times when sadness has softly sifted through my daily routines, shadowing my cooking and my speaking. But under both, deeper than the explosion of Christine’s unexpected death or the long sadness of her empty room, lies a certainty that Christine still exists, that we will one day be reunited.

A part of me crossed with her into death, still walks in love with her. Yet it is not a budding musician I walk with—or a brat—or a handicapped child. She was all of these. She is none of these. I walk with her. Her soul’s whole now, bathed in light. Relationships fade and change. Love lasts.

*Sandra Ball
TCF Salem, NJ
In Memory of Christine*

You can no longer see me,
but please know that I am there.
I am the flowers in the garden,
I am the wind beneath your hair.

BY SHERRY ROCKHILL

Source: <http://www.familyfriendpoems.com/quotes/death/#ixzz31KjD6pYmW>
Family Friend Poems

A Journey to the “New Normal”

May 31 marked seven years since my only sibling Dave died from cancer at age 32. This June 28 we would have been celebrating Dave’s 40th birthday with a big party, and I’d be kidding him about going bald, just like all the Snapp men before him. Instead, I’ll be getting ready for the TCF National Conference, at which I’ll share memories of his brilliance, great smile, and sense of humor with those who will never have the pleasure of meeting him in person.

At this point in my grief journey, most will be good memories of how Dave lived, rather than bad memories of how he died. I can’t recall the moment when that shift of perspective occurred, but I would like to share a few memories and milestones that have marked the way:

- Months after Dave died, I went to see the movie “Big”, starring Tom Hanks, and “lost it” when his mother stared out the window wondering if she’d ever see him again. I watched the movie again recently and didn’t lose it.
- It was three months before I felt up to sharing with anyone the details of the day my brother died at his home in Bellevue, Washington, in the company of Mom, Dad, and me. On the way home from that emotional conversation, I drove the wrong way down a one way street in downtown Chicago – it might be smart to have a friend drive you to your first few TCF meetings!
- I discovered that the grief path is not a straight line. A few good days can be followed by several bad ones. I’ve heard other TCF members call this their “roller coaster ride.”
- For a year, I couldn’t keep the radio on if “Wind Beneath My Wings” came on. For the next year, I kept it on but cried through it. Now, I can usually make it all the way through without any tears!
- With the help of TCF, I realized that despite friends expecting it to be possible, I’d never be “back to normal.” My focus instead shifted to finding my “new normal”. While I can’t point to a time when that happened (probably after the 1990 TCF Conference), THAT was a milestone.
- For three Christmases after Dave died, I didn’t put up a tree in my condo. For Christmas, 1991, as I was getting out ornaments for my first tree since his death, I came across a bunch of ornaments that he had had in his apartment. I came totally unglued then, but now I look forward to seeing those ornaments each Christmas.
- It was three years before I felt that I had enough emotional energy to pursue a relationship. Even now, I don’t have a lot of tolerance for guys I go out with that gripe about their brothers or sisters.

My most vivid “landmark” to date along my grief journey came in February 1993. Following my Dad’s father’s death in December, 1992, we were in Atlanta cleaning out my grandfather’s apartment, and I came across a pile of post cards and letters that Dave had written to my grandparents through the years. Earlier in my journey, a “blind side” such as that would have sent me into a tailspin. In this case, though, my immediate reaction was one of happiness, for I had found a part of Dave that I didn’t know I still had! I saved a few of the post cards, sent a couple to my cousin who was referenced in some of the letters, and (amazingly) threw the rest away. It was fun to share the memories, but I didn’t feel the need to hang onto them. It was at that point, nearly five years after Dave’s death, that I truly felt as if I was closing in on that “new normal.”

*Karen Snapp
Frisco, Texas
From the TCF Stages Newsletter, Summer 1995
In Memory of my brother, Dave*

Our Children Remembered—October

Name	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Parents
Jessica Kassandra Hafler	2-Oct	23-Nov	Jerilyn & Keith Hafler
Eric David Kroneman	3-Oct	12-May	Larry & Bonnie (deceased) Kroneman
Curtis Darck Dawson	3-Oct	5-Apr	Terry Dawson & Judy Strough
Gerald Dale Stepping	3-Oct	10-Jan	Constance Shaw
Adam Jacob Denevan	4-Oct	8-Jan	David Denevan & Cindy Carlson
Travis Bakke	5-Oct	15-May	Marie & Greg Bakke
Chebea Ann Villauer	8-Oct	7-Feb	Darla & Glen Villauer
Marcus Don Gross	8-Oct	1-May	Don & Pat Gross
Nicholas Huber	8-Oct	19-Jul	Jack & Karen Huber
Tyler Easton	8-Oct	15-Nov	Rick & Brenda Easton
D'Arcagn James Lambertz	10-Oct	10-Oct	Mario & Jamie Lambertz
Kathlyn Colleen Mathison	11-Oct	16-Nov	John & Mollyn Mathison
Mark D. Runyan	12-Oct	17-Jan	Lurlene Runyan
Austyn Brennan Norton	13-Oct	28-Jan	William Norton & Annec Meyerink
Tara Bullerman	14-Oct	6-Apr	Tom & Trish Bullerman
Michael W. Miller	14-Oct	29-Dec	Gary & Julie Miller
Brent James Marra	14-Oct	20-Oct	Denny & Loreen Marra
Raynie T. Pullman	14-Oct	30-Jan	Joe & Margie Pullman
Samantha Ann Goudy	15-Oct	17-Dec	David (deceased) & Carolyn Croudy Carlson
Amanda Marie Boll	18-Oct	15-Apr	Allen & Tracey Boll
Wyatt Ammon	19-Oct	18-Nov	Greg & Jeannie Ammon
Dylan Moberg	19-Oct	13-May	Mark and Glory Bunde
William "Billy" Joseph Schoewe	19-Oct	13-Dec	Bruce & Jeanette Schoewe
Darwin John Smith	21-Oct	4-Aug	Donald & Charlotie Smith
Ashlyn Johanna Lee	21-Oct	15-Nov	Kirk & Michelle Lee
Brittany Ellen Timmerman	22-Oct	22-Oct	Jeff & Denise Timmerman
Eric Lappegard	22-Oct	23-Jul	Cindy & Boyd Lappegard
Lael Areen Jeanette Seryyange	24-Oct	21-Jan	David & Kristin Seryyange
Ashley Essee Hanson	27-Oct	1-Oct	Allen & Mary Hanson
Tate Michael Baloun	27-Oct	23-Jul	Brad & CamMay Baloun
David James Barg	27-Oct	3-May	Fred & Peggy Barg
Davis Jackson Lee	29-Oct	30-Oct	Jeff & JoAnn Lee
Scott Joseph Hurney	16-Mar	2-Oct	Marlene & the late Joe Hurney
Brandt Triemann Grb	26-Jan	3-Oct	Russell & Dawn Triemann
Jason Alan Thornberry	17-Nov	3-Oct	Steve & Gloria Thornberry
Kayla Larson	10-Jan	4-Oct	Sharon & Greg Larson
Alexander Brent Schumacher	7-Apr	4-Oct	Brent and Denise Schumacher
Leslie Roe	15-Mar	9-Oct	Linda & Herb Roe
Carson Elliot Powell	12-May	11-Oct	Greg & Terri Powell
Tyler Jon Kendle	16-Jan	12-Oct	Todd & Maria Kendle
Brady R Crawford	5-Jan	13-Oct	Mary & Leon Friedrichs (step-father) Bob Crawford
Lonny Schlum	11-May	15-Oct	Roger & Jancee Schlum
Ira Wayne Hawk	11-Nov	15-Oct	Kathy Crowe & Pee White Buffalo Chief
Pamela Ehde Lais	30-Apr	17-Oct	Carol & Art Ehde
Ashley King	10-Mar	19-Oct	Brenda King
Holly Rotert	21-Feb	19-Oct	Bob & Carmen Rotert
John Bernhard	17-May	23-Oct	Betsy & Ed Bernhard
Ethan Wingert	24-Mar	24-Oct	Jim & Renae Wingert
Jared Reisch	25-Mar	24-Oct	John & Brenda Reisch
Michael Hegerfeld	3-Jan	25-Oct	Shirley & the late Marvin Hegerfeld
Levi James Tieszen	27-Feb	25-Oct	James & Deb Tieszen
Jared Brooke Winter	1-Mar	26-Oct	Tricia & Brooke Winter
Dominic Herkenhoff	9-Nov	26-Oct	Michael & Sandy Herkenhoff
Deborah S. Lounsbury Fueston	25-Jan	27-Oct	Robert & Mary Lounsbury
Tamm Marie Lockwood	6-Apr	28-Oct	Wendy Lieberg & David Lockwood
Deidre Keyon Lockwood	19-Aug	28-Oct	Wendy Lieberg & David Lockwood
Tanner Joseph Bambridge	11-Nov	29-Oct	Brent & Lisa Bambridge
Owen Raymond Schuelke	30-Sep	30-Oct	Brian & Maggie Schuelke
Kyle Swier	13-Aug	31-Oct	Gene & Shirley Jones
Karl Wayne Longenecker	11-Dec	31-Oct	Diane DeVito