



The Compassionate Friends



El Paso Chapter



September



October



November



WELCOME TO OUR FALL MEETINGS

Picnic: October 4, 5:00 PM
Madeline Park

Meetings: Wednesdays
September 30, 2009
October 28, 2009
November 25, 2009

Program:
To be Announced

Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

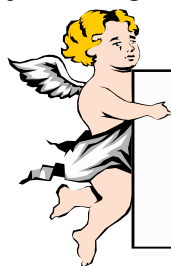
Place:
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
1000 Montana Avenue
El Paso, Texas

Board Of Directors:
Chairman: Susan Crews
542-0908
Sec/Treasurer: Lou Cain
Newsletter, Copies & Mailing:
The Winkelmans

Mark Your Calendar For Future Meetings

Dec 13 Around the Globe
Candlelight Ceremony
Jan 28 Monthly Meeting
Feb 25 Monthly Meeting

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is a self help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents. The purpose of TCF is to aid parents in the positive resolution of the grief experienced upon the death of their child and to foster the physical and emotional health of bereaved parents and surviving children. The El Paso chapter meets in donated church facilities, but no religious creed or affiliation is involved. There are no dues and no one is required to talk at any meeting. Listening is okay! Please join us, together we can make it.



Editor's Notes



In October, we will be having our annual balloon picnic at Madeline Park. Everyone is invited, parents, children and other family members. We all **bring our favorite dish**, eat, socialize, then send off a balloon with a special message to our child(ren). Each person is asked to **bring one or more helium balloons** to send off to their child. We also suggest you **bring lawn chairs** to sit on. The picnic will be held at **Madeline Park on Sunday, October 4, at 5:00 PM, located off of Cincinnati Avenue, in Kern Place**. See you there.

Mail all Entries to: Eric Winkelman
5337 Hunters Glenn
El Paso, TX 79932
ejwink@sbcbglobal.net

National Office: TCF National Office
PO Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
(630) 990-0010 or (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

If you would like to receive this monthly newsletter, please e-mail ejwink@sbcbglobal.net or www.elpasotcf.org

YOU WILL SURVIVE THE HOLIDAYS

Those first few holiday seasons after the death of your child can cause parents great pain. That was certainly the case for my husband and me after we lost our daughter Rhonda when she was 16. Here are some things that we did (and some that we didn't) that helped us gain some pleasure from the holidays. It will never be the same without your child/children but you will learn to cope and reinvest in others and have a life again.

PLAN AHEAD

Think about and plan for these next few weeks. Decide what **you** want to do and let those who are close to you know what **you** need.

CHANGE

Sometimes changing where and when holidays are celebrated helps. Perhaps your family would agree to have one gathering this year between the two holidays. Just because you've always hosted the gatherings at your house in the past does not mean it has to be the same. Inform your family that you're unable to do this and tell them you will be having it at a restaurant this year or ask another family member to do it for you. Often, we have found, the intensity of the pain lessens in a different environment.

HELP OTHERS

Some people decide to work in local food kitchens on these special days. Many who have done this say it helped them focus on what they have and see that life is often more painful and difficult for others. It also makes us feel so much better when we give of ourselves to others.

DECORATING

If you feel your home needs to be decorated for the holidays but you cannot muster the courage or energy to do it, then ask a friend or family member to assist or do it for you. You may want to consider decorating the gravesite instead or in addition to what you do at home.

ATTENDING SPECIAL EVENTS

Go to special events if you'd like to but inform your host or hostess that you may need to "escape" inconspicuously if you cannot handle it. Think about and look for others who are having a difficult time during the holidays and plan to attend or sit with them. It helps to have someone nearby who truly understands.

ATTENDING WORSHIP SERVICES

Often bereaved parents will say that music and worship services are the most difficult to attend after a child's death. We may be angry at God, and we most definitely feel cheated when other families seem to be intact and ours is not. Loneliness and unfairness are our feelings and often cause despair. If you are able to attend the annual services of your place of worship, you may want to sit near the aisle or at the back so you can have an easy escape route and not be "hemmed into the middle."

REMEMBERING YOUR CHILD

You might want to purchase a special candle in memory of your child. Light the candle daily from Thanksgiving through Christmas. You also may want to take an item of your child's clothing and have them cut and designed for a doll or bear. Jewelry can be melted, redesigned and sized for others to wear. Be creative and think of ways that you can use the belongings of your child to create something new that will help others to remember him or her. Whether this is your first year of bereavement or if it has been several years since your child died you will find that you WILL survive the holidays. You can gain some small pleasures if you plan to include the memories of your child in your holidays.

By Kay Bevington at www.alivealone.org.

Fall

Fall is a season of many feelings.
Autumn is here once again,
As it comes every year,
And with the leaves
My falling tears. This time of years is the
hardest of all.
My heart is still breaking.
Once again it is fall.
Memories once so vivid
Are seeming to fade.
My time spent with you

Seems some other age.
This season reminds me
Of grief and of pain
But yet teaches hope
And joy once again.
For the trees are still living
Beneath their grey bark,
And you, my sweet child,
Are alive in my heart!

- Cinda Schake, TCF/Butler, PA

Fall Angel Dates

If your child's name has been left out of this section, or their is missing/incorrect information, please mail or e-mail me immediately so I can update our data base.

LIKE LEAVES IN AUTUMN



HERE AND THEN GONE

BUT ALWAYS REMEMBERED

DEATH DATES:	AGE:	CHILD:	PARENT(S):
9/2/1983	3	Jonathon	Son of Mrs. Susan Crews
9/2/2009	20	Philip	Son of Martha and Felipe Jordan
9/4/1998	12	Adam	Son of Beverly Hurley
9/5/1997	41	Harlow III	Son of Mr. & Mrs. Harlow Paul
9/5/2006	8	Samual	Son of Gordon Mahon
9/18/1993	29	Steven	Son of Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Waite
10/6/2005	47	Fred	Son of Fran Zimet
10/7/2007	2	Ethan	Son of Gloria Ortiz
10/16/2001	26 Days	Elsie	Ann Sigholz
10/19/1991	8	Jeremy	Alvin and Carmen Dobard
10/30/2003	10	Ruben	Son of Cindy and Mark Flack
11/19/2007	27	Michael	Son of Terri & Robert Gallardo
11/28/2003	19 Days	Gabrielle	Daughter of Edna and Andrew Sierra
11/30/1991	21	Mark Anthony	Son of Maria Molina

The Unending Symphony

by Bee Ewing

The sun will surely rise again
And rivers will run to the sea.
The ocean waves will crest and roll,
The eagle will always fly free.
Just as certainly heaven waits
For all those who believe.
While God in His infinite mercy

Sustains all those who grieve.
In the unending symphony of life,
You have played such a special part.
The song of your life will remain for all
Who have memories of you in their heart.

~ submitted by Meg Avery, Sugar Hill, Ga.
In Memory of Her Son, James Avery July 15, 1983 - September 22, 1997

Brother. Sister.

I miss you with the same
Longing as if it
Has been one hundred years.
I know you miss
Me even more.
I can see
The waterfalls pouring
From your sad, brown eyes.
We will never see
Each other again
Not while you live,
For there is dry, packed
Dirt above me, forever severing
Our being together.
Six feet of land
Separating
Our physical forms.
No, I will never see
Your glowing face
For as long as you
Live.
You will never hear
The loud, hearty laugh I have
The one that sounds like
A happy child
In his youth.

You will never inhale the scent
Of old shirts left
Folded in drawers for far
Too long.
But we will always
Be best buds, two peas
In a pod, like we
Always were.
You and I,
We always wanted
To fly together,
To be birds,
Flying free.
What sick irony it is
That while I fly,
You are caged,
Stuck in a place
You cannot escape.
It isn't fair, is it,
That we couldn't fly together,
That we have to be
In another world
To be truly free.
Though my body is
Six feet under,
I still love you

With the intensity
Of a thousand
burning suns.
I know you miss me
So much it hurts,
And I miss you
The same.
Though it is abysmal,
Though things are
dark
And gloomy, lonely
and
Agonizing, no matter
How broken and
Pathetic you feel,
Take comfort, dear
sister,
We will always be
The best of friends.
And when we finally
Meet again,
We will fly,
Together.
By Rachael Abraham
In Memory of Her
Brother, Paul

To realize the value of a sister/brother
Ask someone who doesn't have one.

To realize the value of ten years:
Ask a newly divorced couple.

To realize the value of four years:
Ask a graduate.

To realize the value of one year:
Ask a student who has failed a final exam.

To realize the value of nine months:
Ask a mother who gave birth to a stillborn.

To realize the value of one month:
Ask a mother who has given birth to
A premature baby.

To realize the value of one week:

Ask an editor of a weekly newspaper.

To realize the value of one minute:
Ask a person who has missed the train, bus or plane.

To realize the value of one-second:
Ask a person who has survived an accident.

To realize the value of a friend or family member:
LOSE ONE.

Time waits for no one.

Treasure every moment you have.

You will treasure it even more when
You can share it with someone special.

The origin of this letter is unknown,
But it brings good luck to everyone who passes it on.

Remember...

Hold on tight to the ones you love!

Love Gifts

A LOVE GIFT is a gift of money or service to The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in honor of a child who has died but it can also be a gift to help in the work of the El Paso Chapter of TCF. Your gifts are tax deductible and are our Chapter's only monetary support. Your donation will help us pay for postage and labels for sending our newsletter each month.

LOVE GIFT

Name of Person to be Remembered _____

Special Occasion of Person _____

Given By _____

Send To: Mary Lou Cain
5664 Beth View
El Paso, TX 79932

The Love & Peace Rose and Billy Hawley

By Carol Hawley

I love flowers of all types. From the dainty African Violets to chrysanthemums to orchids tooh the list is endless.

Occasionally I received bouquets of roses on my birthdays, Mothers Day and wedding anniversaries. My favorite color of roses is champagne color. The rose is a symbol of love. The ruby red rose is a huge seller during Valentine's Day. It was late spring 2004 in the evening when Billy came home and surprised me with a single long-stem rose. Billy has hit a rough spot in his life and I think that's his way of saying "I am sorry." Mothers are very forgiving creatures especially toward their children. Even though their child has misbehaved and has been a pickle.

I received a rose that has the color of orange and red mixed, but with tinges of yellow. The thing about the rose was the fragrance. It smells fruity like a peach. I quickly trimmed the end of the stem and placed the rose in a coffee cup. I put the rose on my computer desk in the bedroom. I changed the water every day and added a bit of sugar for the rose. The bud opened very slowly and it lasted the longest of all roses I ever received, close to two weeks. Billy checked on the rose every now and then. He even commented "Hey, maybe things will finally work out."

Recently I dug out my collection of flower catalogs and looked for this rose. Eventually I found out that the rose is an AARS winner and the name given is the LOVE & PEACE rose. To quote from the Wayside Gardens catalog: "The rose is a tough and lasting beauty with beautiful dark foliage, highly resistant to blackspot and mildew."

Since it was only late spring in Georgia when Billy gave this rose to me, rose bushes have not bloomed yet and this cut rose is from somewhere else. I also consulted with my friend Charlotte who is an avid gardener and a member of the Master Gardener Club. She says the hot humid weather in Georgia is not ideal for this rose and it is grown elsewhere.

September 27 was four years since our son Billy has passed away. Bill, Alan (Billy's older brother) and I think of Billy often. My tears still flow but less; our pain throbs with less intensity but our longing to see, hug and talk with him is still strong.

I still have the rose and it's encased in a clear acrylic box. It has lost its beauty, splendor and scent. Yet, whenever I look at the rose, it brings back memories of that nice evening when Billy walked in with a smile and holding a rose behind his back - a memory I will treasure. It will be my one and only rose from my son Billy, the LOVE & PEACE rose.

HALLOWEEN AFTER A CHILD HAS DIED

When the first Halloween arrived soon after our son's death, I could hardly bear to think of it. Clint loved fall and Halloween. He took such joy in the season: football games, corn mazes, haunted houses and parties. It almost felt like a betrayal of sorts for me to hate the season now, but I couldn't help it. In the beginning, everything about it brought me pain. It was especially hard to look at some of the gloomier decorations. Since I couldn't change how others celebrated this time of the year, I tried to focus on the simpler things: uncut pumpkins, the changing leaves, vibrating autumn flowers.

My husband and I searched to find ways to honor our memories. We decided to continue the family tradition of volunteering to pass out candy at the local zoo. As we busily filled each child's treat bag that night, we privately reviewed our own memories.

Slowly, with time and healing, I have found that I can handle most of the traditional decorations and festivities. Now, three years later, there are still some times when I must remind myself not to focus on the more grim items of the season. I want to use the energy of my thoughts to hold onto and enjoy my precious memories.

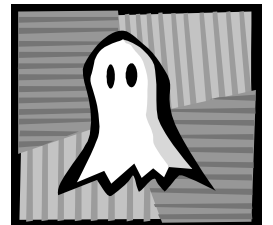
I have found that some activities feel right and others don't. I keep what works and abandon what doesn't. Sometimes, nothing feels right. We each must find our own way of handling each holiday. I know another mother who hands out anti-drug information with her treats.

Be patient and don't put too much expectation on the day or on yourself. I have found it to be true that most of the time the anticipation of a holiday is worse than the actual holiday. The best advice is to continue to take this journey one day at a time and to honor the memory of your child in your own way.

By Debra Reagan

In Memory of Clint Reagan. 5/15/85 - 8/6/05

www.clint-reagan.memory-of.com



How Will It Be?

Three years of holidays have gone

How will this one be?

It's now mid-November,

Blue sky, gold, russet leaves.

The second year almost as hard

As the first, in memory,

And last year with its dark descent,

Brought me poetry.

What will year's end bring this time?

Just celebrations mire?

or will the love surrounding strong

Bring peace to damp the fire?

By Genessee Bourdeau Gentry,

from her book "Stars in the Deepest Night"

*In the fall, when amber
leaves are shed,
Softly, silently, like tears
that wait to flow,
I watch and grieve.
My heart beats sadly in the fall,
'tis then I miss you most of all.*



You Are Not Alone

We know the heartache that you bear,
we've felt the pain, because we've been there.

We share a bond of infinite sorrow,
a hope for peace, strength for tomorrow.

A time will come when you'll seek relief,
solace and comfort to ease your grief.

We welcome you, we will be there.

We understand; we've much to share.

- TCF/Scranton, PA

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL DAY

The senate has, for many years, at the request of The Compassionate Friends, proclaimed the second Sunday in December as National Children's Memorial Day to coincide with The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting. Members of all TCF chapters join tens of thousands of families worldwide in lighting candles at 7 pm as an act of symbolic remembrance. This is an annual event where persons around the globe, united in the loss of a child, light candles for one hour the second Sunday in December. Candles are first lit at 7 pm local time just west of the International Date Line. As candles burn down in one time zone, they are then lit in the next, creating a virtual 24 hour wave of light as observances continues in countries around the world. TCF El Paso Chapter will sponsor a **Candle Lighting Ceremony** as part of The Compassionate Friends worldwide candle lighting remembrance services on **Sunday, December 13, 2009**, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. We will begin lighting our candles promptly at 7:00 pm. Please plan to arrive by then. You may bring your own candle and picture of your loved one. We will have extra candles. This is a very special, heart-warming ceremony to remember our child, sibling, grandchild during the busy holiday season. Many of us have discarded old traditions, kept some traditions and found new rituals to connect us with our children. This may be one of your new traditions, a memory to cherish. Please join us on December 13th. A social will follow after the lighting ceremony.



Wake me up When September Ends

*Summer has come and passed
The innocent can never last
Wake me up when September ends.*

Even without looking at the calendar, my body and soul takes note. I know the time of year by heart. It is the beginning of the school year. For nearly my whole life this time of year has signaled a fresh start, anticipation of things to come. A time for new shoes, fresh notebooks, sharp, un-chewed pencils. All these things beckon of hopes and dreams, plans and goals for success and achievement.

Our son, Jake, died two months short of his high school graduation. We received his college acceptance letter the day of his funeral. Last fall, we watched his friends and classmates head off to college. Many of them came to say good bye to us; after all, we had "adopted" them as our sons and daughters now. Of course, we wished them well with a smile and a hug. Our hearts were aching to be lugging things into a dorm room, too.

So, September is here once more and I think about what Jake would be doing now. I think about all the parents for whom this time of year is difficult, also. I think of those parents who would be putting crayons into a cute little back pack, those who would be watching that first ball game of the season, and those who would maybe be encouraging a college grad to find that first job and begin paying off student loans. Our sons and daughters have gone straight to the "Head of the Class" but we wish we were able to give them a hug as they achieve glorious dreams beyond our imagination!

*As my memory rests
But never forgets what I lost...
Wake me up when September ends.*

Written by Laurie Dreier
From the TCF St. Paul Aug/Sept/Oct 09 Newsletter

Miracle

I have had my own inner battles over Wendy, and whether or not I could have changed things, or stopped her, or saved her, or was responsible for her death. The moment had come for me finally when I knew that there was nothing I could have done. For me, the truth had come in a thousand tiny moments, like shards that formed a window I could finally look through. It came in moments of prayer and nights of bitter tears, but in the end what I had seen, as I looked into myself, had brought peace to me. I couldn't have saved her. I couldn't have changed it. All I could do was accept the fact that she was gone now and had chosen to be. It was about acceptance and surrender, and loving someone enough to let them go forever.

In Loving Memory of Wendy
1967 - 2001

I'll love you forever and miss you forever, Mom

Submitted by June Cooper, Wendy's mom: "I am not entirely there yet, but I am working on it and this sounds so good that I had to print it and I wanted to share it because if you print it, it may help someone else who feels just like we do."



**The Annual El Paso
TCF Picnic**

will be on Sunday,
October 4, 2009
from **5:00 – 7:00** at
Madeline Park in Kern
Place. The main dish
will be provided by El
Paso TCF. We would
like for you to bring a
favorite salad, side dish,
appetizer, snacks (chips,
pretzels, etc.), sodas
and water, or dessert.
We will have our

Memorial Balloon Release between 6:00 and 6:30. Please bring your own balloons, lawn chairs or a blanket to spread out. As always, you are welcome to bring friends and/or family members. Check our local website: www.elpasotcf.org for pictures of previous year's picnics.



Self Help Organization Offering Friendship and Understanding to Bereaved Parent



Address Correction Requested

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
1000 MONTANA
EL PASO, TX 79902